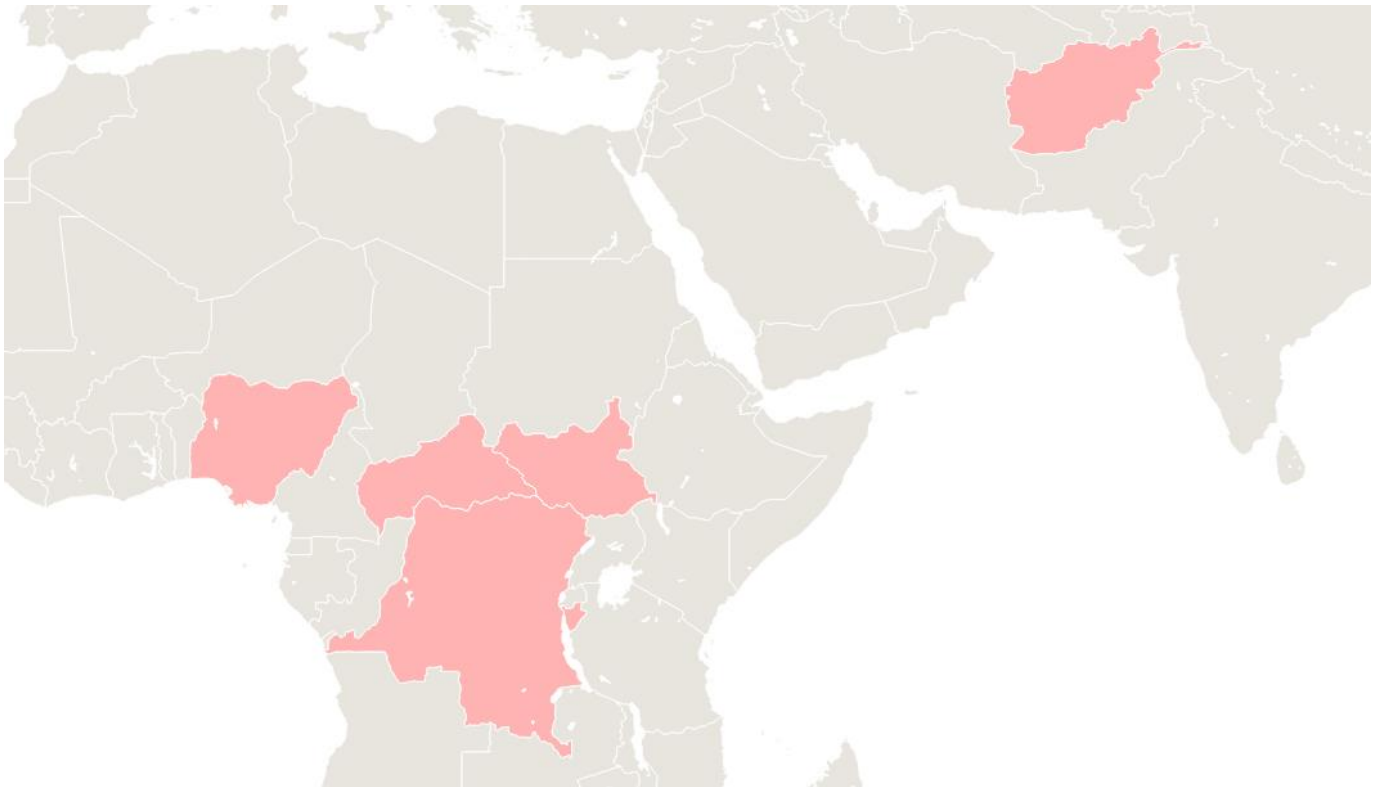


ANALYTICAL REPORT 2017 STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

**CAPACITATING CHANGE:
RESTORING THE SOCIAL CONTRACT IN FRAGILE CONTEXTS**

APRIL 2018



CONTENTS

1. ANALYSIS OF THE PROCESS	1
2. PROGRESS PER COUNTRY	1
2.1 Afghanistan.....	1
2.2 Burundi.....	2
2.3 Central African Republic	3
2.4 Democratic Republic of Congo.....	4
2.5 Nigeria	4
2.6 South Sudan	5
2.7 Overarching trends: civic space, youth and women	6
2.8 Analysis: leverage of local L&A to national L&A.....	6
3. PROGRESS IN INTERNATIONAL L&A	6
3.1 Analysis per topic	6
3.1.1 Inclusive and engendered peace.....	6
3.1.2 Security and access to justice for all	7
3.1.3 Accountable and responsive health services	7
3.1.4 Extractives	8
3.1.5 Space for civil society.....	8
3.2 Analysis of international lobby and advocacy and links with countries.....	9
4. DRAWING LESSONS	9
4.1 Theory of Change and L&A strategies.....	9
4.2 Strategies to develop the capacity of implementing partners.....	10

1. ANALYSIS OF THE PROCESS

The strategic partnership (SP) program “empowering people in fragile contexts” aims to strengthen the voice and capacity of civil society to effectively engage in, and influence, peacebuilding and state-building. In each of the six fragile countries where we work, we focus on a selection of our five themes.

The changes we aspire to achieve in the different themes in each country (referred to as thematic trajectories) are captured in 17 Theories of Change (TOCs). These TOCs describe the national lobby and advocacy (L&A) efforts and are supported by an additional TOC for international lobby and advocacy. The table below presents an overview of the trajectories per country.

Strategic topics	Afghanistan	Burundi	CAR	DRC	Nigeria	South Sudan	International L&A
Inclusive and engendered peace							
Security and access to justice for all							
Accountable and responsive health services							
Extractives/Inclusive economic growth							
Space for civil society							

We realize that not all L&A can be planned – nor that it necessarily happens according to plan. Therefore we have started harvesting unexpected outcomes in 2017. This has already proven to be very useful as input for our new planning. In 2018, we will use outcome harvesting more intensively, as an additional monitoring tool as well as an important methodology for the mid-term review of our program. In the planning report for 2018 we already discussed the changes that were made in the TOCs. In this year’s progress report for 2017 we will present a selection of results that were achieved through the program’s lobby and advocacy efforts. As to cooperation with MoFA and Dutch Embassies: this has extensively been addressed in the annual plan 2018 and not duplicated in this annual report.

2. PROGRESS PER COUNTRY

2.1 Afghanistan

Inclusive and engendered peace

An important stakeholder in the Afghan peace processes is the High Peace Council (HPC). Together with other like-minded NGOs the program contributed actively to the lobby for greater representation of women in the HPC. Eight additional women have now joined the HPC board, bringing the number of women to 12 out of a total of 57 members. The New Peace Strategy developed with the HPC, however, is still awaiting official approval by the President and the National Security Council. We have observed that peace talks with the Taliban have hardly moved forward, and we believe progress will require political will in addition to the changes in the peace strategy and in HPC leadership. A positive development is that the HPC updated civil society organizations (CSOs) on the New Peace Strategy that includes reforms in the peace talks and also reaffirmed its commitment to the establishment of a women & youth advisory board.

Furthermore, the advocacy efforts of our partner the Afghan Women’s Network (AWN) have contributed to the continued commitment of the Ministry of Women Affairs, Deputy Minister of Youth and First Lady to involve women and youth in peace talks. AWN has participated in two peace symposiums on the role of women in peace talks conducted by the Ministry of Women Affairs in two provinces. AWN has organized youth platforms locally in eight provinces to facilitate the youth’s engagement in peace talks. The youth platforms prepare issues that they discuss in the quarterly meetings of the Provincial Peace Committees (PPCs).

Security and access to justice for all

The justice sector is showing resistance to change. As a result it is difficult for CSOs to work at the national level. SP partner SALAH has not succeeded in signing an MoU with the Supreme Court. SALAH has decided to work with the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission in 2018 instead, although it continues to negotiate with the Supreme Court for an MOU. The justice sector is proving to be more flexible at the local level, however, and officials have reaffirmed their commitment to improving the local justice system. Advocacy efforts are aimed at improving court procedures and the functioning of judges and prosecutors. In the provinces targeted by the SALAH CSOs, community representatives and the media can now attend court sessions. There is close collaboration between CSOs and the justice sectors in five of these provinces. Issues that are observed in court sessions are discussed in coordination meetings with heads of local courts, prosecutors and justice departments. SALAH also uses round table talks on local TV and radio to exert pressure on those responsible to resolve these issues and attend to community needs.

Box 1: Youth engagement in peace talks

In 2017, partner organization the Afghan Women's Network (AWN) has achieved significant success in their facilitation of platforms for youth engagement in peace talks in eight provinces. The platforms have been highly active from the start, conducting monthly meetings and prioritizing participatory agenda setting. The most urgent priority was to increase youth involvement in the peace talks. AWN facilitated exchanges between the platforms and the Provincial Peace Councils (PPC), the High Peace Council (HPC) and the Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA), which were all well received. Notably, the PPCs of Paktian and Nangrahar invited the youth platform to become guest members of the committee, allowing them full participation in the council. The platforms also cooperate amongst each other to centralize their input for the HPC in Kabul. These successes may continue in 2018, as the President has acknowledged the importance of youth engagement in the peace process, and requested that the HPC establish a Women & Youth Advisory Board in 2018, a commitment that was re-affirmed by the HPC itself.

Accountable and responsive health services

In 2017 the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) was one of the ministries that spent most of its development budget on partnerships with NGOs. Despite a decrease in the total government budget of 2% in 2017 and 12% in 2018, the total budget for the health sector has increased only by 1%. Still, improving the management of the health budget remains a key concern. The MoPH is trying to find alternative financing and is lobbying the Cabinet and Parliament to approve the proposals. An advocacy committee has been established in the MoPH, which also includes a technical committee. Both SP partner AHO and Cordaid are members of the technical committee and participate in advocacy to increase the health sector budget and approve alternative healthcare financing. The introduction of a user fee in government hospitals was recently approved, but lobbying activities continue for the introduction of health insurance and tobacco taxation. Currently the lower house of Parliament and the Ministry of Finance are debating whether to introduce 100% taxation on tobacco, which will be used for the Health budget. At the local level, AHO has contributed to the MoPH's decision to engage hospital boards, which include representatives of health *shuras*, in the Provincial Public Health Coordination Committees.

Extractives

This trajectory focuses on eliminating the negative effects of mining on local communities. SP partner HRRAC has signed a MoU with the Ministry of Mines & Petroleum to work with local communities in Parwan province in the north of the country. SP partner HRRAC is working closely with local communities to familiarize them with the mining practices in their areas. They are directly engaging with local authorities through the Provincial Development Committee meetings and through meetings with sectorial directorates in Parwan province. Engaging the community in more meetings with the provincial government has improved communication. Furthermore, in two communities HRRAC piloted a complaint hearing mechanism, which has helped communities to raise issues with the authorities. One measure taken by the Ministry of Mines & Petroleum and the National Environmental Protection Agency was the recent installation of air pollution detectors in the Jabal Saraj community in Parwan.

2.2 Burundi

Inclusive and engendered peace

In 2017, our partner organizations for engendered peace formed an alliance. They developed and started implementing a national lobby plan. As a result of our lobby, the president of the National Communication Council has promised to increase the number of women in decision-making organs at the media organizations. The Council also put in place a certificate for gender-sensitive media. Our lobby with the mediation team for the Burundi peace talks and the Burundian Ministry of Foreign Affairs resulted in the participation of 16 women (out of 69 participants) in the dialogue process. There is also more general recognition of the importance of including women and youth in that process. At the provincial level, we developed four lobby action plans. These secured the commitment of several women parliamentarians from

those provinces to support parliamentary bills dealing with women's participation. An unexpected outcome was the set-up of income-generating activities (collective restaurants) by women's groups in the province of Rumonge.

Security and access to justice for all

Our efforts to build relations with the Ministry of Justice in 2016 paid off in 2017. Our lobby efforts resulted in a 17% increase of the budget allocated to the Ministry of Justice. Furthermore, after presenting a report on professional ethics we noticed a change in attitude in the authorities of the Ministry of Justice, who are now firmly committed to develop a code of ethics for the judges. Finally, there was also an unexpected outcome. A technical commission was established, directed by the Justice General Director to harmonize legal texts related to the local justice committees.

Inclusive economic growth: youth employment

Building on the work done in 2016 to improve the enabling environment for engagement between CSOs and decision makers at the local level, we managed to set up 48 coordination committees of youth organizations and communal authorities in 2017. As a result of our work, more than 250 youths from 13 communities have gained employment. Some unexpected lobby results include the set-up of a vocational training center, accepted by the Burundian Investment Promotion Agency (API); the allocation of 10% of the community development fund for the promotion of youth employment in eight communities; and a reduction of administrative costs and taxes for youth organizations in more than 50 communities.

Box 2: Technical justice committees

Partner organization AJCB conducted a technical validation workshop on the performance of local justice committees with judicial decision-makers from the Ministry of Justice and the Director General of Justice. The goal of the workshop was to support the harmonization of legal texts and revitalize local justice committees. As a direct result of this workshop, a technical commission was established at the Ministry of Justice tasked with drafting and amending laws concerning the local justice committees. The technical commission has already made progress in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the local justice system by amending laws aimed at increasing jurisdictional services and reducing corruption. This result showcases one of the ways in which our advocacy efforts have made an impact at the national level.

2.3 Central African Republic

Inclusive and engendered peace

The program partners and Cordaid have carried out various sensitizations, trainings and educational talks, sometimes under difficult circumstances, to raise awareness about gender-based violence (GBV). Religious and community leaders in the arrondissements of Bangui are key stakeholders in changing attitudes towards GBV and are a key target group for us. Our lobbying with decision makers has led to a number of achievements in terms of combatting GBV in the Central African Republic. One milestone was the creation of a National Unit to fight GBV in schools by the Ministry of National Education by ministerial decree on September 15, 2017. This National Unit complements the work that was started by teachers who are members of the Association of Women Teachers of the Central African Republic (AFECA). AFECA's mission is to fight GBV in schools and households. Another important result is the introduction by the Ministry of Finance of a budget in the 2018

Box 3: National Unit against GBV

Cordaid and local SP partner CERCLE have played leading roles in a long advocacy process in the fight against GBV in schools. CERCLE's advocacy efforts have targeted ministry officials, while also being actively involved in awareness campaigns and sensitization. In September 2017, a meeting between CERCLE and officials of the Ministry of Education resulted in the establishment of a *Cellule Nationale* within the Ministry of Education, tasked with combatting GBV in the education system. The Ministry of Education's favorable response to Cordaid and CERCLE's initiatives helped to open up civic space to lobby for the establishment of GBV Units within other key ministries.

Finance Law on Results-Based Financing for girls' schooling and the fight against GBV in schools. These achievements are a positive foundation for future advocacy for the establishment of a National Observatory for the fight against GBV.

Security and access to justice for all

At various high-level meetings SP partners have effectively put the needs of the victims of violent conflicts on the agenda. This has resulted in a presidential decree to create a steering committee that will guide the process of setting up the Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission (CVJRR). Eight out of 21 seats (38%) on the steering committee are reserved for civil society, three of which will be granted to victims' associations and two to human rights organizations. In addition, victims' organizations have helped to draft the CAR peace plan, an initiative of parliamentarians, which was subsequently adopted. The program has helped to organize victims on various occasions. About 5,000 victims from various parts of CAR marched in the 08 District of Bangui on the 11th of May, the day of commemoration for victims. Advocacy work done by the program partners has resulted in the reopening of the FATIMA High School, which had been closed since 2014 due to security concerns in the area where it is located.

2.4 Democratic Republic of Congo

Inclusive and engendered peace

An important lobby achievement of this trajectory in 2017 was the adoption of civil society recommendations by the NAP 1325 secretariat and other involved authorities during the revision process of NAP 1325. Recommendations included incorporating specific needs of rural women and aligning NAP 1325 with other international agendas such as the New Deal and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Furthermore, after receiving training from a SP partner, a group of girls created a network of female students in Kinshasa to promote women's political participation.

Security and access to justice for all

Our biggest lobby achievement in 2017 was the Minister of Justice's approval of the National Policy for the Reform of the Justice Sector. This policy incorporated many of our recommendations for improving access to justice. At the provincial level, based on our assessment of the security sector, the Provincial Commissioner of South Kivu deployed a police force in response to security concerns expressed by community members. In Kabare (South Kivu), we have set up local multi-stakeholder forums on security. In South Kivu, the SP partners are supporting the development of a provincial decree to set up a fund to establish local security committees (made up of police, local authorities, and community members). Finally, as a result of a joint civil society lobby the national parliament was prevented from voting in favor of a new NGO law, which would seriously restrict civic space.

Accountable and responsive health services

In 2016, the SP partners carried out a study on how to improve access to healthcare. As a result of our lobby based on this study, the Directorate of Community Health incorporated many of our recommendations into the new National Strategic Policy for Community Health Care, which will be finalized in 2018. Furthermore, Cordaid and its partners participated in the development of the provincial law on health cooperatives and compulsory health insurance in North Kivu. We expect the North Kivu Parliament to adopt this law in the first half of 2018.

Extractives

Our joint advocacy efforts with other civil society actors have managed to revive the review of the mining code reform process. The new mining code adopted by the national parliament incorporated many of the amendments proposed by civil society, e.g. on community development, artisanal and small-scale mining, and transparency. As a result of our community awareness raising local leaders from communities in the concession area of the Banro (Canadian multinational) mine in South Kivu and Maniema wrote a letter to the Banro CEO to ask for fair compensation and support for communities displaced by the company.

Box 4: Provincial decree on health

This year, our partner Action Humanitaire pour la Sante et Developpement Communautaire (AHUSADEC) made significant contributions to the development and adoption of a provincial decree on health cooperatives and compulsory health insurance in North Kivu. This achievement was the culmination of extensive lobby and advocacy efforts. The research conducted by our partner on quality health-care access has prompted government authorities to commit to the facilitation of accessible quality health care and the development of laws regulating the health sector. AHUSADEC facilitated the writing and adoption of this provincial decree by conducting technical writing workshops with provincial officials and health experts, and holding a series of meetings with key legislative stakeholders in the Provincial Ministry of Health and its specialized institutions. The draft of the decree has been examined by the North Kivu Provincial Assembly and will be adopted during the parliamentary session of March 2018.

2.5 Nigeria

Extractives

In 2017, the media campaigns initiated by SP partners ensured that the general public and relevant decision makers remained conscious of the need for a swift Ogoni clean-up. Our capacity development efforts increased community knowledge of the clean-up and its implications, and as a result these communities now conduct advocacy jointly. Additionally, women committees have started directly and independently advocating the Hydrocarbon Remediation Project (HYPREP). The National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA) has agreed to have community women participating in the monitoring and reporting of oil spills. Although bureaucratic bottlenecks in the Ministry of Environment prevented the free flow of available funds for the clean-up to the implementing agency HYPREP, HYPREP commenced delivery of some emergency measures to

Box 5: The Ogoni clean-up

In November 2017, the Vice-President of Nigeria issued a public statement at the National Summit on Environmental Governance in the Niger Delta in which he confirmed the set-up of the organizational structures (HYPREP) needed for the implementation of the clean-up. This sudden change was preceded by months of what was perceived to be a lackluster attitude on the part of the Federal Government. After the departure of the former Minister of Environment, no visible action had been taken to implement the clean-up. The announcement by the VP was the result of consistent lobby and advocacy activities by the SP partners, who organized public dialogues, social media campaigns, and stakeholder sensitization efforts. It has given impetus to the lobby and advocacy campaign to get the clean-up started, as it has provided our local SP partners with an important reference point for further advocacy in 2018 with regard to the implementation of the planned actions by the government.

Ogoni communities nonetheless. Another lobby achievement is that the National Assembly invited several SP partners to present their visions to the public hearing about NOSDRA and the Environmental Impact Assessment Acts. An unforeseen achievement was the Ministry of Environment's request for the support of two SP partners in the Environmental Impact Assessment review. The fact that faith-based organizations and youth committees are now actively involved in advocacy for a peaceful clean-up and peaceful coexistence in Ogoni communities, was another unexpected achievement.

2.6 South Sudan

Inclusive and engendered peace

Our training of local (traditional) leaders and women's and youth organizations on GBV had several positive results in different regions. We witnessed the establishment of judiciary police, who carried out investigations into sexual violence; a local radio station started to broadcast messages against GBV; and GBV victims received free psychosocial support and legal aid with support from two ministries and UNMISS. The judicial system adopted a more open attitude towards victims of GBV, e.g. by keeping family courts operational and by training (paramount) chiefs how to handle GBV cases. Our training of the Special Protection Unit (SPU) of the police led to their readiness to deal with the cases reported on the digital SGBV platform set up by our partner organizations. We also supported the participation of women's organizations in the peace process overseen by IGAD, which led to the incorporation in the final Addis Ababa document of a quota of 35% women in political positions in the country. After years of lobbying by South Sudanese civil society, the Maputo Protocol has been ratified and we are now pushing for its implementation via the Parliamentary Women Caucus, for example.

Security and access to justice for all

An important achievement of this trajectory is the commitment of the Law Reform Commission (LRC) to review the country's legal frameworks and identify shortcomings. They received our recommendations for improving and implementing the Security Sector Act (including the Police Act 2009, the National Security Act 2015, and the SPLA Act 2009). If accepted, the revised Act including our recommendations will be presented to parliament. At the same time, we helped to ensure fair trials in several regions by training members of the police, prison service, judiciary and special forces, as well as chiefs, and by establishing mobile courts. Finally, local communities managed to address injustices, either themselves or by engaging relevant stakeholders, and improve relations with security and justice providers. Communities in Magwi and Ayachi monitored incidents of insecurity and injustice and reported their findings to the police, and communities in Wau presented their security concerns to relevant security sector actors.

Extractives

Discussing our research paper on the community's 3% share of oil revenues led to the formation of a Community Development Committee (CDC) in the oil-producing region of South Sudan. After we disseminated relevant laws to local communities, they were able to identify concerns related to oil extraction and advocate for change with their leaders. They in turn strategically engaged with state authorities, oil companies, and the national government to take action. Regarding the health risks associated with oil spills, the CDC requested relevant stakeholders to inform communities and suggest potential ways of mitigating the problem. The local authorities formed a committee to work with oil companies and monitor oil spills. Oil companies and the government organized an awareness event in Palouch. Youth from Melut prompted the Parliamentary Committee on Petroleum to visit the region and investigate the oil spills. A dialogue between communities, civil society, the Parliamentary Committee on Petroleum, the Ministers of Health and of Environment and academics resulted in the problems being presented to the House of Parliament.

Box 6: Combating GBV in Imatong State

Thanks to GBV community trainings, our local partners EVE and StewardWomen succeeded in bringing together a diverse group of community leaders from Imatong State (traditional leaders, religious representatives, women leaders, and youth leaders) to discuss GBV in their communities. As a result of these training events the community representatives agreed to host monthly forums to evaluate their performance in addressing GBV in their communities. With support from our partner the South Sudan Law Society (SSLs), the outcomes of the monthly forums have been discussed in the newly-formed local government working group on the rule of law. The forums have also provided input to authorities at the state level. One notable result is the increased community support for the drafting of a state law to abolish the traditional practice of girl-child compensation. In the case of murder, this practice dictates that a young girl from the family of the killer be traded as compensation to the family of the deceased. This particular outcome illustrates the impact of our advocacy efforts in strengthening the dialogue on GBV through multiple levels of governance and has the potential to be implemented in other states in South Sudan.

2.7 Overarching trends: civic space, youth and women

Space for civil society

The progress reported above indicates that in 2017, Cordaid and its partners have increasingly managed to engage effectively with stakeholders at a high level. For a large part, this is thanks to the contacts and ties with important stakeholders that were established in 2016. Although the country reports do not mention severe restrictions on activities, we are aware that civic space is shrinking in the program countries. Examples include the NGO bill passed in Burundi in late 2017 and the NGO bills that have been prepared by legislators in DRC and Nigeria (which will be subjected to vote in parliament in the course of 2018). It is becoming increasingly dangerous for civil society activists to carry out their work. This also pertains to the realm of the Cordaid SP. A leader of one of our partner organizations was arrested on dubious grounds. It is also becoming increasingly difficult for our country office staff and partners to obtain a visa for the Schengen zone and the USA. In several cases this has prevented people from attending international meetings and made them miss important advocacy opportunities. As can be seen in the progress report on the international trajectory of civic space we are increasing our efforts to counter this negative trend.

Inclusion of youth and women

The development of the Gender, Peace & Security (GPS) Barometer has enabled us to start collecting stories from women whose voices are usually not heard in policy arenas. We have also started to increase our focus on youth in our work at the country level, especially in the inclusive peace trajectory. These experiences made us realize that we need to make a special effort to ensure that not only the most vocal and best-connected women and youth are reached in our programs. We also need to prioritize women and youth from rural areas, from (ethnic) minorities, from different age groups and with disabilities in our capacity development activities to ensure that their specific needs and recommendations are included in our policy messages.

2.8 Analysis: leverage of local L&A to national L&A

In section 3.2 we will indicate the importance of establishing links between the national level lobby and our efforts at the international level. In the same vein, it is important to connect the local with the national level. By working to strengthen the capacity of local schools and teachers to combat GBV in school curricula, one of our partners in CAR was able to get the Ministry of Education to change policy and further increase national political will to fight GBV. In Nigeria, Cordaid and partners harmonized lobby and advocacy efforts, working to influence policy in Port Harcourt and Abuja and at the community level in Ogoniland. Our collaboration lends legitimacy to our message at the national level and has helped us to achieve policy results with regard to revising environmental governance laws and implementing the Ogoni clean-up. In some cases, focusing on local level processes can provide an alternative strategy to circumvent political stagnation at the national level. In South Sudan, where there has been little progress in the national peace dialogue and the IGAD-led process of revitalizing the peace process, one of our partners managed to successfully promote and strengthen local peace dialogues instead.

The lessons we have learned throughout 2017, offer concrete ideas to adapt our lobby and advocacy strategies for 2018. This includes developing strategies for extending successful local actions, as we noticed that these can indeed create leverage for L&A efforts at the national level.

3. PROGRESS IN INTERNATIONAL L&A

3.1 Analysis per topic

3.1.1 Inclusive and engendered peace

A key achievement in 2017 was the roll-out of the Cordaid ‘Handbook on Integrating Gender in Peacebuilding and Statebuilding’. Our country offices in DRC and Burundi have used the handbook as a reference work for their lobby and advocacy efforts. UNDP showed interest in using the handbook in New Deal countries, and the US Department of State intends to develop a training activity for international actors based on it.

We have further developed the GPS Barometer, a participatory tool to collect stories from local women about their daily safety situation, together with our country offices and partners in DRC and Afghanistan. The data that are collected provide strong evidence from remote areas, which will be used to inform policy-making on GPS. The US Department of

State is interested in exploring how they could use this tool. Follow-up is needed in 2018, as well as outreach to other international actors.

As a result of Cordaid's board membership in the former Global Acceleration Instrument (GAI), now the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF), the fund has become more sensitive towards the needs of civil society. It also has a better understanding of the needs of women and men working in conflict countries. Programmatically, the WPHF's call for proposals for Burundi may offer possibilities for synergy with activities within our 'inclusive and engendered peace' trajectory in Burundi.

We organized several lobby meetings, round tables and side-events at the Commission on the Status of Women and at the UNSCR 1325 anniversary in New York, as well as with the Dutch Parliament, which focused on the experiences and insights of women from the six SP countries. Through these activities, we caught the attention of decision makers from UN WOMEN, UNDP, NATO and the Dutch Parliament, for example. In 2018 we will follow up on these initial contacts.

Two years of advocacy efforts by our partner the United Network of Young Peacebuilders (UNOY) regarding the important UNSCR 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security, bore fruit in 2017. Jordan decided to set up the Champions of Youth group of 22 member states to ensure that the resolution results in tangible action. Another result was the recognition of UNSCR 2250 by EU High Representative Mogherini, who demonstrated the EU's desire to collaborate on UNSCR 2250 by organizing a consultation for the UN's progress study. Furthermore, Search for Common Ground and UNOY carried out the Global Survey of Youth-led Organizations working on Peace and Security with the support of the SP. This fed into the UN's progress study, which is scheduled for publication in March 2018. It will be discussed during an open debate in the Security Council in April 2018.

3.1.2 Security and access to justice for all

This international trajectory was developed in close synergy with the country trajectories, specifically those in Afghanistan, Burundi, CAR, and DRC. Cordaid was selected to participate in the Africa-EU civil society forum meeting in the run-up to the 5th African Union-EU Summit in Abidjan. The civil society declaration with recommendations on such matters as conflict prevention, peacebuilding, democratic governance, and civic participation managed to influence the outcomes of this important summit.

Furthermore, we organized a workshop (in Addis Abeba) on the role of the African Union and regional African economic communities in peace and security for partners and country office staff from Burundi, CAR, South Sudan, and DRC in collaboration with the African Security Sector Network (ASSN). This helped to prepare for concrete country-specific advocacy activities in 2018. Important advocacy opportunities will be related to the Dutch temporary seat on the UN Security Council, where our six SP countries will be regularly discussed.

In The Hague, the strategic partnerships of DSH (CARE NL, Cordaid, GPPAC, NIMD and PAX) have teamed up to provide joint input on the Integrated Foreign and Security Strategy (GBVS). Several of our recommendations have been incorporated into the GBVS, such as putting human security at the center of the strategy and emphasizing conflict prevention and community-based, gender-sensitive peace building.

Participating in advocacy networks such as EurAc, the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office, Crisis Action, and the Broad Human Rights Platform BMO has enabled us to include our insights in joint policy briefs. These networks also facilitated lobby meetings in which representatives from our strategic partnership met with officials. For example, our CAR advocacy coordinator visited Brussels – in the context of a Crisis Action campaign on the CAR – during which she informed EU officials of the current situation in the country and made recommendations for the EU's response. The Crisis Action campaign contributed to the vote in the UNSC on 15 November to add 900 peacekeepers to the UN peacekeeping force in CAR. The meetings between Dutch parliamentarians and our Afghanistan Country Director in the context of the parliamentary debate on the prolongation of the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan is another example.

3.1.3 Accountable and responsive health services

As part of our advocacy for promoting CSO participation in Universal Health Care (UHC), in 2017 Cordaid continued its engagement with the UHC2030 Civil Society Engagement Mechanism, through which we supported the UHC2013 Alliance in becoming a broad-based and effective movement.

The Cordaid country offices in Kabul and Goma organized public events on the importance of UHC, in which provincial and national policymakers as well as the international community participated. In this way, we linked local-level analyses to the policy debates at the national and international levels. Both meetings led to the building of coalitions to promote UHC. In Kabul, Cordaid SP, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Finance and the World Health Organization

(WHO) started collaborating to develop alternative options for health financing such as results-based financing, now that international support for health is decreasing in Afghanistan. In Goma, Cordaid SP, other NGOs, the provincial Ministry of Health, local CODESAs (health committees), some health insurance cooperatives (*mutuelles*) and WHO and UNICEF have joined hands to work on promoting health insurance. By also presenting our work on UHC to the desk officers for Afghanistan and DRC in Geneva, we are trying to gain as much leverage as possible with WHO.

We also gave a presentation at the EU about the long-term financial sustainability of health care in Afghanistan. This was purposefully done at the time that the EU was discussing its new Afghanistan country strategy. Indeed, we recognized several of our suggestions in the final version of this strategy.

Finally, Cordaid managed to get civil society's voice included at a panel discussion during the UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in New York, emphasizing the importance of strengthening country-led health systems that leave no one behind, specifically in fragile states. Based on a report by a partner organization from DRC, we strongly recommended emphasizing social inclusion and promoting community engagement as key contributing factors to UHC. This panel was attended by high-level decision makers from donor and recipient countries including Japan, France, Kenya, and Uganda, as well as UN representatives, the Director General of WHO, representatives from foundations and the private sector.

3.1.4 Extractives

In order to ensure that our experiences on the ground feed into the international policy processes of governments and companies, Cordaid decided to become a member of the European Partnership on Responsible Mining (EPRM) initiated by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. An important decision taken by the EPRM in 2017 was to define human rights due diligence, as stipulated by EU regulation on conflict minerals, as a guiding theme. Human rights due diligence is an important instrument for achieving the EPRM's goal of improving the social and economic conditions of mineworkers and local communities. Most of the proposals selected in the first EPRM call for proposals in late 2017 also clearly contributed to EPRM's goal. The European Commission was working on the operationalization of accompanying measures for its regulation of conflict minerals and was open to recommendations by NGOs on this issue. As for oil exploitation in Nigeria, given that the Dutch-British company Shell had major influence in the Niger Delta, Dutch civil servants at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs appreciated receiving updates and policy recommendations from local organizations working in the Niger Delta.

No activities have been carried out yet related to the integration of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in IDPS/New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States; this planned action will be taken up in 2018.

3.1.5 Space for civil society

In 2017, Cordaid and its partners addressed concerns about the shrinking political space at various international fora, including the UN General Assembly, HLPF, IDPS, the EC Policy forum for Development and the European Development Days (EDD). In these fora, we tabled issues regarding civic space and called for the continued support of a wide range of international development actors. Key southern CSO partners (from CAR, South Sudan, and Afghanistan) were capacitated to directly and successfully engage in these fora and to present compelling cases to underscore the concerns about shrinking civic space. In addition to formal engagement in IDPS as a designated constituency, the Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS) staged various landmark sessions at major international events such as the EDD & EU Partnership Forum (with EC DEVCO) and HLPF (with UNDP Youth and UNOY).

Proactive engagement in various multi-stakeholder platforms has led to policy achievements regarding the following agendas: Universal Health Coverage; Women, Peace and Security; Youth, Peace and Security; the 2030 Agenda (SDG implementation); and International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS). One of our biggest achievements involves the Afghanistan SDG process. Before the HLPF in New York, we co-organized a CSO meeting hosted at the Netherlands Embassy in Kabul to review the Afghan SDG progress report. On behalf of the Afghan CSOs, Cordaid presented recommendations at the Afghanistan side event at the HLPF. As a result, the Afghan Ministry of Economy invited NGOs to participate in several of the working groups that are part of the SDG implementation structure in Afghanistan.

In the Netherlands, Cordaid – as member of the BMO – actively participated in dialogues with the Human Rights Department of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs on civic space. As a result, all Dutch embassies received official instructions on how to deal with shrinking civic space and how to protect human rights defenders in their countries. Furthermore, we continued to be part of the civic space initiative consisting of a group of SPs and DSO to jointly work on defending civic space in SP countries through an action learning methodology. Cordaid acts as country lead for Burundi, one of the five pilot countries. The pilot is expected to kick off in mid-2018.

3.2 Analysis of international lobby and advocacy and links with countries

Our international L&A is closely linked to the thematic trajectories in the countries. Achieving change at the national level often requires policy changes at the regional and /or international levels. Equally, international policy debates can benefit from input from the countries where they will have an impact. The same international actors are working at the national or even sub-national levels in the SP countries, as well as in New York, Washington, Brussels, Geneva, and Addis Ababa. It is becoming increasingly clear that we need a joint strategy to have maximum impact on policy areas such as Agenda 2030 (SDGs), Gender, Peace & Security, Youth, Peace & Security, and Universal Health Coverage. This joint strategy would combine targeted lobby activities at the national level with those at the regional and international levels.

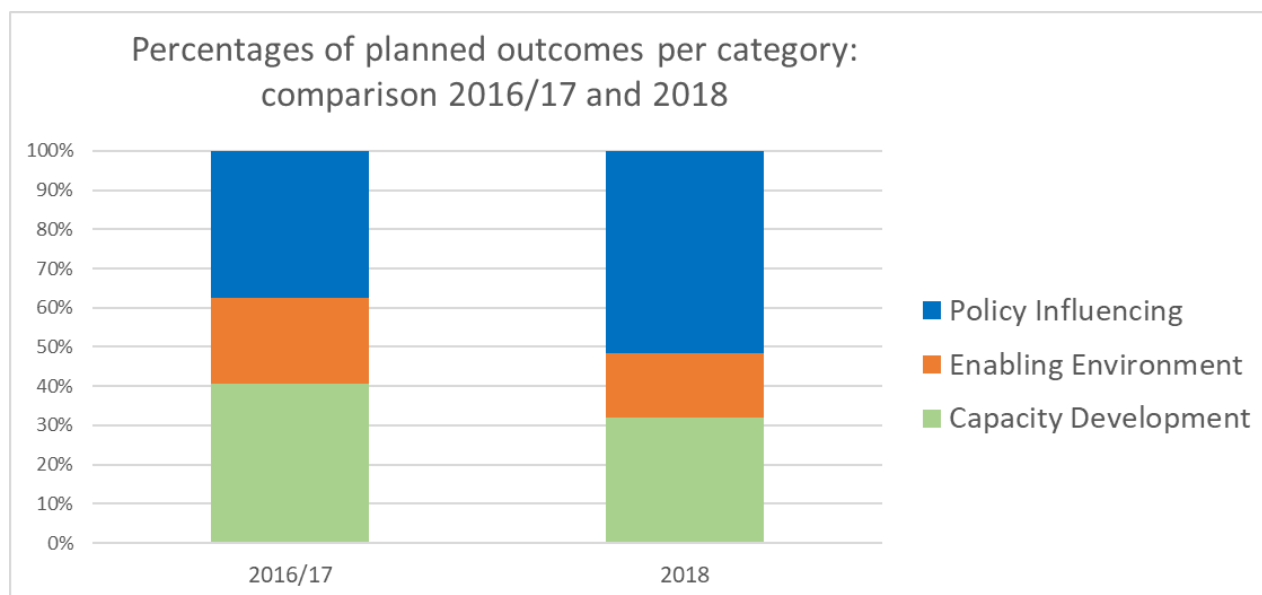
The overarching international lobby trajectory of civic space was created in response to the restrictions imposed on civil society worldwide. Coordinated advocacy engagement in the Netherlands and internationally helps to safeguard a conducive enabling environment for civil society in the SP countries to engage on these issues with national governments and other stakeholders at the national level. Ensuring linkages between activities at the national and international levels creates space for institutionalized dialogue with duty bearers at both levels.

A key success factor of our international lobby is our ability to transfer abstract international processes and phrases (such as conflict prevention, sustainable peace, and community participation) to the concrete contexts we work in and vice versa. Many of the discussions on the highest level tend to be broad and general, but when contextualized, they begin to take on depth and meaning. This has led to more frequent information sharing between our advocacy colleagues in country offices and the international lobbyists in The Hague. By strategizing together, creating a division of labor, and updating each other about policy developments and opportunities, our work has started to yield positive results and make an impact. This process started in 2017, but it definitely needs to be vigorously followed up in 2018.

4. DRAWING LESSONS

4.1 Theory of Change and L&A strategies

Detailed outcomes have been planned with the implementing partners for each of the 17 trajectories. Every year the partners indicate what changes they hope to achieve among the targeted stakeholders and formulate these in outcomes. Categorizing these outcomes reveals that in 2016-2017 there was more emphasis on developing the capacity for lobby and advocacy at various levels (ranging from communities to national networks) and on creating the enabling environment for L&A by engaging decision makers and setting agendas. In 2017 we observed a shift of attention towards policy influencing. Building the awareness of various stakeholders on the key topics in our trajectories has already resulted in the commitment of and first actions taken by many decision makers. As the program advances, there are more outcomes planned to influence policy, so that the targets of our lobby activities will adjust policies and laws as well as improve the procedures and practices of their policies.



4.2 Strategies to develop the capacity of implementing partners

In 2017 we boosted our efforts to strengthen the capacities of our local partner organizations. In all six countries, workshops and trainings were the most important capacity development method (50% of our efforts), combined with coaching, sharing of experiences, learning by doing, and expert advice. The Theory of Change approach used in the partnership was new for most implementing partners. However, now that they have learned how to work with it, they have all come to appreciate its value. The joint workshops for ToC development and monitoring progress are good learning opportunities. Many of the lessons learnt can directly be applied to improve the lobby effort. Some common lessons learnt include the value of working together in a coalition and the need to establish strong internal structures to support the lobby staff of an organization. Good lobby results obviously depend on the skills of the lobbyist, but supportive working conditions are important as well. A problem for capacity development occurring in various countries is the frequent staff turnover in our partner organizations, which is one of the reasons why we have not made as much progress as we had hoped.

In spite of all these efforts, the assessment results do not show improved capacity yet. In 2016 we carried out an organizational L&A capacity assessment for each partner organization and a joint programmatic assessment for each trajectory. This resulted in a capacity development plan for each country. In 2017 we repeated these assessments. When comparing the baseline assessment of 2016 with the 2017 assessment for each country, we see slightly lower scores on four of the five main elements that define the L&A capacity. After careful analysis we found the following explanations for the lower scores: 1) new staff recruited by partner organizations to carry out the SP had less expertise than the staff members who participated in the 2016 assessment; 2) partners answered more honestly and Cordaid staff who now knew the partners better were more thorough in their questioning; 3) in 2017 it was clear for partners that the assessment would not be used as a selection instrument, but as a tool for developing a capacity development plan. In 2018 we will make a greater effort to ensure that our implementing partners' scores on L&A capacity improve.

ABOUT CORDAID

Cordaid strives to end poverty and exclusion. We do this in the world's most fragile and conflict-affected areas as well as in the Netherlands. We engage local communities to rebuild trust and resilience and increase people's self-reliance. Our professionals provide humanitarian assistance and create opportunities to improve security, healthcare and education, and stimulate inclusive economic growth. We are supported by 288,000 private donors in the Netherlands and by a worldwide partner network. This gives us the leverage and implementing power to solve problems and create structural change in the most challenging settings.

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