EAC REGIONAL FRAMEWORK ON UNSCR 1325
Acknowledgements

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Glossary

CSO- Civil Society Organisations
GAA- Girls Advocacy Alliance
AU- Africa Union
EE - Economic Empowerment
GBV- Gender based Violence
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About FAWE

FAWE is a pan-African non-government organisation founded in 1992 by five women ministers of education to empower girls and women through gender-responsive education in sub-Saharan Africa. The organisation’s members include female ministers of education, university vice-chancellors, education policy-makers, researchers, gender specialists and human rights activists. FAWE Headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya is a network of 34 National Chapters in 33 countries.

FAWE’s vision is a world in which all African girls have access to education, perform well and complete their studies and gender disparities in education are eliminated. FAWE’s mission is to promote gender equity and equality in education in Africa by fostering positive policies, practices and attitudes towards girls’ education.

FAWE works hand in hand with communities, schools, NGOs, Ministries of Education to ensure that African girls receive equal education and life chances so that they grow into women who have the knowledge, skills and opportunity to contribute to the economic, social and democratic development of their societies.

FAWE believes education is a human right and that all citizens, including women and girls must enjoy that right. Educating girls and women reduces fertility rates, child and infant mortality rates, improves nutrition and health, protects girls and women from abuse, exploitation and HIV/AIDS, increases economic productivity and growth and improves governance and democratic processes.

PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

FAWE acts as a watchdog on the implementation of national and continental education policies and strategies to ensure that they do not discriminate against girls and women. In 2017, FAWE conducted an assessment on existing key policies, laws, protocols and treaties that denounce Gender Based Violence (GBV) and promote Economic Empowerment among girls, women and the youth at the regional (AU) and sub-regional (EAC and ECOWAS) level.

In line with its objectives; FAWE is implementing a Girls advocacy Alliance Programme in partnership Plan international African Union Liaison Office, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to specifically enhance the capacity of selected regional and sub-regional CSOs network/alliance to influence regional policy-making and monitoring bodies on Gender-based Violence and Economic Empowerment of the youth at the East African Community (EAC) and the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) regional blocks. The goal of the Programme is;

“Girls and Young women in Africa, and their civil-society organisations use regional monitoring accountability mechanism to hold their governments to the fulfillment of their protection and rights.”

The information in this document is packaged for selected CSOs under the Girls Advocacy Alliance Programme to enable them play a critical role in pushing African governments to commit and report on these regional instruments.

This summarized version of the EAC REGIONAL FRAMEWORK ON UNSCR 1325 is therefore developed to:

- Enable selected CSOs better understand the existing AU, ECOWAS, EAC protocols and policies especially the clauses that relate to issues of Gender Based Violence and Economic Empowerment of girls and young women.
- Serve as reference points for selected youth led CSOs to engage, lobby and hold their governments accountable to fulfil their protection and rights at national, sub regional and regional level.

This document can however be used by any other organization advocating for ratification of policies. It should be noted that the original version of the EAC REGIONAL FRAMEWORK ON UNSCR 1325 was the main reference document for this work.
BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

DESCRIPTION AND STATUS

A framework is a particular set of rules, ideas, or beliefs which are used in order to deal with problems or to decide what to do. The East African Community Regional Framework on United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) 1325 is therefore a guide to how matters pertaining UNSCR 1325 will be addressed in the EAC.

The Framework is alive, running from 2015 to 2019.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

The East African Community (EAC) recognizes that women and girls have vastly different experiences to men and boys when it comes to Peace and Security. Women and girls often face devastating human rights violations, including high levels of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) in conflict affected settings. Women are also significantly under-represented and often overlooked in formal peace processes. This happens in spite of the fact that women can be powerful agents in preventing conflict and building peace.

This Regional Implementation Framework on United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) 1325 defines a systematic framework for national and regional actions and monitoring systems to assess progress and impact of interventions on peace and security at all levels.

UNSCR 1325 alongside other resolutions under the United Nations Women (UNWOMEN) Peace and Security agenda, addresses the impact of conflict on women and girls and highlights the critical role women can play in preventing, managing, and resolving conflict. Governments have a responsibility to ensure that women’s and girls’ Human Rights are protected, and that women are empowered to participate in formal peace and security processes.

The EAC is committed to the implementation of UNSCR 1325 as a mechanism of strengthening women’s participation and involvement in the promotion of peace and security within the context of conflict prevention and resolution, eradicating sexual violence, and ending impunity in conflict situations.
The EAC Regional Framework on UNSCR 1325 sets out what the EAC will do at the level of the EAC Secretariat and in partnership with Partner States, to integrate a gender perspective (consider women and girls together with men) into its peace and security efforts to protect women’s and girls’ Human Rights and promote their participation in conflict prevention, management and resolution.

The purpose of the Regional implementation Framework on UNSCR 1325 (1015-2019) is to;

1. Articulate EAC’s commitment to implementing UNSCR 1325 and the broader women, peace and security agenda,
2. Provide a regional policy and programmatic framework that compliments and supports national efforts on women, peace and security.
3. Provide an enabling environment at the regional level to improve women’s leadership in conflict prevention and management, peacekeeping, security policy decision-making, and ensuring that women’s and girls’ rights are protected;
4. Strengthen civil society, women’s groups, including young women and gender equality advocates in engagement with Regional Security and Conflict Prevention Policy and decision-making

The framework consists of five key thematic areas as identified by UNSCR 1325: Prevention, Participation, Protection, Relief and Recovery. To achieve the outcomes under these thematic areas, the EAC has set out three strategies for developing practical, detailed and concrete actions. Different government agencies and departments at Partner States level and the EAC Secretariat, and partners including Civil Society are tasked with working on more specific actions within these strategies:

i. Promote equal participation of women and men in all peace initiatives at all levels particularly at the decision making level;
ii. Integrate gender perspectives in resolution of armed or other conflicts and foreign occupation;
iii. Carry out research and identify innovative mechanisms for containing violence and for conflict resolution.

Based on the Framework, a Regional action plan has been developed to assist EAC Partners States to accelerate the implementation of existing International, Regional and National commitments on women, peace, and security. The action plan identifies priorities, initiates strategic actions, and apportions responsibilities among different actors (States, government departments and Civil Society Organizations including Youth Organizations).

Under the Action Plan, the relevant strategies for GBV prevention and Economic Empowerment to support the GAA Programme include:

- Strategy on integrating gender perspectives in resolution of armed and other conflict and conflict occupation.
- Carrying out research and identify innovative mechanism for containing violence and for conflict resolution.

The Framework identifies CSO’s as important implementers and commits to strengthen Civil Society, women groups, including young women and gender equality advocates in engagement with regional security and conflict prevention policy and decision making.

The Action Plan and Reporting Framework is used in:

1. Identifying the priority areas for intervention in the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 so as to help in initiating new programmes and projects or devising new components within existing projects and programmes that respond to women specific needs and concerns.
2. The preparation of projects and programmes to meet specific strategic objectives.
3. Identifying, mobilizing and allocating the required resources to undertake strategic actions through the budgetary process.
Implementation is based on the developed action and reporting framework.

- At the regional level; implementation process is led by the EAC Secretariat, the Department of Peace and Security and the Gender Unit. A focal point in EAC Peace department is established to coordinate peace issues.
- At Partner States’ level, line Ministries such as Ministries of Internal Affairs, Gender, Defense bodies and Civil Society, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) will also be involved through the establishment of a Regional Taskforce/Steering Committee on SCR1325.
- Donors and the private sector should also be involved.
- The Regional Committee has defined roles which include tracking the implementation of the action plan.
- Partner States (Member countries) implement the action plan through their relevant ministers. Both Kenya and Uganda have developed their action plans.
- Engagement with the National Committees established through country National action plan is key as they are key actors who report to the regional steering committee.

(CSO should seek to participate and track progress of the National Peace action plans to specifically track progress in GBV in conflict situations and promotion of Economic empowerment of women and girls after conflict situations).

MONITORING MECHANISM

A Regional Steering Committee is to be established to monitor, promote and evaluate the National and Regional Framework.

(This important structure needs to be operationalized and engaged to ensure implementation of the Regional framework.)

- CSOs, together with the government ministries, are to be included in the formation of this structure. Member States are required to submit annual reports according to the action plan.
- National Steering Committees also exist to monitor and report on National Implementation of National action plans.

REPORTING

Reporting of progress by Member States is through the EAC Secretariat; the Department of Peace and Security
**RELEVANCE TO GBV PREVENTION**

The Framework identifies four themes. Those relevant for GBV prevention and EE are as below;

1. **Protection of Women and Girls from Sexual and Gender-based Violence**, including:
   - Protection of the rights of women and girls, with special consideration for protecting women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence;
   - Protection should emphasize the safety, personal dignity, and empowerment of women and girls in fragile and insecure environments and in emergency and humanitarian situations, such as in refugee camps.

2. **Prevention of Violence against Women through the Promotion of Women’s Rights, Accountability and Law Enforcement**, including:
   - Reduction of all forms of structural and physical violence against women, particularly sexual violence.
   - Prosecuting those responsible for war crimes, genocide, crimes against humanity and other violations of international law.
   - Respecting the civilian and humanitarian nature of refugee camps
   - Excluding sexual violence crimes from amnesty agreements, as they may amount to crimes against humanity, war crimes or genocide
   - Strengthening women’s rights under national law
   - Supporting local women’s peace initiatives and conflict resolution processes

The action plan identifies capacity building for women and men in communities in early warning systems and conflict prevention as critical.

EAC Peace and Security Department, EAC Gender Unit, IGAD Centre for Early Warning (CEWARN).

Responsible CSOs Ministries of Gender in Partner States should therefore be engaged in order to increase capacity of individuals, communities, and security sector institutions to respond to threats of violence against women and girls who have particular vulnerabilities, and to minimize the risk of sexual and gender-based violence during periods of pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict.

**Number of countries ratified**

Kenya and Uganda have adopted the Regional action plan.

**Number of countries signed**

Applies to all Partners States

Each State is to develop its own National Action plan. The Regional Framework does not contradict the National Plans of Action but complements.

**RELEVANCE TO EE**

**Relief and Recovery**

Ensuring a gender perspective is incorporated in all relief and recovery efforts in order to support specific needs and recognize the capacity of women and girls.

CSOs should track the implementation of the action plan, in effect, both at the regional level and National level, particularly to establish the effectiveness of the programmes put in place as to whether they address GBV prevention and EE.

**CONCLUSIONS**

This Regional Implementation Framework is a practical step forward in establishing a framework for a coordinated regional approach to implementing UNSCR 1325 and is thus an important tool and avenue to address factors that contribute to GBV and Economic exclusion in the region that are perpetuated by conflict situations.

It provides an opportunity for CSO’s to contribute to the relevant strategic actions that can strengthen prevention initiatives.

The identified CSOs in the GAA Programme should make effort to engage with the National and Regional Steering committees, join UNCR Networks in the region and actively participate as implementers in the Regional Implementation framework. Especially, in the thematic areas that directly address GBV prevention and Economic empowerment.

By participating in the Regional taskforce, the CSO can monitor and track the implementation of the Regional Framework.

**GAPS**

The following gaps are still present

1. Women are still excluded and still suffer violence in conflict situations, women are still excluded and not aware of their role. Thus the need to lobby for capacity building for women on peace matters.
2. Human dimension (human security is a people-centred approach focused on the protection and empowerment of individuals) not included in security meetings and mechanisms. National Security approach still applied.
3. Engage the Regional and National peace Steering Committees to give suggestions and information that would promote prevention of GBV and EE among girls.
4. Lobby for representation of women in standby brigades and institutionalization of gender parity in peace negotiations.