Gender Strategy 2019-2022

Search for
Common Ground

Mombasa, Kenya

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Executive Summary

At Search for Common Ground, we are committed to transforming the way the world solves conflict, away from adversarial approaches and towards non-violent solutions. As an entire organization, we are currently transitioning within a ten-year plan that aims to realign our geographical focus and how we approach the mobilization of people and resources. In turn, as the Kenya office, we are shifting to think in terms of a regional approach, towards a focus on the Horn of Africa. We see the epicenter of violent extremism as Somalia, and Kenya as a spillover country for conflict. We believe it is also time to refocus our commitment to gender. Gender equality is the subject of various international human rights and counter-terrorism doctrines, conveyed through United Nations Resolutions and Sustainable Development Goals. Kenya also enshrines concepts of gender equality within its Constitution. Focusing on gender will ensure we are upholding human rights and is a means to build long-lasting peace.

With our office's focus on violent extremism, we must take into account the gendered dynamics that go into the experience of the context surrounding these extremist groups. Men, women, boys, and girls all experience this context differently and have unique reasons for joining violent extremist groups. Understanding these gendered influences will help us to intentionally tailor our programs and work environment to create effective and sustainable change.

With that being said, we have developed a framework to ensure that a gender lens is incorporated into all of our activities. **This gender strategy takes a holistic approach, considering 1. the global organizational environment in which we are a part, 2. the internal dynamics of the office in which we work, and 3. the external programming in which we implement.** We will use a gender analysis when examining and implementing organization-wide strategies. We will create a gendered balanced and gender supportive workplace, and ensure our budgets are gender responsive. We will consider gender in program planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and working with partners.

This overall strategy will help our office become more gender transformative and promote gender equality. This focus on gender equality will in turn promote peace and security because we will be working to eliminate inequalities and create a more just society, where men and women, boys and girls are all equally valued and respected.

Terms and Concepts

Gender refers to the socially learned behaviors, roles, and expectations that distinguish men, women, and people of other gender identities. It influences how people perceive themselves and each other, how they act and interact, and the distribution of power and resources in society. Gender is dynamic, meaning it can change over time and can vary between cultures.

Sex refers to the biological characteristics of being a male or female. It is primarily associated with physical and reproductive features.

Gender Equality refers to the developmental goal of equal rights, responsibilities, opportunities, and access of all people, regardless of their gender. Equality does not mean that women, men, girls, boys, and individuals of other gender identities will become the same, but that the different gender roles are valued equally and do not constitute an obstacle to their well-being and the fulfillment of their potential as members of society. Gender equality is not just a 'women's issue' but an issue that sometimes also requires a special focus on the needs of men and boys.

Gender Equity means being fair to all people based on their gender identities. To ensure fairness, measures are often needed to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent women, men, and gender minorities from otherwise operating as equals. Equity leads to equality.

Gender Mainstreaming refers to the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. This is the strategy adopted and advocated by the United Nations with the ultimate goal to achieve gender equality.

Gender Responsive refers to activities that have considered the gender norms, roles, and power dynamics and have taken measures to address inequalities between the genders.

Gender Transformative refers to activities that have critically examined the gender norms, roles, and power dynamics in that particular context and have taken measures to address the root causes of inequality through changes in roles, status, and the redistribution of resources.

Intersectionality refers to a mode of analysis that considers the ways in which people experience the multiple aspects of their identity simultaneously. These aspects of identity intersect, shaping how a person interacts with and is viewed by society. Unpacking these intersecting identities is key to understanding discrimination and exclusion because a person's experience is often greater than the sum of all parts. Gender, for example, can intersect with age, socioeconomic status, religion, race, ethnicity, and more.

Introduction

Gender is a pervasive and often unconscious driver of behavior. It influences what we do and how we do it. Gender inequality is a central issue that keeps societies in conflict and obstructs the path to peace.[1] As a peacebuilding organization, we must take into account the unequal power dynamics that separate men and women, boys and girls from achieving the same status, access to resources, and opportunities.

Kenya, as most places on Earth, is a patriarchal society, meaning that men hold the power and control in decision-making processes. While Kenya has made significant strides in fostering gender equality over the last decade, there still exists disparities in education, health, and representation within the political and economic spheres.[2] Gender also influences how and why people join extremist groups.[3] In order for us to effectively work towards transforming violent extremism, we must understand how gender and gender relations influence our own spaces, as well as how they will impact the context and implementation of our programming. To do this, we have created a framework to incorporate a gender lens into all that we do.

1 Oxfam Canada. Gender Inequality as a Driver of Conflict, 2014.
2 USAID. Gender Equality & Female Empowerment in Kenya and East Africa, 2018.
3 UN Counter-Terrorism Committee and Executive Directorate. Gender Dimensions of the Response to Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters: Research Perspectives, 2019.

Search for Common Ground

Our purpose at Search for Common Ground (Search) is to end violent conflict. Instead of tearing down an existing world, we focus on constructing a new one. We do this through a type of peacebuilding called conflict transformation. Meaning: we look to change the everyday interactions between groups of people in conflict, so they can work together to build up their community, choosing joint problem-solving over violence. Our mission is to transform the way the world deals with conflict, away from adversarial approaches, toward cooperative solutions.

Core Philosophies:
1. Conflict is normal and resolvable.
2. Common ground is not a compromise.
3. Conflict can be transformed.
4. Peace is a process.
5. Humankind is interdependent.

Search Beyond the Horizon: Mapping the Next 10 years

In 2018, Search created a 10-year strategy for the organization as a whole. It contained three scopes of emphasis for future programming.

Scope I: New Territories → Search will understand conflict systems not delineated by country borders, but as porous and shifting within regions. The Common Ground Approach will be applied to this regional approach, over the long-term, applied to root causes of the conflict, and adaptable to shifting conflict dynamics.

Scope II: New Opportunities → Search will strive to build a global movement, popularize the Common Ground Approach methodology, and create common ground in the digital space.

Scope III: New Voices → Search will support people working to build peace in conflict zones, work with institutions to transform their ability to mitigate conflict, make the case for the field, and fix the funding ecosystem.

Horn of Africa Strategy

In line with the 10-year global strategy and devising a regional approach, a strategy for the Horn of Africa (HOA) region has also been developed. It focuses on Somalia, as the epicenter of the conflict, and the spillover effects into Kenya, Tanzania, and Northern Mozambique. There are proxy countries involved as well, including Italy, Ethiopia, Eritrea, UAE, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar.

There are five main pillars to the strategy:
1. Build the social contract in Somalia from the ground up.
2. Catalyze conditions for an inclusive process to end the Al-Shabaab insurgency.
3. Support national and regional reconciliation across various and predominant dividing lines.
4. Advance inclusive governance along the Swahili Coast and in North Eastern Kenya so that there are responsive channels for marginalized groups to redress grievances.
5. Build alignment among external actors so that they collaborate to promote stability in Somalia.

Search Kenya

Despite being perceived as an overall peaceful country, Kenya ranks 125th out of 163 countries in the Global Peace Index,[4] with poor scores in both societal safety and security and in domestic conflict. Deep-seated ethnic-based politics have been systematically used in post-colonial Kenya to the advantage of larger ethno-religious groups and to the detriment of the others, condemning the latter to decades of marginalization that have catalyzed social, political, and security grievances and mistrust of the central government. These have in turn engendered a suite of other problems, including the rise of violent extremism (VE) in the Coastal and Northeastern counties.[5] Ranked 19th out of 163 countries in the Global Terrorism Index 2016, Kenya is nowadays considered a spill-over country for VE.[6] It has been the target of more than 330 terrorist attacks between 2008 and 2017, largely perpetrated by Al-Qaeda-linked, Somalia-based Al-Shabaab, as well as by homegrown groups.[7]

We, the Search office in Mombasa, Kenya, primarily work on transforming VE in the coastal region. Directly supporting the Horn of Africa Strategy, our office targets the effects from the epicenter of Al-Shabaab violence in Somalia, as well as, aiming to address the root causes of violence in the entire region. Our programs work with vulnerable youth, families, communities, and justice sector actors.

Leveraging the Common Ground Approach, our team's mission in Kenya is to be inclusive, responsive, effective, and vibrant in our work to transform engagement and relationships among communities (including at-risk groups), government, media, and CSOs to find collaborative solutions to human security issues.

4 Institute for Economics and Peace. Global Peace Index 2017, 2017
5 SFCG. Literature Review: Preventing Violent Extremism in Kenya and Tanzania, 2016.
6 UNDP. Preventing and Responding to Violent Extremism in Africa: A Development Approach, 2016-2019, 2016.
7 SFCG. Jamii Bila Balaa Proposal, 2018.

Background on Gender in Human Rights, Peacebuilding, and VE

The right to equality and non-discrimination, including on the basis of sex, is one of the foundational principles of human rights law. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is the most thorough instrument for gender equality, adopted in 1979. CEDAW's goal is to eliminate all forms of discrimination in law and practice against women on the basis of sex and gender. States are mandated to take all appropriate measures to guarantee women the recognition, enjoyment, and exercise of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men. The Convention requires States to address discriminatory laws, practices, and customs, as well as discrimination by private actors.[8]

IIn 1995, the Fourth World Conference on Women developed the Beijing Platform for Action, a global outline to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment. The platform contained twelve critical areas, including women in power and decision-making, human rights, women in armed conflict, and violence against women.[9] During this forum, gender mainstreaming emerged as an internationally agreed strategy for promoting gender equality, and was later adopted by the General Assembly (GA) as a United Nations (UN) system-wide policy.[10]

In 2000, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1325, which reaffirms the importance of women's equal involvement and participation in efforts to maintain and promote peace and security.[11]

The UN first passed a Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in 2006, though it did not specifically mention gender considerations. In 2013, however, the UN GA passed a resolution on the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism. It called upon Member States to shape, review and implement all counter-terrorism measures in accordance with the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination. Additionally, in 2014, the UN GA passed a resolution on the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review, which encouraged Member States, UN entities, and international and regional organizations to consider the participation of women in efforts to prevent and counter terrorism. In 2016, in another Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review, the UN GA told Member States and UN entities to integrate a gender analysis on the drivers of extremism for women, and to consider the impacts of counter-terrorism strategies on women's human rights and women's organizations when developing strategies to counter terrorism and VE.[12]

8 UNODC. Handbook on the Gender Dimensions of Criminal Justice Responses to Terrorism, 2019.
9 UN Women. Fourth World Conference on Women, 1995.
10 UNODC. Handbook on the Gender Dimensions of Criminal Justice Responses to Terrorism, 2019.
11 UN, Security Council Resolution 1325, 2000.
12 UNODC. Handbook on the Gender Dimensions of Criminal Justice Responses to Terrorism, 2019.

In 2015, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 2242, which recognized the unique impact terrorism and VE have on women and girls, including in terms of health, education and public participation. The resolution also affirmed that women and girls are often directly targeted by extremist groups. It instructed Member States and UN entities to conduct gender-sensitive research on the factors that drive people to VE. The resolution also called for greater integration of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda into counter-terrorism measures.[13]

The UN's Sustainable Development Goals, adopted in 2015, to be completed by 2030, also target gender and justice. Goals 5, Gender Equality, and 16, Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, are particularly relevant.[14]

Kenya, as a member state of the UN, prescribes to all the above resolutions. Kenya has also built gender equality into their core legal document, the Constitution of Kenya, most recently redrafted in 2010. In Chapter 4 (Bill of Rights), Part 2 (Rights and Fundamental Freedoms), Article 27 (Equality and Freedom from Discrimination), it enshrines gender equality and non-discrimination as a core value of Kenya as a nation, saying:

"(1) Every person is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law.
(2) Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and fundamental freedoms.

(3) Women and men have the right to equal treatment, including the right to equal opportunities in political, economic, cultural and social spheres.
(4) The State shall not discriminate directly or indirectly against any person on any ground, including race, sex, pregnancy, marital status, health status, ethnic or social origin, colour, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, dress, language or birth.
(5) A person shall not discriminate directly or indirectly against another person on any of the grounds specified or contemplated in clause (4)."[15]

Additionally, Chapter 7 (Representation of the People), Part 1 (Electoral System and Process), Article 81 (General Principles for the Electoral System), ensures gender representation within Kenya's governance systems, saying:

"(b) not more than two-thirds of the members of elective public bodies shall be of the same gender."[16]

In 2012, a consortium of individuals and organizations came together to create a plan for the realization of women's rights and empowerment in Kenya, creating the Kenya Women's National Charter. The Charter includes sections on the elimination of discrimination, the right to dignity and respect, freedom from sexual and gender-based violence, access to administrative justice and equal protection before the law, rights and responsibilities in the promotion of peace, and more.[17]

13 UNODC. Handbook on the Gender Dimensions of Criminal Justice Responses to Terrorism, 2019.
14 UN. Sustainable Development Goals.
15 The Consititution of Kenya, 2010.
16 The Consititution of Kenya, 2010.
17 National Women Leadership Platform for Action, Kenya Women's National Charter, 2012.

Purpose of Strategy

The purpose of this strategy is to serve as a guide and overarching framework for us and our partner organizations to mainstream gender into our internal functions and external activities. Gender mainstreaming requires an explicit strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women and men an integral part of an organization's policies and programs. This strategy will help ensure that all our actions contribute to gender equality and take into account the specific needs of both program participants and staff members. Inherent in a gender lens is an intersectional lens, one that considers the intersecting points of identity that influence experience.

Discrimination and violence based on gender is a violation of human rights. Often times, gendered violence is not directly seen, whether that is because it is structural in nature or taking place in private spaces, and is therefore able to continue. We must actively focus on gender to challenge the inequalities in our society and build a more inclusive, sustainable peace.

Gender norms can affect the ways that people experience both VE and efforts to transform VE. In order to effectively implement programs to transform VE, it is imperative that we intentionally consider the effects of gender on the drivers to VE, recruiting tactics employed by VE organizations, stigmatization from communities related to VE allegations, and more. If gender is not taken into account, it is possible that interventions may exclude vulnerable populations or unintentionally cause harm by reinforcing inequalities.

Operating as an organization who intentionally considers gender in all its actions, both internally and externally, we will create an environment where people feel safe, respected, and included, improving our ability to reach both effective candidates for employment and vulnerable, potential beneficiaries. This will lead to more sustainable and effective programming outcomes in the long-run.

Goal, Objectives, and Key Results

Goal: the goal of this gender strategy is to improve peace and conflict transformation in Coastal Kenya through the promotion of gender equality in the next three years. The goal will be achieved through the following outcomes including but not limited to improving the ratio of men and women involved in peace processes, decreasing the number of all gender identities becoming involved in VE, and improving relations between individuals, communities, and the justice sector. In order to promote gender equality, we must apply a gender lens, meaning we have to assess the impact on and from gender, both formally and informally, in and on all of our external activities and internal functions—and respond to the outcomes of said assessment. External activities include research, outreach, and dialogues, and internal functions include logistical planning, hiring practices, and workplace support structures.

Objective 1: Improve our capacity to attract, on board and retain the right people.
- Key Result: Incorporate gender into staff handbook and basic gender training into on-boarding procedures within 6 months.
- Key Result: Ensure gender sensitivity between co-workers by providing biannual refresher trainings on the organization-wide code of conduct.
- Key Result: Create a country-specific method for reporting incidents within 6 months, alongside the organization-wide code of conduct, that spells out who to contact in what situations, and ensure that all staff knows this information.
- Key Result: Ensure that there is gender balance within the office, at all levels, and any support to achieve meaningful participation from everyone, regardless of gender identity, is offered. This can include special considerations on time and location of meetings, establishing norms for safe spaces, trainings on allyship, and more.

Objective 2: To ensure that the country program aligns to the HOA strategy by how we design and implement programs, create partnerships and capture impact.
- Key Result: Incorporate a gender lens into implementing programs, ensure that we are working with gender responsive partners, and create gender responsive monitoring and evaluation (M&E).
- Key Result: Share institutional knowledge about gender with other offices in the HOA region and partner organizations, so that each entity working under the HOA strategy will be inclusive of gender in their work. This will include creating a mechanism for sharing gender knowledge within 6 months.

Objective 3: Raise quality institutional revenue in line with our HOA strategy.

- Key Result: Ensure that all funds raised are from donors who are supportive of gender programming and are used for programs that are gender responsive.

Objective 4: Enhance operational excellence for the Kenya Program.

- Key Result: Implementation of gender strategy as a process over the next 3 years.
- Key Result: Ensure salary scale is not reinforcing gender inequalities.
- Key Result: All projects and departments provide gender and other intersectional identity disaggregated monitoring data every quarter, as well as reflection surveys on the support structures in place for the meaningful participation of all genders, both in the office and in programming.
- Key Result: Provide biannual gender trainings/reflections/discussions/workshops to build the capacity of the staff to use a gender lens in their work in the office and the field.

Objective 5: Use our resources efficiently and in compliance.

- Key Result: Ensure that a gender lens is used in all research, analysis, planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of programs run by and/or associated with Search for Common Ground to enhance the inclusivity and sustainability of the programming and therefore maximize the use of our resources.
- Key Result: Include at least one gender-focused training per year for partners, with possible participants including grassroot CSOs, media houses, Networks, and implementing partners.

Objective 6: Develop and deliver compelling content and messaging to drive private philanthropic fundraising and increased brand awareness.

- Key Result: Ensure that external documents, including flyers, social media, and training materials, are representing men, women, boys, and girls in various roles.
- Key Result: Ensure that internal documents, including handbooks and organizational strategies, are representing men, women, boys, and girls in various roles.

Gender and VE in Kenya

Kenya ranks 76 out of 149 on the World Economic Forum's 2018 Global Gender Gap Report. In September 2018, USAID reported "significant inequalities between males and females in education attainment, health outcomes, representation in parliament and participation in the labor market. Moreover, gender-based violence is pervasive with almost half (45 percent) of women aged 15-49 having experienced either physical or sexual violence at some point in their life (Kenya Demographic Health Survey 2014)."[18]

Beyond general gender differences in Kenya, there are also disparities in the ways that women and men, girls and boys experience VE. Therefore, VE in Kenya cannot be fully understood without examining the context through a gender lens. For example, men and boys are often perceived as perpetrators, with a tendency towards violence seen as an innate characteristic. As a result, men and boys are vulnerable to being targeted by police and other justice sector actors.[19] Women and girls, on the other hand, are often seen as victims and inherently more peaceful than men, and violent extremist groups have used their ability to conduct business undetected by the justice system by putting them in recruitment roles.[20] Both men and women partake in VE for economic, political, ideological, religious, and social reasons, but gender colors the way people experience these drivers towards extremist groups.[21]

SEARCH KENYA GENDER STRATEGY

18 USAID. Gender Equality & Female Empowerment in Kenya and East Africa, 2018.
19 The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, Community Perceptions of Violent Extremism in Kenya, 2016.
20 RUSI, Women and Recruitment in the Al-Shabaab Network: Stories of Women being recruited by Women Recruiters in the Coastal Region of Kenya, 2018.
21 UN Counter-Terrorism Committee and Executive Directorate. Gender Dimensions of the Response to Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters: Reasearch Perspectives, 2019.

Traditionally, men and boys are expected to provide for their families economically. However, when corrupt economic systems lead to a lack of legitimate opportunities for employment, they can be left feeling disenfranchised and emasculated, and therefore easily persuaded to join extremist groups by promise of income or livelihood.[22] This is compounded by the marriage traditions in Kenya, where men are supposed to pay a bride price. In a place where "real" men are married and have kids, one's masculinity will be threatened by an inability to pay. So, not only are men drawn by the thought of money, but some violent extremist organizations also promise wives.[23] Once they have families, men and boys are traditionally taught that they need to be protectors, an emphasis on strength, bravery, and dominance portrayed through tropes of the vigilante or the hero.[24] Violent extremist groups give an outlet for men and boys to assert these traits, sometimes through the use of arms, and in doing so, a means to seemingly increase or regain their masculinity.[25]

Women and girls often do not have the economic opportunities men and boys have. Therefore, women and girls may join extremist groups to follow men and boys because they may feel as if their wellbeing, both in terms of finances and security, depends on it.[26] Additionally, some organizations may play on the gendered pressures for women surrounding marriage. There is an expectation in some communities that women need to get married and have children to fulfill their roles as women. Extremist organizations may promise a good, devout husband in return for their membership.[27] On the other hand, there are some women and girls that may join extremist groups to escape the harsh gender norms prescribed by their home communities; extremist organizations may promise new gender roles, ones that promote empowerment of women or give women new agency to practice religious and extremist views.[28] [29] Women, like men, may also be a target for harassment by security sector actors, but for women, it is especially if they are presumed to have a familial connection to extremists.[30]

SEARCH KENYA GENDER STRATEGY

22 Jossif Ezekilov, George Washington University. Gender "Men-Streaming" CVE:Countering Violence Extremism by Addressing Masculinities Issues, 2017.
23 RUSI, Understanding the role of Gender Relations in Radicalising and Recruiting Young Muslim Women in Higher Learning Institutions in Kenya, 2018.
24 SFCG, Transforming Violent Extremism Guide, 2017.
25 Saferworld. Masculinities, Conflict, and Peacebuilding, 2014.
26 Rift Valley Institute. Violent Extremism in Kenya: Risk and Resilience, 2017.
27 RUSI, Understanding the role of Gender Relations in Radicalising and Recruiting Young Muslim Women in Higher Learning Institutions in Kenya, 2018.
28 Brookings Institution. Female Terrorists and their Role in Jihadi Groups, 2017.
29 SFCG. Countering Violent Extremism Guide, 2019.
30 Institute for Security Studies. Preventing violent extremism in Kenya: Why women's needs matter, 2017.

In order to counter VE, the security sector in Kenya favors a heavy-handed approach and deploys many more men than women.[31] Much of this inequality stems from notions of the justice sector as a masculine field, one that promotes highly militarized spaces and encourage heroism through domination and violence. Because men are more often targeted as perpetrators of VE, the security sector's hypermasculine approach has had the opposite effect of what it was intending.[32] Instead of decreasing VE, they have stifled the masculinity of vulnerable men and boys, who then seek fulfillment of masculinity elsewhere, often feeling as if their only option is VE.[33]

Interventions countering, and ultimately transforming, violent extremism must take into account all the gendered relationships that contribute to joining violent extremist groups. Programs must simultaneously encourage the positive manifestations of gender roles outside extremist groups, while discouraging negative manifestations of gender roles inside extremist groups. Programs need to ensure they are not reinforcing harmful gender norms, while at the same time promoting gender equality. Because of this, we have developed this strategy to intentionally incorporate gender into all aspects of our work in transforming VE.

SEARCH KENYA GENDER STRATEGY

31 International Peace Support Training Center. Gender Mainstreaming in Security Sector Reform in Kenya: An Assessment of the National Police Service, 2016.
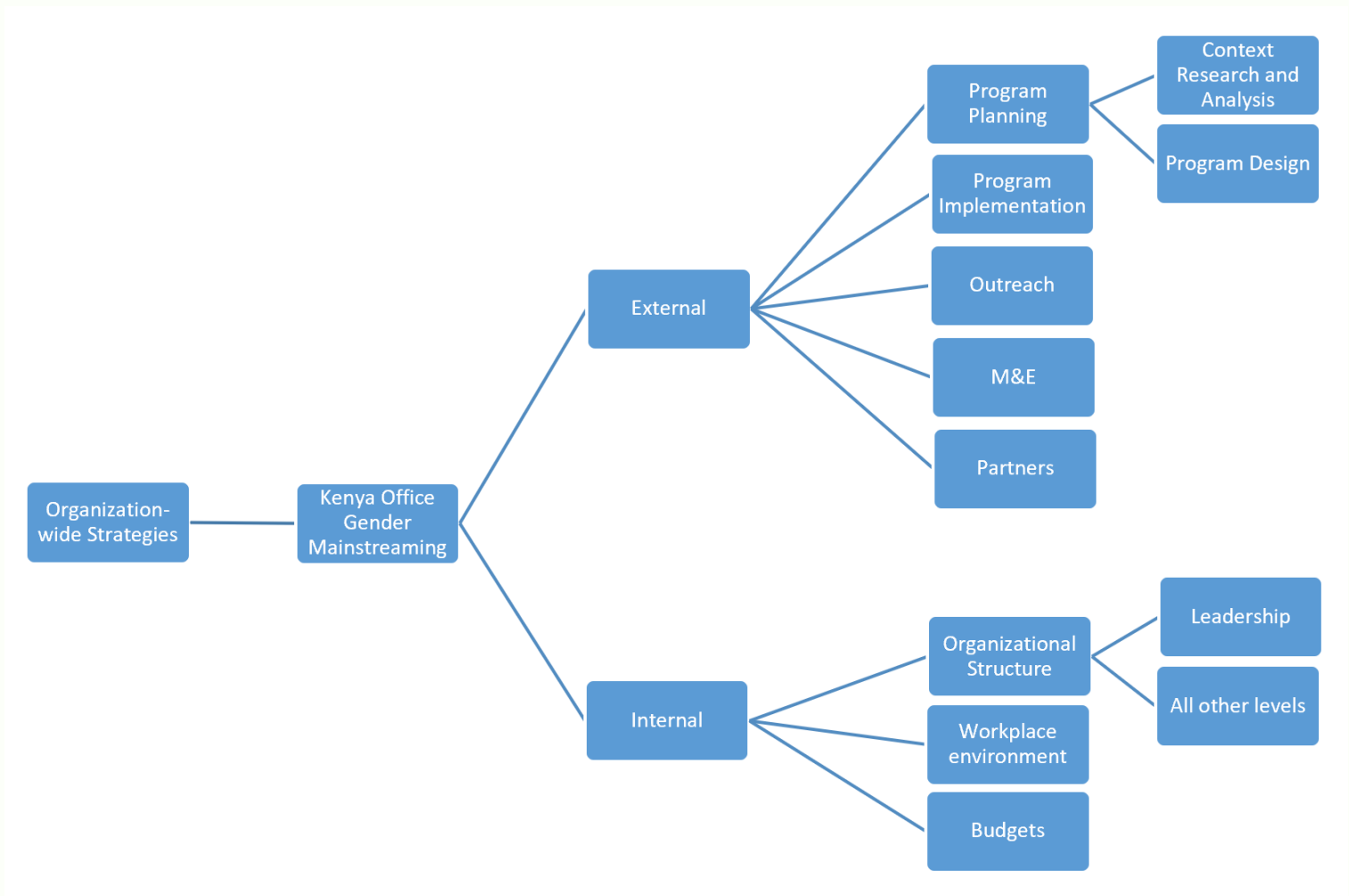32 SFCG. Meet me at the Maskani: Mapping of Influencers, Networks, and Communication Channels in Kenya and Tanzania, 2017.
33 SFCG. "Inuka!": Community-Led Security Approaches to Violent Extremism in Coastal Kenya, 2018.

Gender Strategy

Approach: we use a gender mainstreaming approach to promote gender equality within all of our activities. This means deliberately examining how our actions are affected by and affecting gender norms.

The **theory of change** (ToC) underpinning the rationale of this project is: if a gender lens is incorporated into our internal functions and external activities, as well as when analyzing information from the wider global organization, then we will be more inclusive and intentional in our work to transform VE, addressing a root cause of instability in Coastal Kenya and the Horn of Africa, and leading to more peaceful and equal societies.

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Organization-          Kenya Office
wide Strategies  ─────  Gender          ┌──  External  ──┬── Program Planning ──┬── Context Research and Analysis
                        Mainstreaming    │                │                      └── Program Design
                                         │                ├── Program Implementation
                                         │                ├── Outreach
                                         │                ├── M&E
                                         │                └── Partners
                                         │
                                         └──  Internal  ──┬── Organizational Structure ──┬── Leadership
                                                          │                               └── All other levels
                                                          ├── Workplace environment
                                                          └── Budgets
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Use a gender lens on all organization-wide strategies: consider the gendered dimensions of organization-wide strategies and tools, including the Search Global 10-year Strategy and the Horn of Africa Strategy.

Search Beyond the Horizon: Mapping the Next 10 Years at Search for Common Ground

Scope I: New Territories → While shifting to target whole conflict regions, we must ensure that the Common Ground Approach retains its focus on being inclusive of all people and targeting multiple forms of violence. While physical violence is still a gendered issue, many people, especially women and girls, experience violence that is not physical, including structural, sexual, emotional, and psychological violence. Therefore, in order to be truly inclusive, we must consider all forms of violence that affect all gender identities.

Scope II: New Opportunities → In building a global movement, we must be inclusive, ensuring that we are not targeting only some sections of society. Therefore, we must make sure all gender identities are represented in our work. Additionally, all spaces have a gendered bias, including digital spaces. Therefore, examining how we present gender roles and relations is important when creating online platforms.

Scope III: New Voices → In pursuing new voices in peacebuilding, including those experiencing conflict first-hand and those already working to build peace in their communities, we must take gender and social norms into account to effectively raise up and support underrepresented voices. Additionally, with funding as a major aspect of any organization or project, we should look for ways to make budgets gender responsive and that our funding is reflective of our gender policies.

Horn of Africa Strategy

An overall gender strategy in Kenya will support the Horn of Africa Strategy to directly achieve its goals. Using gender considerations will ensure that marginalized groups are being heard and their needs fully supported.The strategy specifically mentions mobilizing support and participation from women in dialogues, negotiations, reconciliation efforts, and decision-making processes. It also mentions gender as one of the core issues of the conflict. There are five main pillars to the strategy:

1. Build the social contract in Somalia from the ground up: building buy-in to a system of governance in Somalia will take support from people of all walks of life, including both men and women. Because of the porous borders to the conflict, the Kenya office can further this goal by working with vulnerable and influential communities to understand the beneficial effects of gender equality and how representation of various gender identities in systems of governance is crucial, with the hope of inspiring a push for gender balance when the systems are formed.

2. Catalyze conditions for an inclusive process to end the Al-Shabaab insurgency: any sort of negotiated settlement must take the needs of all gender identities into account in order to create sustainable peace. Therefore, any settlement processes will need to support perspectives from both men and women. The Kenya office's work to support gender equality can empower communities to push for inclusion in the eventual negotiation process.

3. Support national and regional reconciliation across various and predominant dividing lines: just as conflict crosses borders, so can peace and gender equality rhetoric. The Kenya office's work to find and utilize community influencers, as well as the media, and ensuring that both men and women are represented in both, can help build a foundation for positive practices when it comes to dialogues in and about Somalia.

4. Advance inclusive governance along the Swahili Coast and in North Eastern Kenya so that there are responsive channels for marginalized groups to redress grievances: the Kenya office will continue to bring together government actors and local populations and ensure that these programs are gender responsive.

5. Build alignment among external actors so that they collaborate to promote stability in Somalia: the Kenya office can use its line to the Kenyan Government to push for collaboration in the region and for both men and women to support any efforts engaging Somalia.

Internal: what happens inside the organization will be projected outside to the program participants and communities we work with. Valuing and practicing gender equality internally will serve as an example of good practices. It will also allow employees to do their best work in an environment in which they feel safe and supported.

We will create a gender balanced workplace: a gender balanced work environment not only means that there are equal numbers of women and men in the office, but also that both genders have representation in all levels of the organization, especially in leadership positions. Underrepresentation of a certain gender identity in the workplace means that their perspective is limited or non-existent. This can lead to a lack of inclusion when planning and implementing programs. It can also make a person who is of an underrepresented gender identity feel uncomfortable or unsafe, as if their perspective is not as important, or as if their perspective must represent or become the token for the whole of that identity. Working towards a gender balanced workplace will help all identities feel comfortable and for their perspectives to be taken into account equally, leading to more informed programming.

- Actively work towards gender diversity in hiring practices. For example, consider various places to advertise available positions. Who has access to information online? Is a different group of people more receptive to whatsapp messages or flyers?

We will create a gender supportive work environment: it is not enough to have representation of gender identities within a workplace. First and foremost, the space we work in needs to be free of discrimination and harassment. Second, there needs to be enough support-- emotional, social, and logistical-- that people of all genders trust they are safe and are physically able to contribute their perspective meaningfully. This may include special considerations around timing and location of meetings, allyship from co-workers, and more.

- Be aware of and analyze gender disparities in contribution and job performance.
- Have a no-tolerance policy for harassment or gender discrimination.
- Create a safe method for reporting incidents and ensure that all staff is aware of this method.

We will create gender responsive budgets: gender responsive budgets ensure that men and women benefit equally from Search's programs and services. Gender responsive budgets are not separate budgets for men and women, nor are they 'budgets for women.' A gender responsive budget takes into account the specific needs and interests of the gender groups when planning expenditure reports to ensure equal opportunity. This may not necessarily mean men and women are allocated the same amounts, but that resources are allocated in an equitable manner. Gender responsive budgeting is important because budgets dictate the kinds of programs that we are able to implement, and therefore are an important reflection of the organization's gender policies and values.

- Analyze budgets, including program financing and employee salaries, as well as those of community partners, with a gender lens.

External: in order to see our goal of gender equality become a reality, we need to actively work to make our programming as gender transformative as possible. This means that our programs are gender aware and addressing the root causes of gender inequality, regardless of if that program's main goal is gender-specific or not. A gender lens should be used in all stages of programming.

We will consider gender in context analysis and program planning: context research, research analysis, and program design all need to incorporate a gender lens in an effort to create as close to a gender transformative program as possible. This may include asking specific gender-focused questions, interviewing community members of different gender identities, having representation from various types of men and women on the data collection, data analysis, and program design teams, considering differential power dynamics at play in the community, and more. This means deeply considering all aspects of VE and transforming VE through a gender lens.

- Conflict scans and other contextual research need to consider a wide range of identities, including gender, and their unique experiences and challenges. This does not necessarily mean that data on all points of identity need to be collected, but that they should be considered in planning.
- Conflict scans and contextual research needs to be carried out by both men and women, with other intersectional traits taken into account, to ensure a variety of perspectives are represented and to mitigate any gender relational and gender-based cultural barriers to collection.
- Different genders may interpret information differently, so conflict scans and contextual research needs to be analyzed and translated into programming by a team comprising multiple gender and intersectional identities.

We will consider gender in program implementation: program implementation also needs to take gender into account. This includes consciously deciding what gender and intersectional identities will be represented in both the people implementing and benefiting from the program.

- Gender needs to be considered when choosing who will implement programming depending on the goals and cultural context of the program.
- The gender(s) of the participants will also need to be taken into account. Not all programs are able to reach both men and women (of various other identities), nor would it necessarily be appropriate or beneficial, but all programs must analyze the possibilities of gender and intersectional representation and make an intentional decision on who to include and why.

We will review our outreach tools: representation is an important step in helping to change unconscious attitudes around gender equality. We will ensure that our outreach materials are portraying both men and women in various roles and activities.
- Branding, social media, and marketing materials should be gender responsive and consider other intersectional identities.
- Our media, including radio shows and promotional videos, should be gender responsive and consider other intersectional identities.
- Our internal reports and handbooks should also consider representation of various gender and intersectional identities.

We will conduct gender responsive M&E: gender responsive M&E is important because it allows us to test whether our implementation of a gender lens is comprehensive and helping our programs to be more effective.
- Consider a wide range of identities, including gender. This does not necessarily mean that data on all points of identity need to be collected, but that they should be considered when planning M&E. When decided, disaggregate data based on chosen identity factors.
- This can also include asking gender-specific questions on pre-tests, post-tests, and qualitative interviews about meaningful participation, gender attitudes, representation, and more.
- Having representation of intersectional identities, including gender diversity, when assigning data collectors.
- Having representation of intersectional identities, including gender diversity, when assigning data analyzers.
- Gender responsive M&E also means that once collected and analyzed, any gender-specific findings are reported in a way that allows the insights to be used in future programs. The goal of gender responsive M&E is to analyze how to make current and future programs as gender transformative as possible.

We will work with gender responsive partners: Search works with local and international partners on many programs. It is important to ensure that we are on the same page with our partners in terms of gender values and expectations for the program. If partner organizations do not value gender equality to the same extent we do, it is possible that the parts of the project controlled by the partner organization can reinforce harmful gender norms by mistake. If Search is represented on the project, we must ensure that a gender lens is used in all aspects of the project, even those we are not in charge of, to fulfill our commitment to do no harm.
- Work with partner organizations to ensure proposals, planning, and implementation of projects have a gender lens.
- Establish gender equality objectives for the program before committing to work with partners.
- Establish the partner's gender approach, or their willingness to learn and expand their capacity, as a formal criteria for choosing who to work with.

Implementation of Strategy: this strategy should be used as a base for gender considerations at Search Kenya. All employees and interns should receive a copy of this strategy during on-boarding.

Roles and Responsibilities: while it is everyone at the organization's responsibility to ensure this gender strategy is implemented, there are specific offices that hold responsibility for each part of the strategy.
- Internal considerations:
  - Gender Balance: Country Director and Human Resources
  - Gender Supportive Workplace: Country Director, Human Resources, ILT/M&E Team, and all staff
  - Budgets: Country Director, Finance Team, and ILT/M&E Team
- External considerations:
  - Context Analysis and Program Planning: Country Director, Programming Team, ILT/M&E Team and M&E consultants
  - Program Implementation: Programming Team and M&E Team
  - Outreach: Media Focal Point and Programming Team
  - M&E: ILT/M&E Team
  - Working with Partners: Country Director and Programming Team

M&E of Strategy: this strategy should be reviewed every year to analyze to what extent the office is adhering to it and adding updates as needed.

Time Frame: the strategy should hold for 3 years (Q3 2019 - Q3 2022). After that time, the strategy should be re-visited and either updated or re-written.
  Timeline of outcomes:
  - 6 months: incorporate gender into staff handbook and on-boarding procedures; create HOA gender sharing mechanism for other Search offices and partners; create office-specific mechanism for reporting incidents of sex and gender-based discrimination, ensure that everyone in the office is aware of this reporting mechanism; each ongoing program (Jamii Bila Balaa, Inuka, and any other accepted programs) will create an action plan that lays out steps to implement this strategy into their work; each department (programs, finance/admin/HR/security, and DME) will create an action plan that lays out the steps to implement this strategy into their work; have at least one gender session for staff
  - 1 year: incorporate intentional gender and intersectional analysis into our context research and M&E planning; create gender representative branding and outreach tools (monitor social media, radio programs, and other marketing materials with a specific gender lens); have at least two gender sessions for staff.
  - 2 years: incorporate gender and intersectional analysis in program planning (based off analysis of previous programs) and when working with budgets and donors; work with gender-responsive partner organizations; have at least four gender sessions for staff
  - 3 years: have a gender responsive staff, with members who have the capacity to incorporate gender considerations into all their actions; have at least six gender sessions for staff.

Reflection Questions to Guide Implementation:

- Organization-wide strategies:
  - When transitioning to a regional approach, who is at risk of being left out?
  - What types of violence are we focusing on? Are there other types that we are missing?
  - Are we using the appropriate modes of communication to reach multiple sections of society?
  - What kinds of information and what mechanisms of sharing can cross borders? Do these differ by gender
  - Who are making the decisions when it comes to peace and governance? Are they considering marginalized voices and is there work being done to give them representation?
  - Do gender norms, values, and roles vary within the HOA region? Within Kenya? Within the coastal region?

- Internal:
  - Are we missing any voices in our office environment?
  - Does everyone feel safe within the office space?
  - Are there clear reporting mechanisms?
  - Do our budgets promote gender equality?

- External:
  - Who are the most vulnerable populations to VE? Do we want to work with them? Can we work with them? Why?
  - Who are we targeting in a specific activity? Why, from a gender perspective, are we including those people and not others?
  - Are we able to reach everyone that we are targeting? What are the barriers to accessing our activities? Money? Time? Location? Something else?
  - Are all the participants able to meaningfully contributing? What are some ways we can encourage everyone to participate?
  - Is everyone being heard and understood during activities? If not, what is obstructing this from happening?
  - Who is researching and collecting data on the context? Who is implementing the program and M&E? Why?
  - Are we taking multiple points of identity, along with gender, into account when planning and implementing programs?
  - Do our donors value gender equality? Are they willing to fund gender transformative programming?
  - Do our partners value gender equality and have strategies to incorporate gender considerations into the program? If not, are they willing to learn?

Additional Resources

These resources can help to continue the conversation about gender mainstreaming, gender programming, and gender and CVE.

- RUSI. Compendium of Research on Gender and Violent Extremism in Kenya, 2018.

- Interagency Gender Working Group. The Gender Integration Continuum Training Session User's Guide, 2017.

- WECF International. The Gender impact assessment and monitoring tool, 2018.

- Saferworld. Masculinities, Conflict, and Peacebuilding, 2014.

- Tony Blair Institute for Global Change. Gender and Extremism Series, 2018.

- Mazurana, Dyan, Prisca Benelli, Huma Gupta, and Peter Walker. "Sex and age matter: improving humanitarian response in emergencies." Feinstein International Center, Tufts University (2011).

- O'Reilly, Marie, Andrea Ó. Súilleabháin, and Thania Paffenholz. "Reimagining peacemaking: Women's roles in peace processes." New York: International Peace Institute (2015).

- UNODC. Handbook on Gender Dimension of Criminal Justice Responses to Terrorism, 2019.

- Proctor, Keith and Dyan Mazurana. "Gender and Violent Extremist Organizations," Handbook of Gender and Security, edited by Caron Gentry, Laura Shepherd, and Laura Sjoberg, Routledge Press (2017).

- European Institute for Gender. What is Gender Mainstreaming.

- Search for Common Ground. Countering Violent Extremism Guide, 2019.

- Search for Common Ground, Transforming Violent Extremism Guide, 2017.

Conclusion

We believe that women and men, boys and girls, while different, should be equally valued by society. Progress towards gender equality, in terms of roles, status, access to resources, and opportunities, will help our programs become more inclusive and in turn, more sustainable. In order to do this, we must examine gender relations within the context in which we are working, Coastal Kenya and the Horn of Africa, and create the space to implement changes that further equality between the genders. Therefore, this strategy creates a framework for considering gender in all aspects of our work-- namely within our global organizational plans, internally within our office environment, and externally in our programs. However, this is not where our analysis stops. We must actively implement this strategy and continue to monitor and evaluate its outcomes. We will think critically and creatively in applying the strategy to various instances and programs. This strategy is only the first step in the overall journey towards gender equality.