

OUR ROADMAP FOR SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA



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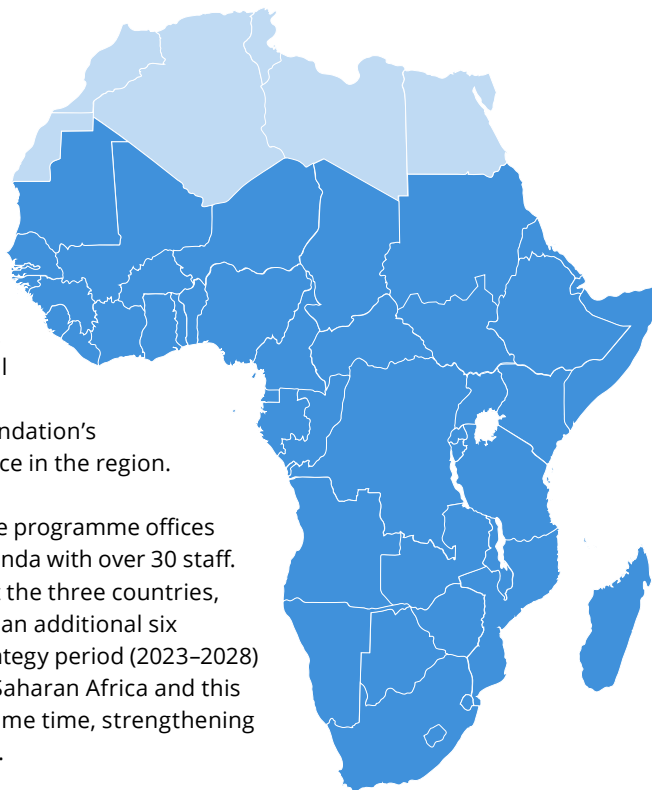
Production visit in Musanze, Rwanda. High up on a hill lies the women's safe space of our partner Rwanda Women's Network.

Front page: Women from one of Kvinna till Kvinna's partner WORIIWA's Community Rights Committees in Buchanan, Liberia. The CRCs are all women, and they strongly advocate against Sexual and Gender-based violence which has led to a decrease in rape, domestic violence, and teenage pregnancy in their communities.

Back page: Rwanda Women's Network empowers so-called 'girl champions' to bring about change and inspire other women. Here, Fillette Mujawimana participates in a FemDialogue meeting on sexual and reproductive health and rights, and period poverty in Kanama in western Rwanda.

1 BACKGROUND

The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation has been present, supporting women human rights defenders in sub-Saharan Africa for over 15 years. For the purposes of internal structuring, Kvinna till Kvinna refers to its programmes in sub-Saharan Africa as a 'region'. The foundation's Regional Roadmap for sub-Saharan Africa 2023–2028 is the second strategy for the region. It takes its starting point in the newly developed Global Strategy for the organisation: A push for lasting peace, but is also based on a thorough assessment of the foundation's current work and lessons learned from its long presence in the region.



Kvinna till Kvinna currently (beginning of 2023) has three programme offices in sub-Saharan Africa; in Liberia, the DR Congo and Rwanda with over 30 staff. Over 25 partner organisations are supported amongst the three countries, as well as women human rights defenders (WHRDs) in an additional six conflict affected countries in the region. During this strategy period (2023–2028) Kvinna till Kvinna plans to expand its presence in sub-Saharan Africa and this Roadmap aims to guide that expansion while, at the same time, strengthening the ongoing work in our current programme countries.

This Roadmap

The Roadmap was elaborated through a participatory process in Nairobi in November 2022 with staff from all three programme offices as well as from the Head office in Stockholm. The process involved a review of the previous strategy, and the identification of challenges and lessons learned from implementing the current programmes and projects. It was further complemented by the results from numerous programme evaluations, desk- and commissioned studies as well as feedback from 20+ women human rights defenders from six additional conflict-affected countries during the event Building an inclusive women's movement in fall 2022.

The Roadmap has also gained insight from other key Swedish, Global and African Development strategies. These include, amongst other, the 2022–2026 Strategy for Sweden's regional development cooperation with Africa, the 2021–2025 Strategies for Swedish Development cooperation with the Democratic Republic of Congo and Liberia, the 2020–2024 Swedish strategy for Rwanda, Sweden's Regional SRHR strategy, Agenda 2030, the WPS agenda, UNSCR 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security and the 'Maputo protocol' on women's rights in Africa.¹

The Roadmap will guide Kvinna till Kvinna during a challenging time for women and girls in sub-Saharan Africa. Countries are coming to terms with the social and economic impacts of Covid-19 and its associated restrictions, the highest inflation in a decade, protracted conflicts, and worsening impacts of climate change. For women, girls and marginalised communities, their experiences of these crises are compounded by deeply embedded patriarchal norms.

Our added value

Kvinna till Kvinna's added value in the region will continue to be in supporting local and national women's rights organisations and WHRDs, while pushing for an enabling environment where these actors can be sustainable and receive direct support from donors. Kvinna till Kvinna believes that no one is better placed to create lasting change than strong, local organisations, movements, and individual activists.

Kvinna till Kvinna will continue to advance women's rights in the region through partnership with women's rights organisations and activists. The Roadmap paves a way for providing financial support and targeted capacity strengthening, facilitating safe spaces for networking and exchange, and challenging actors to under-

1. The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's rights on the Rights of women in Africa, better known as the Maputo protocol.

take critical, feminist analysis. Partners will create connections within and outside the movement, inspire mutual learning and develop new strategies to reach rightsholders, duty bearers and the wider society. This work is of increasing importance to challenge the shrinking space for civil society, at large, as well as the push back we see globally against women’s rights spearheaded by anti-gender movements.

We live in a world that is rapidly changing and where our partners’ changing needs will always be at the centre. Therefore, this Roadmap will be monitored annually during the organisation’s Regional days and potentially revised following a mid-term review in 2025.



Our Sister's Opportunity work with the most marginalised women in Rwanda combining fashion design training with rights-based empowerment. Photographer: Bridget Rhinehart

2 TRENDS

Enabling trends

The feminist movement(s) is growing and becoming more vocal in the global South, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Feminist movements across the continent have a commitment to intersectionality, striving for diversity, anti-racism and decolonialisation.² Substantial gains have been made when it comes to basic rights for women; child marriages have decreased in the last 25 years³, more girls are accessing basic education⁴ and more women are participating in the labour force.⁵ Women's right to health has also improved; the number of women accessing modern contraception has increased⁶, more women have access to safe and legal abortions⁷, and infant and maternal mortality rates, as well as fertility rates have fallen although not at the speed needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.⁸ When it comes to legislation against domestic violence, in the early 1990s only a handful of countries in the world had laws against it. By 2018, 26 out of 47 countries in sub-Saharan Africa had such legislation⁹.

Access to internet has increased and about 46% of the population in sub-Saharan Africa use a mobile phone, a rapid increase from 35% internet connectivity in 2020. Although mobile penetration has increased as well as internet usage, sub-Saharan Africa has the widest gender gap in internet connectivity with 37% gap between men and women.¹⁰

Regional multilateral and inter-governmental organisations are developing and strengthening their voices on gender. In 2003, African Union adopted a Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, better known as the Maputo Protocol, which guarantees the rights of women in Africa. Amongst the most progressive articles, is Article 14, which states that abortion must be legal to save a woman's life and preserve her physical or mental health, and in cases of rape, incest and grave fetal anomaly. Since then, seven sub-Saharan countries have reformed their laws to meet—and in one case, exceed—these minimum criteria and a total of 21 sub-Saharan countries expanded groups for legal abortion between 2000–2019.¹¹ In 2019, the African Union launched a ten-year Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment strategy (2018–2028)¹².

In the development sector, Sexual Exploitation, Sexual Abuse, and Sexual Harassment (SEAH) is getting increased attention. Policies are being reinforced across the aid community that promote zero tolerance for sexual demands, transactions, or harassment at any level of donors' institutions or partners.

In line with the decolonialisation/localisation agendas, including the Grand Bargain agreement (2016)¹³ and the OECD-DAC recommendations (2021),¹⁴ more and more donors also require that projects be designed and led by local staff and/or local organisations to increase local ownership.



2. Molyneux, M., Dey, A., Gatto, M. et al. (2021). New Feminist Activism, Waves and Generations. UN Women Discussion Paper, No.40, April 2021.

3. But 12% of girls are still married before the age of 15 and 37% before the age of 18. UN Women. (2020). Sub-Saharan Africa. Regional Factsheet.

4. In 2000 primary level, just 44 percent of girls were completing their education. In 2020, that figure had risen to 66 percent, and had even overtaken the rate for boys ([link](#)).

5. Women's labour force participation rate (LFPR) in the region for individuals aged 25–54 has increased slightly over the last 20 years from 73–76% (1998–2018).

6. The rates of married or in-union women have their family planning needs met with modern contraception in the region increased from 4.4% in the 1970s to 48.2% in 2015. UN Women. (2020). Sub-Saharan Africa. Regional Factsheet.

7. In total, 21 out of the 48 Sub-Saharan countries expanded the grounds on which abortion is legal between 2000 and 2019 but the vast majority—92%—of women of reproductive age (15–49) in the region still live where abortion is highly or moderately restricted. ([link](#))

8. Over the last four decades, Rwanda's total fertility rate more than halved from 8.3 to 3.8 live births per woman while the maternal mortality ratio declined from 1300 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 290 in 2015. ([link](#))

9. WorldBank2018e

10. GSMA. (2022). The Mobile Gender Gap Report.

11. From Unsafe to Safe Abortion in Sub-Saharan Africa: Slow but Steady Progress ([link](#))

12. It aims to achieve 4 outcomes that involve eliminating traditional hinderances to gender equality and women's empowerment including strengthening women's agency in Africa through full economic empowerment, political participation as well as reinforcing the respect and dignity and security of women in recognition of women's rights as well as the need for effective laws, policies and institutional support. Countries' gender ministries are the main implementors of this strategy and thus are to report on its impact.

13. This is an agreement between the biggest donors and aid organisations that aims to get more means into the hands of people in need through localisation strategies. ([link](#))

14. OECD Legal Instruments ([link](#)) (especially pillar 2 focused on local ownership)

Some trends, however, may hamper our progress, needing us to find ways to mitigate or tackle them:

For example, concerning sexual and reproductive health and rights, although more women have access to safe and legal abortion, 92% of women of reproductive age (15–49) in the sub-Saharan Africa live where abortion is highly or moderately restricted.¹⁵ Although a decline in adolescent birth rates has been observed globally, sub-Saharan Africa continues to have twice the global average, with over 100 births per 1,000 women, in 2021.¹⁶ Nearly one third (32%) of the region's young women were married before age 18 in Southern and Eastern Africa¹⁷, and about 41% of girls marry before reaching the age of 18 in West and Central Africa.¹⁸

Sub-Saharan Africa is disproportionately affected by climate change, with nine out of the ten most vulnerable countries in the world on the continent¹⁹. Extreme floods, droughts, and coastal erosions are increasing in intensity and frequency. These issues are bringing more insecurity to women and girls, who, due to traditional gender roles and power inequalities, often bear the effects of climate change.

Inflation is at its highest for the past decade causing spikes in prices of basic goods, coupled with pre-existing food insecurity due to economic effects of COVID-19 which caused job losses, school closures, and increased rates of domestic violence. As a result, livelihoods and the general standards of living have deteriorated, and wealth gaps have grown larger across the continent. Poverty levels exceed 50% in sub-Saharan Africa which is perceived to be one of the 7 drivers of violence.²⁰ At the same time, Africa's new wealth is increasingly concentrated in a few hands. According to a UNDP report 10 of the world's 19 most unequal countries are in sub-Saharan Africa.²¹

Another threat of violence and instability in the region is related to shifts in governance where sub-Saharan Africa has seen no less than 11 coup d'état attempts in the last two years²² and heightened insecurity also related to planned elections. Several elections are planned to be held in sub-Saharan Africa during the Roadmap period, DRC and Liberia both have presidential elections due in 2023 and Rwanda in 2024.

Harmful traditional practices such as Female genital mutilation (FGM) continues at alarming levels despite a decline in recent decades. In 2017, one in three girls aged 15 to 19 had been subjected to FGM in the 30 countries in the world where the practice is concentrated, most of which is in this region, compared to one in two around 2000.²³

The global anti-gender movement with growing influence and support to organisations in many countries in this region is also a threat and gaining ground.²⁴ Actors in this alliance include religious fundamentalists but also right-wingers and the far right, populists and conservatives.²⁵ Members of the anti-gender movement frequently oppose some LGBTQIA+ rights (and even commit hate crimes against sexual minorities), some reproductive rights around bodily autonomy, government gender policies, gender mainstreaming but often also gender equality in general. For example, in Rwanda, a law requesting more access for teen girls to contraceptives was rejected by parliament in November 2022 after a group of religious and far right activists disrupted the vote in parliament²⁶. In Uganda, the new Anti-Homosexuality Act of 2023 discriminates and penalises the LGBTQIA+ community for their sexual orientation and gender identification criminalizing same sex conduct, including potentially the death penalty for those convicted of "aggravated homosexuality," violating multiple fundamental rights guaranteed under Uganda's constitution and breaks commitments made by the government as a signatory to a number of international human rights agreements. In addition, anyone advocating for the rights of LGBT people, including representatives of human rights organisations or those providing financial support to organisations that do so, could face up to 20 years' imprisonment for the "promotion of homosexuality."

15. Guttmacher fact sheet on abortion in Africa, 2020

16. UN population division. ([link](#))

17. UNICEF report on child marriages in south and eastern Africa from 2022

18. UNICEF report 2018

19. 66th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women in March 2022

20. Cilliers, J. (2018). Violence in Africa: Trends, drivers and prospects to 2023. Institute for Security Studies, Africa Report.

21. Closing Africa's wealth gap ([link](#))

22. Overall, Africa has experienced more coups than any other continent. Of the 16 coups recorded globally since 2017,

all but one—Myanmar in 2021—have been in Africa. ([link](#))

23. World Bank 2018e

24. See examples such as in Uganda: ([link](#)) and Kenya: ([link](#)) and ([link](#))

25. A mix of religions including the Anglican church (as in Kenya) and other Christian fundamentalists but also Muslim leaders (as in Uganda).

26. Rwanda Today. (2022). MPs reject Bill seeking to allow 15-year-old girls access family planning drugs. Accessed through ([link](#))

Sub-Saharan Africa is the world's fastest urbanizing region, with an annual urban population growth rate of 4.1%, in comparison to the world's rate of 2%.²⁷ A high proportion of the growing urban population are migrant men, however the percentage of women migrating is on the rise often to become domestic workers, one of the most vulnerable migrant workers groups.²⁸ On the positive side, urban migration gives women an opportunity to have access to (better) maternal care, better education for their girl children and to be more entrepreneurial relative to the rural areas²⁹. This however, is dependent upon urbanisation planning taking women's perspectives into account when designing urban landscapes and services.

Religion is important in many of sub-Saharan Africa's societies and at times differences in beliefs have led to, or been used to, fuel conflicts. Religious extremism has played a role in armed conflicts such as the Jihadist in Mali, Mozambique or Somalia, or parts of Kenya, and extremist Christians and Muslims conflicting in Nigeria. Religious conflict intersects with other conflict drivers such as social-economic differences, ethnicity, access to natural resources and of course gender inequality.³⁰

Finally, in the development sector, the politicisation of aid and development cooperation continues, twinned with populist right-wing rhetoric winning grounds. In Europe we see a decrease both in development aid (ODA) among several institutional donors, most recently Sweden, but also a lack of respect for internationally agreed upon conventions related to right to seek asylum resulting in stricter immigration policies.



When covid-19 hit Liberia, Tupee Nagbo went bankrupt after 25 years of being in business, as the global pandemic has severely affected women. But Tupee now takes part in leadership trainings provided by our partner organisation Women Rights Watch (WORIWA) and has a new role as chairperson for the Fanti Town Community, in Buchanan City, Liberia. Photographer: Wolobah Sali

27. UNHABITAT. (2020). Analysis of Multiple Deprivations in Secondary Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa. Analysis Report.

28. Masanja, George F, The Female Face of Migration in Sub-Saharan Africa, Department of Geography St. Augustine University of Tanzania

29. Decomposing the urban-rural inequalities in the utilisation of maternal health care services: evidence from 27 selected countries in Sub-Saharan Africa ([link](#))

30. Agbiji, O. and Swart, I. (2015). Religion and social transformation in Africa: A critical and appreciative perspective. Scriptura 114 (2015:1), pp1-20, May 2015.

3 VISION & REGIONAL GOALS

Kvinna till Kvinna's global vision is:

A world of peace and justice in which women and girls have equal rights and opportunities.

The sub-Saharan Africa regional thematic goals are aligned with the global vision and the thematic change areas in Kvinna till Kvinna's Global strategy 2023–2028: i) Feminist peace, ii) Political & Economic rights, iii) GBV & SRHR and iv) Feminist Movements. Our regional goals provide a more specific focus within each global change area meant to inform context specific programme design and implementation across the region.

3.1 Feminist peace

Global goals:

- Women access justice and shape justice frameworks.
- Women participate meaningfully in conflict transformation and peace building.
- Women have the agency to shape the agenda for women, peace & security, and peace processes.



Within the change area of Feminist Peace, Kvinna till Kvinna will work strategically in sub-Saharan Africa to:

CREATE SPACE FOR WOMEN TO DIALOGUE & TAKE FURTHER ACTION TO PROMOTE PEACE AND SECURITY IN THE REGION

Kvinna till Kvinna and its partners will create space for women to dialogue and take further action to promote peace and security in the region. This will be achieved by facilitating peace and security dialogues and regional networking across e.g the Great Lakes region and advocate for women to be included in the peace processes/ conflict transformation initiatives.

INCREASE KNOWLEDGE, ENGAGEMENT & DOCUMENTATION CAPACITIES OF PARTNER ORGANISATIONS TO COLLABORATIVELY PROMOTE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

Kvinna till Kvinna and its partners will monitor and document the situation of women in conflict, support community, national and regional-level conflict resolution and peacebuilding, making sure that partners are resourced to critically monitor mechanisms used for implementing WPS commitments.



Photographer: Gloria Patel

3.2 Political & economic rights

Global goals:

- Women participate fully at all levels of leadership and decision-making.
- Women effectively participate in political life.
- Barriers to women’s economic rights and justice (including access to and control over resources) are removed.



Within the change area of Political and Economic rights, Kvinna till Kvinna will work strategically in sub-Saharan Africa to:

SUPPORT AND MONITOR WOMEN’S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AT LOCAL- AND NATIONAL LEVELS

Kvinna till Kvinna will support women’s mobilisation for political participation and exchanges between partners. They will safeguard and support women candidates and those aspiring to run for political positions, and rural women sensitised and mobilised to vote and take part in local politics. Partners will also monitor to make sure quotas such as the 30% political representation in Liberia and Rwanda are adhered to, especially at local levels.

ENGAGE WOMEN IN POWERFUL POSITIONS TO PROMOTE WOMEN’S RIGHTS AGENDA

Kvinna till Kvinna and partners will work with women already in power, such as parliamentarians and ministers to lobby and support them to promote a women’s rights agenda.

ADVOCATE FOR WOMEN TO HAVE DECENT WORK AND SUSTAINED INCOME, WITH ACCESS, CONTROL AND OWNERSHIP OF RESOURCES AND ASSETS IN ORDER TO CREATE SUSTAINED INCOME

Kvinna till Kvinna and partners will continue advocating for increased access to decent work and sustained income for women. They will support women to move from the informal to the formal sectors and access profitable labour markets. Kvinna till Kvinna will support programmes that grow women’s financial knowledge and skills and access to financial services, especially in non-traditional vocations. Kvinna till Kvinna and its partners will advocate and promote laws and policies that support women’s equal ownership of resources, including land. At individual and household level, Kvinna till Kvinna will support partners working to shift mindset and behaviour around economic decision making and economic independence.

CHALLENGING REGRESSIVE SOCIAL NORMS ABOUT THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN ECONOMICS AND POLITICS

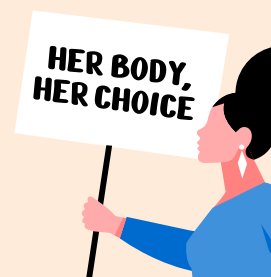
Kvinna till Kvinna and its partners will be supporting progressive change of gendered norms within both economics and politics.



3.3 GBV & SRHR

Global goals:

- Legal frameworks, protection, and policies on GBV and SRHR are improved and implemented.
- Women and girls can safely access services and justice at all levels.
- GBV is prevented and SRHR promoted by changing attitudes, behaviours, and social norms.



Within the global change area GBV and SRHR, Kvinna till Kvinna will work strategically in sub-Saharan Africa to:

ADVOCATE TO AND HOLD DUTY BEARERS ACCOUNTABLE FOR SRHR AND GBV COMMITMENTS, INCLUDING PREVENTING HARMFUL TRADITIONAL PRACTICES

Kvinna till Kvinna will support its partners to advocate for the state and other duty bearers to honour commitments related to SRHR and both prevention and response to GBV. This will be based on monitoring, education and advocacy to stop all GBV including harmful practices, such as FGM-C. Kvinna till Kvinna will also support partners to hold duty bearers accountable for their SRHR commitments, for example through awareness raising and advocacy on the implementation of the Maputo Protocol, and national abortion and contraceptive access laws as well as related commitments such as providing Comprehensive Sexual Education. Kvinna till Kvinna will specifically focus on supporting young women's collective voice for progressive SRHR policies and services.

SUPPORT ACCESS TO HOLISTIC SRHR & GBV SERVICES

Kvinna till Kvinna and partners will advocate so that survivors of GBV have access to holistic GBV services and justice, including legal aid and mental health support. In addition, focus will also be on advocacy for sexual and reproductive health and rights, especially ensuring SRHR services for all including the most vulnerable, marginalised groups, including but not limited to, teenage mothers, LGBTQIA+ and women with disabilities.

SUPPORT PARTNERS TO DO TRANSFORMATIVE WORK ON NEGATIVE GENDER NORMS

Kvinna till Kvinna will support partners work on challenging negative norms, attitudes and behaviours that underly GBV and hinder SRHR. Kvinna till Kvinna will strengthen partners capacities to implement methods for community-based awareness raising and behavioral change, and to share existing experiences and effective methods between countries and partners to address negative social/gender norms.



Our partner AFEJUCO provides legal assistance to SGBV survivors. At this trial, ten members of the Defence and Security forces were convicted of rape and sentenced to prison. AFEJUCO played an essential role in the consolidation of evidence, sensitising the survivors and covering the travel expenses in relation to the hearings and trial. With the impunity in the DRC, it was previously almost impossible to win a court case against the military or the police. Photographer: Claudine Kitumaini, AFEJUCO

31. e.g., Maputo CEDAW, ACHPR, WPS (AU + Global), UPR, CRC and the SDGs.

3.4 Feminist movements

Global goals:

- Feminist and women’s rights movements are more diverse and inclusive.
- Feminist voices are amplified through joint action and coalition building.
- Feminist movements are secure, have ample resources and counter shrinking space.



Within the Feminist movement change area, Kvinna till Kvinna will work strategically in sub-Saharan Africa to:

FOSTER INCLUSIVE AND INTERGENERATIONAL EXCHANGE, DIALOGUE AND PARTNERSHIPS TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE WOMEN’S RIGHTS MOVEMENTS AT COUNTRY, REGIONAL AND CONTINENTAL LEVEL

Kvinna till Kvinna will actively work to support increased solidarity, diversity, inclusivity, and security within feminist and women’s rights movements, at the country, regional and continental level. This will include coalition building to counter shrinking space and the anti-gender movement and broader inclusion of under-represented groups in Kvinna till Kvinna’s partnership portfolio. Specific focus will be on mapping of potential partner organisations’ working for/with women with disabilities and LBTQIA+ communities. Critically, Kvinna till Kvinna will carry out learning within and between offices on how to better work with the LBTQIA+ community to build a more inclusive, stronger and unified feminist movement. Furthermore, Kvinna till Kvinna will continue to organise intergenerational exchanges/mentorships and creating safe spaces for women to share experiences across generations. These exchanges will focus on including the HRBA³² as the basis promoting intersectional feminism.

INCREASE AND STRENGTHEN ADVOCACY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS

Kvinna till Kvinna and partners will conduct joint and cross-regional research and also strengthen knowledge and capacities around how to best make use of human rights mechanisms in ours and partners’ advocacy work to hold states accountable by advocating for their implementation³¹. Partners will engage community level leaders in national and international advocacy and support initiatives against human rights limitations such as the state of siege in North Kivu and Ituri in Eastern DR Congo. While in Liberia and Rwanda this can look at national level shadow reporting and supporting Universal Periodic Review processes.

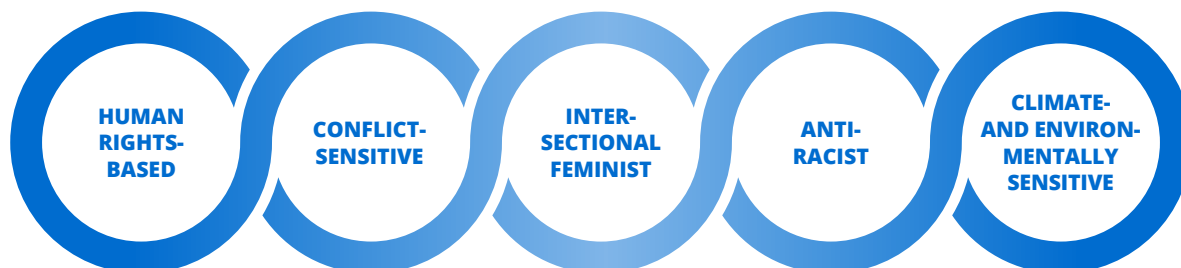


RSLF organized a workshop in Mbuji Mayi for all the focal points on the use of digital technology in the context of Covid in order to reach the various authorities even online. Photographer: Martin Anakete, Rien Sans les Femmes

32. Human rights based approach, as described in more detail on page 12.

4 METHODS AND APPROACHES TO MEET THE THEMATIC PRIORITIES

All support undertaken by Kvinna till Kvinna will be guided by five approaches:



Human rights-based approach

We apply a human rights-based approach (HRBA) to our programmes and partnerships. Kvinna till Kvinna sees people as rights holders: active agents who are entitled to their fundamental rights by duty bearers, who are responsible for respecting, protecting, and fulfilling human rights, in accordance with international law. That means all our programmes should i) be based on human rights ii) empower rights holders and partners to participate in shaping and implementing programmes iii) include vulnerable and marginalised groups, to address discrimination iv) be transparent in all steps of the planning, monitoring and evaluation cycle v) be accountable to rights holders and partners themselves by being participatory and reporting back on progress and results. In sub-Saharan Africa we will, amongst other things, support partners to advocate for the state and other duty bearers to honour commitments related to SRHR and both prevention and response to GBV by strengthening knowledge on, and capacities to use continental and global human rights mechanisms in advocacy work.

Conflict sensitive approach

Kvinna till Kvinna works in conflict affected countries which means we engage based on continuous analysis of the context and conflict, considering the perspectives of diverse groups and being sensitive not to fuel conflict. Kvinna till Kvinna strives to have presence in the context, which enables us to have a “finger on the pulse,” and for direct interaction with women’s organisations from a variety of backgrounds. We do this to understand how our interventions interact with the context, and then use that knowledge to mitigate any negative effects of programmatic work, whilst identifying opportunities for positive impacts. In sub-Saharan Africa Kvinna till Kvinna works with organisations representing diverse groups, perspectives, and experiences, to have a balanced portfolio and prevent any bias (or perceived bias) in conflict-affected areas. In the region we also aim to facilitate peace and security dialogues and regional networking across our offices and partners in the Great Lakes region to counter the increased tensions between and within countries.

Intersectional Feminist Approach

Our feminist approach stems from the idea that knowledge is power, and that we need inclusivity and multiple stories to paint a true picture of reality. Intersectionality is a common way of looking at complex power relations without reducing power to a one-dimensional aspect like sexuality, ethnicity, social class, age, gender, or ability. Instead, intersectionality reminds us to view all these aspects in a holistic, nuanced way. Intersectionality helps us understand injustice and social inequality. Kvinna till Kvinna’s intersectional feminist approach is grounded in recognising and analysing power relations, revealing injustices, and transforming societies towards gender equality. We take intersectionality into account in our analysis of partner organisations, our internal operations, our networking, and the way we facilitate meetings and events. In sub-Saharan Africa we will be supporting allied movements for justice that are, for example, based on sexual orientation and/or gender identity and disability rights, carry out learning within and between offices on how to better work with the LBTQIA+ community and the disability rights community to build a more inclusive, stronger and unified feminist movement. And continue to organise intergenerational exchanges/mentorships and creating safe spaces for women to share experiences across generations.

Anti-racist approach

Kvinna till Kvinna will take an active anti-racist approach to our work to address racism and discrimination both internally with regards to the management and structure of our organisation as well as externally in our work with partners. We will identify and oppose racism through concrete action at the organisational and structural level, including with donors. We will strive to be transparent about our efforts, learn from other women's rights and civil society organisations working at the forefront of anti-racism, document our successes and failures, and encourage others to follow suit by leading by example.

Climate and environmentally sensitive approach

As part of our Global strategy, Kvinna till Kvinna commits to taking a climate and environmentally sensitive approach that recognises the connection between gender equality, environment and conflict. It is evident to us and the women's rights organisations that we work with, that the environmental and climate crises (ECC) are negatively affecting our work and the advancement of women's rights in conflict-affected contexts. Our study in Rwanda on the nexus of gender and ECC shows that ECC exacerbates gender inequalities, loss of income, perpetuates GBV, and may lead to an increased use of negative coping strategies such as child marriages and taking girls out of school. The Rwanda study will be the basis for cross regional collaboration, advocacy and capacity building amongst our offices and partners. We will continue to analyse how our programme interacts with the environment; with our partners we assess how key environmental risks could affect our programmes, women's rights, and rightsholders in the countries and regions we work, how our programmes are affecting the environment (positively and negatively) and re-enforce or revise actions accordingly. We will also provide support to WHRDs and partner organisations in research and advocacy (also in Global spaces such as the UN and COP conferences) that address environmental sustainability and hold duty bearers to account for commitments, or lack thereof, to address and redress environment and climate damage and loss. Finally, we will also continue to raise awareness on the intersection of ECC and gender-based violence with evidence to support advocacy in climate financing for inclusion of GBV prevention and response.



The first intergenerational workshop, in 2021 at the Hotel Elisabeth, Bukavu. From the left, Generose Abeka, Solange Lwashiga and Rosalie Kombe Ibimba. Photographer: Sandra Simbakwira

**For all women's rights,
in every corner of the world.**

