Annex 7 - Policy document *Women, Peace and Security* grant instrument

1. Introduction

The Policy Document *Women, Peace and Security* provides further specification on the thematic focus of the Women, Peace and Security grant instrument in relation to the overarching Theory of Change (ToC) of the Civil Society Strengthening framework in annex 5 (CSS). It targets a spectrum of CSO voices that are engaged in the WPS agenda, with an emphasis on the agency of Southern organisations, women's rights organisations and civil society: organisations in the national and international movement on WPS and the Dutch National Action Plan (NAP)1325 community.

The *Women, Peace and Security* grant instrument is one of the grant instruments through which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs contributes to the implementation of the Dutch NAP1325. Therefore, the ToC of NAP III provides an important entry point for this policy document. The NAP ToC has proven to be a useful framework for programmes under the NAP III funding scheme and has been thoroughly re-examined in the Mid Term Review of the third NAP1325. Its continued relevance has been reconfirmed through consultations with the NAP-signatories. Applicants are expected to develop their own Theory of Change.

This policy document aims to 1) support applicants in focusing their programming and 2) to clarify the thematic focus of the Women, Peace and Security grant instrument and the three (sub-)objectives.

Part 2 shortly describes the background on the adoption of UNSCR 1325 and how the Netherlands has translated the theme Women, Peace and Security into a Dutch National Action Plan 1325 (NAP1325). Part 3 describes the complexities of contemporary conflicts and their effect on women and girls in (post-) conflict contexts in more detail. Part 4 describes in more detail the (sub-)objectives, and the major pathways of change of the Women, Peace and Security grant instrument in relation to the overarching Theory of Change (ToC) of the Civil Society Strengthening (CSS) framework in annex 5.

2. Background UNSC Resolution 1325

2.1 Women Peace and Security at the international level

The impact of violent conflict on women was first put on the international agenda through the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995. Subsequently, the global women's movement lobbied extensively for the adoption of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security.

UNSCR1325 marked a turning point in history by embedding women's rights and gender equality in the international peace and security agenda for the first time. It recognises that women play different, often vital, roles in achieving peace and security: as peacemakers, community leaders, breadwinners and combatants. Next to that, UNSCR1325 has a transformative purpose: women's participation can draw more attention to conflict prevention and encourage non-violent conflict resolution. Effective peacemaking, in particular conflict prevention, peace negotiations, peacebuilding and conflict resolution, requires that these processes are inclusive at all levels. It also requires all actors involved to adopt a gender perspective when working on matters of peace and security.

Between 2008 and 2019 the UN Security Council adopted nine more resolutions on Women, Peace and Security[1], establishing an international normative framework on Women, Peace and Security.[2] This framework recognises that structural gender inequalities and discrimination are at the heart of the differential impact conflict has on women, men, boys and girls. Furthermore, it recognises the negative impact of sexual violence on peace and security and guides the work to protect women's rights in conflict and post-conflict situations.

The resolutions on Women, Peace and Security illustrate the normative changes and advancements made since 2000. The UN Security Council regularly addresses the issue of Women, Peace and Security,

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[1] Resolutions 1820 (2008); 1888 (2009); 1889 (2009); 1960 (2010); 2106 (2013); 2122 (2013) 2242 (2015), 2467 (2019) and 2493 (2019).
[2] Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation no. 30, http://www.ohchr.org/documents/hrbodies/cedaw/gcomments/cedaw.c.cg.30.pdf.

amongst others through biannual open debates on Sexual Violence in Conflict and on Women, Peace and Security. There is growing recognition among UN member states and international and regional organisations of the fact that women's meaningful participation in peace and security efforts increases the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of such efforts. As of September 2019, 82 countries (42% of all UN Member States) have adopted National Action Plans 1325 to solidify their commitment to implementing the resolutions.[3] Next to this, 11 Regional Action Plans (RAP) are in place by organisations such as the African Union and the European Union.[4] The Netherlands also has a NAP1325, in which the international normative framework on WPS is translated to concrete actions in and by the Netherlands to implement the WPS-agenda.

There is an overall consensus that the institutional framework on WPS at global level provides, at this time, an ample toolbox for advancing the WPS agenda. Unfortunately, the translation of the WPS agenda into mandates, peace negotiations national policies, action plans and realities on the ground has been lagging behind. CSOs have been and are vital players in moving the WPS agenda forward. This policy framework recognises their continued central role in social transformations, emphasizing that the embeddedness of these voices in local communities is an imperative for their legitimacy.

2.2 Women, Peace and Security and the Netherlands

The Dutch NAP1325 is an important component of the Dutch implementation of the WPS-agenda. The current NAP1325 is the third NAP1325 (2016-2020) of the Netherlands, the first NAP1325 having been signed in 2009. The Netherlands anticipates launching a fourth NAP1325 for the period 2021 – 2025 in 2021.

In the Dutch NAP1325, the cooperation between civil society organizations, Ministries and knowledge institutes is an important characteristic. Joint establishment and coordination of the NAP1325 with civil society organizations is a unique component of the Dutch NAP1325, being the first NAP1325 ever to be co-signed by civil society.[5] Participating organizations have committed themselves as signatories to the NAP1325, forming a network of cooperation to collectively move the WPS-agenda forward and taking part in concrete activities at country level through tailor-made programmes, in addition to advocacy and sharing of experience at the regional and international levels. Among the signatories are more than 70 CSOs, four Ministries (Foreign Affairs, Justice and Security, Defence and Education, Culture and Science) and four knowledge institutes that collectively subscribe to the jointly established goals and ToC of the Dutch NAP1325.

3. A contextual analysis of contemporary conflict

Conflicts today are characterized by upsurges of violence in which human rights and humanitarian law are violated – often at the hands of a growing number of non-state armed actors.[6] Contemporary conflicts often have multiple complex root causes and drivers and are influenced by cross-border and transnational developments. Among other factors, geopolitical complexity, extreme violence, the use and reach of new technologies, environmental challenges and epidemics, such as Ebola, have triggered the need for modern approaches to conflict resolution. Several reviews and studies highlight the need for more attention to prevention of conflict and peace maintenance and a focus on the root causes of conflict in order to avoid relapse, escalation and protracted crises.[7]

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[3] https://www.peacewomen.org/member-states
[4] Ibid
[5] Jacevic, M (2018). *WPS, States and the National Action Plans*. In: The Oxford Handbook of Women, Peace and Security.
[6] Cecilie Hellesveit (2015), 'Tribes, Thugs, Terrorists and the Law: Can Non-Conventional Violence be Regulated?' Oslo: NOREF Report, 3.
[7] For instance: Global Study on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 (2015); Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (2015), A/70/95–S/2015/446; Report of the Secretary-General on Women, Peace and Security (2015), S/2015/716; 20-year Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (2015), E/CN.6/

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Inasmuch as contemporary conflict is complex, the impact of contemporary conflict on women and girls is also complex. The section below starts with an analysis along the lines of the three goals of the Dutch NAP1325 framework and subsequently touches upon a few other themes. All these dynamics take place simultaneously in conflict situations, which can lead to different impacts on diverse women in the same conflict environment. Understanding these complexities is a precondition for the design of any programmatic intervention.

3.1 Armed conflict and the transformation of gender roles

War and armed conflicts affect men and women differently and transform gender roles in society. In times of armed conflict and war, women often become responsible for maintaining and caring for their families and communities.[8] At the same time, women can also actively participate in armed conflict or terrorism as combatants or supporters.

When armed conflict comes to an end, societies seek to rebalance gender roles, which means that some gender roles change (back), while others do not. Gender dynamics during and after armed conflict often entail wider societal change that put traditions in question. This can create opportunities for change, but this also creates clashes and stress to households and communities, which can cause higher levels of violence against women, and can discourage women from participating in the public sphere.[9] Furthermore, people who challenge gender norms, such as women human rights defenders and members of the LGBTQI+ community, are often exposed to threats in times of conflict.

3.2. Armed conflict and Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV)

Armed conflict often leads to a rise in human rights violations. An example is sexual violence in conflict, which occurs in various forms and has next to devastating consequences for the survivor a disruptive and highly complex effect on societies. In some contexts, sexual violence is used as a weapon of war to disrupt societies and terrorise vulnerable groups, including amongst others diverse women and ethnic and religious groups. At the same time, at the family level, high levels of stress can cause an increase in gender inequality, as well as psychological and/or physical violence. Other forms of SGBV, such as intimate partner violence, child marriage, trafficking and exploitation, also rise in times of armed conflict.

Survivors of sexual violence in conflict often have limited access to comprehensive reproductive health services, safety, psychosocial care and legal services or compensation. Furthermore, (informal) justice systems often do not recognise international law. Lack of capacity and knowledge often leads to revictimisation. Sexual violence towards men and boys and LGBTQI+ also occurs during armed conflict and is often an even bigger taboo.

3.3 Armed conflict and the participation of women in the peace and security sector

The level of women's participation in the peace and security sector (e.g. conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, relief and recovery, transitional justice and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR)) remains low. The number of women, women's groups and gender experts participating in peacemaking efforts has increased since 2000, but this does not ensure that this participation is effective and meaningful[10]. Women's roles in conflict-affected and peacebuilding situations are often temporary, symbolic and limited by cultural norms. In addition, many negotiations focus solely on the traditional military and political parties to armed conflict and on high-level political processes, where women remain under-represented.

Underrepresentation of women in the peace and security sector is problematic, because it is women's and girls' human right to be involved in making decisions that affect their lives. Furthermore, it is important that interventions fit gender-sensitive needs. Many interventions reaffirm gender stereotypes

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[8] Moola, S. (2006). Women and Peace-Building: The Case of Mabedlane Women. *Agenda*, 20(69), pp.124-133.
[9] Björkdahl, A. (2012). A Gender-Just Peace? Exploring the Post-Dayton Peace Process in Bosnia. *Peace & Change*, 37(2), pp.286-317.
[10] UNSC Resolution 2242 (2015)

and confirm traditional perceptions of women as victims, potentially undermining the empowering leadership roles that women can play.[11] Evidence furthermore shows that involving women leads to more sustainable peace and peaceful societies. [12]

3.4 Violent conflict and emerging issues

Radicalization, violent extremism and terrorism

Gender inequality is one of the predictors of occurrence of violent extremism, with violent extremist groups deliberately targeting women's rights, roles and physical integrity in conflict and post-conflict societies.[13] At the same time, women are important stakeholders and allies in preventing radicalisation and countering violent extremism and terrorism. In local communities, women can contribute to alternative peaceful narratives and initiatives by promoting inclusion, dialogue, social cohesion and focusing on human security. Women can also be agents of radicalization, violent extremism and terrorism. Perceived (gender) exclusion and inequality, amongst others, can motivate women to join violent extremist groups.[14] A comprehensive understanding of gender roles in radicalization, violent extremism and terrorism is crucial to create alternative narratives.

Civic space

An important precondition for performing political roles is that CSO's have the space to do so. The space for civic engagement and civil society actors is shrinking worldwide, including in environments affected by armed conflict. Civil society organisations experience unwarranted intrusion or interference in their affairs by both state and non-state actors, which limits their ability to pursue their objectives and participation in inclusive forums. In voicing critical perspectives, women's rights activists and organisations, female politicians, women human rights defenders and women journalists may be confronted with threats, (arbitrary) incarceration, (sexual) violence and in some cases even death.

Forced displacement

By the end of 2018, the number of people of concern[15] to UNHCR had reached 74.8 million people, which was the highest number ever.[16] Armed conflict, violence and persecution continue to drive these unprecedented levels of forced displacement. Around half of the world's refugees are estimated to be female.[17] Displaced women and girls are often exposed to exploitation, abduction, sexual violence and other dangers to their physical, mental and reproductive health.

3.7 Conclusion

The strategic WPS-partnerships aim to address the previously detailed structural barriers to the full and meaningful participation of women in all aspects of peace and security by working towards specific objectives. The following section discusses these objectives in more detail.

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[11] Marie O'Reilly, Andrea Ó Súilleabháin and Thania Paffenholz (2015), 'Reimagining Peacemaking: Women's Roles in Peace Processes', 12.

[12] Stone, L. (2014). Women Transforming Conflict: A Quantitative Analysis of Female Peacemaking. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, pp.1-39.

[13] http://www.allianceforpeacebuilding.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Gender-and-CVE-FINAL-1.pdf

[14] 4 USAID, "People Not Pawns: Women's Participation in Violent Extremism Across MENA", September 2015.

[15] Asylum seekers, refugees, returnees, internally displaced people and stateless people.

[16] http://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/gr2018/pdf/GR2018_English_Full_lowres.pdf

[17] https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/women.html

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4. Objectives Strategic Partnerships under Women, Peace and Security

The partnerships under *Women, Peace and Security* start from one of the basic premises of the UNSCR 1325: that women's participation in conflict resolution and peace- and reconstruction processes at all levels of decision making has a positive impact on sustainable peace.

As concluded in the analysis of the current context, there are structural barriers to women's full and meaningful participation in all aspects of peace and security. Most of these obstacles are linked to existing norms, values, laws and institutions that perpetuate gender inequalities. Structural transformation of these norms, values, laws and institutions is a prerequisite for sustainable progress in protecting women's rights and achieving gender equality. To achieve this transformation, a multifaceted approach by governmental and non- governmental actors is needed, so that an enabling environment for women's participation in peace and security can be created. Consequently, the overall objective of the strategic WPS-partnerships is **to contribute to an enabling environment for women's participation and empowerment in conflict and post-conflict environments, so they can meaningfully participate in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, protection, relief and recovery.** CSO's and in particular women's rights organisations play a critical role in influencing and changing this enabling environment.

The overall objective is specified by three sub objectives and three approaches to inform interventions. Where the sub objectives provide further thematic guidance, the three approaches provide the pathways of change and relate to the overall ToC of the Civil Society Strengthening framework.

4.1 Three specific sub objectives

In order to contribute to an *enabling environment* as formulated in the overall objective, the three specific sub objectives of the strategic partnerships under *Women, Peace and Security* are as follows:

1. Better protect women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations from violence and violations of their rights;
2. Subvert harmful underlying gender norms, which are obstacles to sustainable peace;
3. Ensure that women have equal leverage in conflict prevention and resolution, peacebuilding, relief and recovery at all levels, and that their efforts are acknowledged and supported.

These goals are not isolated goals and show clear connections. Subverting harmful gender norms is a precondition to ensure that women have equal leverage in conflict resolution. In order to better protect women and girls, harmful gender norms should be addressed. Equal leverage of women is key to better protect women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations, and to enhance the sustainability and inclusivity of peace.

4.1.1 Sub objective 1: Better protect women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations from violence and violations of their rights

Preventing SGBV and protecting women and girls from violence and human rights abuses is one of the central goals of Dutch foreign policy.[18] The Netherlands supports initiatives that aim to prevent SGBV and better protect women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations, both in the public and private sphere, according to their wishes and needs. This goal has a strong connection with the *protection* pillar of resolution 1325 and links with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 on gender equality and 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions.

Interventions focusing on this goal can work in the institutional context, including laws & policies, attitudes & beliefs, norms and values. Next to the formal justice sector and defence, interventions can focus on traditional law or traditional institutions. Other possible interventions can focus on lobby and advocacy and working with duty bearers, right claimers or local communities towards further understanding of SGBV and providing better survivor-centered care. It is also possible to work on

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[18] https://www.government.nl/documents/policy-notes/2018/05/18/investing-in-global-prospects p.26

resilience at the community level. Small-scale socio-economic interventions and empowerment activities, like village loan schemes, can be included in the programmes if they contribute to the resilience of the target group, and their capacity to influence change.[19] Other related interventions under this sub objective are psychosocial aspects that can contribute to protection and participation. Examples are psychosocial care for survivors of SGBV, self-care for (female) human rights defenders and people who are at risk of secondary trauma, and communities that need to learn to deal with stigma and discrimination.

4.1.2 Sub objective 2: Subvert harmful underlying gender norms, which are obstacles to sustainable peace

Goal 2 focuses on root causes of gender inequality and indirectly focuses on (civic) space for participation of women and the risk of gender based violence. The main focus here is to address root causes of barriers to gender equality and participation. Awareness about gender roles and rights can contribute to gender equality, protection of women and girls and participation. Gender norms can be addressed at the institutional, judicial, community and household level. Specific attention for capacity and knowledge of duty bearers is part of this. Next to that, there are specific barriers for women to participate in the security sector.

Involving men and boys in order to subvert harmful gender norms, including toxic masculinities and prevention of SGBV, is essential. In interventions, it is important to understand both actors who are upholding these barriers and actors who can contribute to changing these barriers. Understanding the influence of other factors – like economic instability, environmental challenges, disasters, epidemics, and climate change - on gender dynamics is also crucial.

4.1.3 Sub objective 3: Ensure that women have equal leverage in conflict prevention and resolution, peacebuilding, relief and recovery at all levels, and that their efforts are acknowledged and supported.

Women play crucial roles in achieving sustainable peace in (post-) conflict situations, as was the case in for example Northern-Ireland, Liberia and Colombia. To achieve sustainable peace and inclusive reconstruction after conflict, female leadership and meaningful participation of women at all levels of decision-making needs to be guaranteed.

At the same time, there are structural barriers for equal and meaningful participation of women within all aspects of peace and security. Over the last 30 years (1989-2019) only 2 percent of mediators, 5 percent of witnesses and 8 percent of negotiators in the main peace processes were women.[20] 81 percent of the peace agreements reached in that same period did not include a specific reference to the unique position, interests and priorities of women. Including women in peace processes does not only entail that women are meaningfully involved, but also that these women are representative of the population.

Interventions focusing on this specific goal can have a broad focus, such as meaningful participation of women in peace negotiations at the local, national and international level, in the prevention and de-escalation of conflict (including violent extremism), in security sector reform (SSR), in monitoring the implementation of a peace agreement and participation in planning of relief and recovery efforts.

4.2 Three specific approaches

Next to the three specific sub objectives, this policy document defines three parallel, interrelated 'pathways for change' or approaches to reach these goals. These approaches are related to the pathways of change in the ToC of 'Civil Society Strengthening' and the focus on the political role of CSO's to move the Women, Peace and Security agenda forward.

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[19] Small scale socio-economic interventions/ economic empowerment cannot be a main objective within the WPS grant instrument. However, there is space for activities that improve resilience under the protection and participation pillar. These type of activities should be supportive to the overall goal of the ToC and should be limited in size. An example is village loan schemes.

[20] https://www.cfr.org/interactive/womens-participation-in-peace-processes

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The three main approaches of the strategic partnerships under *Women, Peace and Security* are **capacity building**, **attitudes & beliefs**, and **laws & policies.** Interventions should relate to at least one of these three approaches. Below, the three main approaches are explained in more detail.

4.2.1   Approach 1: Facilitate capacity building and provide resources to support the empowerment and meaningful participation of women and men who strive towards gender-sensitive approaches to peace processes.

Participating in peace negotiations and engaging with national and international actors to increase women's participation often demand specific knowledge and skills and access to sufficient resources. It is important that all actors in conflict and post-conflict environments have the capacity and skills needed to overcome major obstacles in those environments. Strengthening the capacity of women and men who are promoting gender-sensitive approaches to peace processes can thus help create an enabling environment for women's meaningful participation. Strengthened CSO's contribute to the capacity to influence the political atmosphere of peace processes and to advocate for inclusive peace.

4.2.2   Approach 2: Understand and positively influence attitudes and beliefs that maintain and perpetuate the exclusion of women.

All human societies and cultures have gender norms that prescribe women's and men's behaviour and determine people's beliefs about gender roles in society. Attitudes and beliefs are not fixed but vary with cultures and can change over time. Understanding and challenging attitudes and beliefs is essential for diverse women's inclusion and structural change. Working together with (women led) community groups, youth, peer educators and influencers like traditional or religious, political leaders, and role models can be valuable ways to accelerate change. Also, as described in the ToC of CSS, CSO's play an important transformative role in societal norms and decision-making. CSO's can accelerate change and change power relations at individual, community level and institutional level. At the same time, the communities provide CSO's the legitimacy to advocate for change. Through this approach, change in attitudes and beliefs at individual level is connected to broader changes in society.

4.2.3   Approach 3: Influence the development and implementation of <u>laws and policies</u> that weaken obstacles to women's participation and protection.

International human rights law and international humanitarian law form part of the normative legal framework needed to promote the implementation of the WPS agenda at international, regional, national and local level. Often, however, these laws are not applied and impunity prevails. During and immediately after armed conflicts, rule of law is often disrupted, non-functional and/or non-existent. CSO's play a critical role in influencing the development and implementation of inclusive laws and policies, peace processes and implementation of peace agreements that remove obstacles to women's meaningful participation in peace and security and strengthen protection.

4.3 Cross-cutting themes

Within the Policy document of *Women, Peace and Security*, there are several cross-cutting areas and themes:
1. Gender and intersectionality; inclusion of different and diverse groups is essential to reach transformative change in the WPS agenda.
2. Increased involvement of men and boys as crucial actors in program interventions. While working with women and girls is essential, there is increasing evidence that in the work of prevention of SGBV and decreasing harmful gender norms men and boys can be important allies. Sometimes men are also captured by traditional roles and toxic masculinities that might have been exacerbated through armed conflict.
3. Enhancing linkages between efforts at the local, national, regional and international levels. Women can support each other in networks of cooperation, build movements for change, they can influence (inter)national (peace) processes and simultaneously use international resolutions and national legislation to hold national and local governments accountable. These linkages strengthen CSOs to perform their different political roles as described in the ToC CSS. These crosscutting themes can be relevant for all interventions and pillars, depending on the context analysis and the need for change.

SUSTAINABLE PEACE AND SECURITY FOR EVERYONE

OVERALL OBJECTIVE → **To contribute to an enabling environment for women's and girls' participation and empowerment in conflict and post-conflict environments, so they can meaningfully participate in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, protection, relief and recovery**

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

ENHANCED PROTECTION

DECREASE OF HARMFUL GENDER NORMS

EQUAL LEVERAGE IN CONFLICT PREVENTION, RESOLUTION, PEACEBUILDING, RELIEF AND RECOVERY

Increased capacities, skills, knowledge and resources for meaningful participation of women in security and justice sector development	Increased capacities, skills, knowledge and resources to contribute to gender equality for women and men, youth and communities at large	Women are agents of change and have increased capacities, skills, knowledge and resources for meaningful participation in conflict prevention, including preventing and countering violent extremism, conflict resolution, peacebuilding, relief and recovery
Increased understanding of gender based violence and the protection of women	Increased understanding of gender equality and gender norms	Increased political will and increased awareness, knowledge and skills for (existing) inclusive and non-violent conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding relief and recovery
Improved (implementation of) policies and regulations on gender based violence and the protection of women, including access to psychosocial care and self-care	Increased involvement of men and boys in the implementation of laws and regulations that contribute to gender equality	Local non-violent strategies and approaches of conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, relief and recovery are increasingly re-enforced and incorporated in policies and regulations **and** Improved (implementation of) policies and regulations for the participation of women in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, relief and recovery

INCREASED LINKAGES BETWEEN LOCAL, NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL

COOPERATION

INCREASED INVOLVEMENT OF MEN AND BOYS AS CRUCIAL ACTORS AND

GENDER & INTERSECIONALITY

CAPACITY & RESOURCES

ATTITUDES & BELIEFS

LAW & POLICY

ℹ Information and knowledge sharing

Developing and implementing programmes

Influencing all levels in local and (inter)national organisations (lobby and advocacy)