

# ADVOCATING FOR GIRLS RIGHTS

# GIRLS ADVOCACY ALLIANCE

## MID-TERM REVIEW SYNTHESIS REPORT

DECEMBER 2018



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**GIRLS ADVOCACY ALLIANCE:**  
Advocating for Girls Rights  
Mid-term review synthesis report  
December 2018

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Mid-term Review (MTR) synthesis report is based on the MTR reports elaborated for all 14 components of the Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA) programme 'Advocating for Girls' Rights': ten countries, the Netherlands, two regional levels Africa and Asia, and the international level. The MTR team would like to extend their sincerest thanks to everyone involved in this challenging exercise in the period June – December 2018.

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We hope that the MTR process and the MTR synthesis report will contribute to further strengthen interventions of the GAA programme in the remaining period of implementation (2019-2020), bringing about positive change for girls and young women.

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## GLOSSARY / ACRONYMS

ACERWC	African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
ADB	Asian Development Bank
APC	Alliance Programme Committee
APT	Alliance Programme Team
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AU	African Union
CAT	Capacity Assessment Tool
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CM	Child Marriage
CL	Child Labour
CRC	Committee on the Right of the Child
CSEC	Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CT	Child Trafficking
DCI	Defence for Children International
DCI-ECPAT	Defence for Children – ECPAT Netherlands
EAC	East African Community
EC	European Commission
ECM	Ending Child Marriage
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECPAT Int.	End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes
ECPDM	European Centre for Development Policy Centre for Development Policy Management
EE	Economic Exclusion
EU	European Union
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
GAA	Girls Advocacy Alliance
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GIMAC	Gender is My Agenda Campaign
GMACL	Global March against Child Labour
GYW	Girls and Young Women
HLPF	High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
HRC	Human Rights Council
HTP	Harmful Traditional Practices
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
MDT	Multi-Disciplinary Teams
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MMDA	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies
MTR	Mid-term Review
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NACG	National Action and Coordination Groups to End Violence against Children
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIRN	National Inter-Religious Network
OH	Outcome Harvesting
OSEC	Online sexual exploitation of children
PME&L	Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
RGM	Ready Made Garment
RNE	Royal Netherlands Embassy
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SACG	South Asia Coordinating Group on Violence against Children
SAIEVAC	South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children

SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TdH	Terre des Hommes
ToC	Theory of Change
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UN	United Nations
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
WRO	Women's Rights Organisation

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA) is a joint initiative of Plan International Nederland, Terre des Hommes Netherlands and Defence for Children - ECPAT Netherlands. The GAA is led by Plan International Nederland and is implemented in strategic partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) under the Dialogue and Dissent framework. The goal of the five year GAA programme 'Advocating for Girls' Rights' (2016 – 2020) is that, by 2020, governments and private sector actors ensure that girls and young women in ten countries in Africa and Asia feel free from gender-based violence and are economically empowered. The GAA programme is implemented in Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Bangladesh, India, Nepal and the Philippines. These programmes are supported by interventions aimed at influencing policies at the international level of multinational institutions, and at the regional level of African and Asian Regional bodies and in the Netherlands.

The GAA Theory of Change (see Annex A) aims at the elimination of gender-based violence and economic exclusion of girls and young women. The programme will pay particular attention to gender-based violence, commercial sexual exploitation of children, sexual violence and abuse, Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting, child trafficking, child marriage, economic exclusion, access to post-primary education and vocational training, decent work and female entrepreneurship. The Girls Advocacy Alliance's Theory of Change is structured around four strategic goals:

- Effective implementation of legislation and public policies and improved practices of government actors;
- Improved policies and practices of private sector actors;
- Increased public support;
- Increased influence of CSOs/networks (girls' and young women's organisations) on government and private sector.

The pathways of change each address one of these goals, yet they are intertwined and mutually supportive. Each of the strategic goals is associated with a key stakeholder in gender-based violence and economic exclusion: governments and intergovernmental bodies; private sector actors; traditional, religious and community leaders; and CSOs and CSO networks.

The GAA expects that three different stages can be distinguished in these change processes. The first stage entails the generation of public and political attention to certain: 'agenda setting'. Adoption or revision of laws and policies is the following stage: 'policy change'. The third stage is about effective implementation and follow up of existing laws and policies by key stakeholders mentioned above: 'practice change'.

Until now, in total more than 60 local CSOs have been involved in the GAA programme as (implementing) partners organisations. At the level of the country, regional and international programme components, the GAA almost always consists of a combination of alliance organisations, local CSOs, thematic CSOs and networks and in some countries also women organisations. Implementation of the programme components is coordinated by Alliance Programme Teams (APTs) of (local) representatives of the alliance organisations involved.

Halfway the programme, the Mid-term Review (MTR) aimed to assess the effectiveness of the GAA programme and identify lessons learned in lobby and advocacy as well as in CSO capacity development. In each Programme Component, an extensive MTR process (June – December 2018) has taken place which resulted in fourteen separate reports and formed the basis for this underlying synthesis report. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies has been applied. The GAA program has worked from the very beginning with the methodology 'Outcome Harvesting' to identify and track outcomes. The Outcome Lists compiled by the APTs since the start of the programme formed the starting point for the MTR. The same applies for positive and less successful outcome stories elaborated within the framework of the MTR.

After 2,5 years of the GAA programme, the overall analysis of the GAA 2020 outcomes shows that important progress has been made related to the GBV and EE themes. Most signs relate to GBV themes (particularly Ending Child Marriage, Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Child Trafficking). At GAA overall level, most changes are related with agenda setting and

practice changes; policy changes are reported less frequently. Most progress is reported within the community pathway and the government pathway. Within the CSO pathway, a moderate number of outcomes are reported. Progress towards the expected outcomes for 2020 in the Private Sector Pathway is less advanced. The majority of the outcomes are related to changes at local and district level.

At community level, awareness raising contributed to essential behaviour changes of key leaders and youth, now actively engaging with GBV themes, and linkages were created with local government. As an effect of increased awareness, more early marriages and other harmful traditional practices (HTPs) were prevented and reported to the authorities by community members. This requires possibilities to provide shelter and legal assistance, and there is a need to look more at underlying factors of HTPs in order to better address them. GAA partners have succeeded in establishing collaboration with media to reach a larger audience, resulting in varying successes. The focus on promoting gender and child-sensitive reporting on GAA seems very relevant. A challenging factor is that mainstream media seems difficult to influence.

Implementing partners made good progress related to the Government Pathway. They are well able to draw attention to GBV and EE issues, and to engage with local and district governments. GAA partners use their - often long term - relationships and expertise to contributing to a better functioning of local/district structures. At national level, in a number of countries GAA partners also succeeded in working closely with (line) ministries; GAA partners and alliance members generally opt for a 'non-confrontational' approach and are involved in policy development processes through dialogue and the contribution of specific thematic expertise. GAA partners demonstrated to have the capacity to facilitate these processes. In several countries, working with human rights mechanisms and regional bodies is supporting policy influencing efforts at the national level.

On the CSO pathway, a moderate number of signs are reported. Experience has shown that working with CSO networks has yielded more and immediate benefit and contributed to improved lobby and advocacy. GAA organisations mostly collaborate with existing CSO networks, like-minded CSOs and thematically related networks on e.g. CSEC and child rights organisations.

Within GAA, CSOs play an important role in promoting the GAA agenda by facilitating girls and young women to participate in lobby and advocacy processes around themes that concern them. Youth advocates initiated collective action by implementing their national advocacy plans on GAA related themes. Youth was successfully facilitated to have access to the international and regional spaces.

The limited number of examples of cooperation with the Private Sector illustrates that progress within this pathway has been a challenge for many APTs. Specific skills and long-term relationship building are necessary to bring progress on a larger scale. Support is needed from the Netherlands in order to facilitate exchange of experiences in working with the private sector.

The international component of the GAA programme is to a large extent on track towards its envisaged outcomes for 2020 with regards to human rights mechanisms and support for youth advocacy, the incorporation of evidence based inputs of CSOs into the work of CEDAW and UPR, and the monitoring of the performance on girls' rights and GAA themes by human rights monitoring bodies. Working with country APTs on reporting to the human rights mechanisms has strengthened linkages between national and international level advocacy. Challenges remain, particularly with regards to the complex international political context and increasing conservatism.

The regional programme component in Africa seems to be effective in working with African regional governance bodies, CSO networks and Youth Advocates. Most progress reported is related to putting context-specific GAA themes and issues on the agendas of relevant governance bodies, notably Child Marriage (CM), Commercial and Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) and Child Trafficking (CT), inclusion of girls, and strengthening sub-regional and regional monitoring and accountability mechanisms. Currently, themes and issues like CM, CT, CSEC, Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Economic Empowerment (EE) get more attention at regional and sub-regional

level and GAA could make more use of this momentum. Relevant efforts were made to engage with media and to facilitate access of youth advocates to international spaces.

The regional programme component in Asia has made important progress in the regions policy and practice environment with regards to GBV and EE themes. Strong engagement with regional intergovernmental bodies, active and able technical support on GAA issues, and clear advocacy asks contributed to the progress towards envisaged outcomes. The APT should adapt to shifting political contexts in the region (leadership changes, governments' openness to NGOs and CSOs), and explore ways to strengthen the visibility of GAA messages in its various engagements.

The programme component aimed at influencing Dutch public and private policies and practices on GAA issues showed partial progress. GAA organisations have been engaging with the IMVO covenants, and there is an identified need to develop a joint GAA strategy (joint strategy and policy asks, concrete business case, strategic collaboration with other actors). Influencing public policies with regard to GAA themes was effectively done through participation in relevant networks, outcomes indicate moderate progress. Outcomes are mostly related to GBV/EE topics, at agenda setting and policy change level. Both components (private and public sector) would gain from stronger mutual alignment of actions aimed at the other component.

Over 750 outcomes have been reported halfway the programme. Based on the updated and consolidated Outcome Lists per programme component, 20% of the outcomes of each programme component has been selected for substantiation<sup>1</sup>, with exception of Ghana and Ethiopia and India, where 100% and 61%, respectively, of outcomes has been selected. Substantiation of the outcomes was in the majority of cases conducted by external consultants. Overall, 39 % of all reported outcomes has been substantiated and sufficiently validated, confirming the outcome descriptions, and in the majority of cases also the contribution and significance. This is in line with generally accepted standards for Outcome Harvesting.

The tailor-made and locally owned capacity development activities – based on information from participatory Capacity Assessments conducted by all local NGO partners - contributed to increased capacities for Lobby and Advocacy of GAA partners. Outcome Harvesting meetings, organizational strengthening, specific support on PME and support in the field of lobby and advocacy were assessed as particularly useful in this respect. The joint meetings (ToC, Outcome Harvesting, annual planning meetings) have been important components of capacity development, confirming and facilitating the concept of mutual learning. The capacity development activities turned out to be crucial for enhancement of GAA partners lobby and advocacy outcomes, notably enhanced understanding and knowledge on how to undertake lobby and advocacy initiatives (advocacy targets, formulation of policy asks, evidence based advocacy). The alliance adopted three central Learning Questions, linked to its overall Theory of Change. These were insufficiently followed up, just like cross-country and cross-programme learning.

The GAA collaboration provided relevant added value by sharing complementary thematic expertise, capacities and networks, the use of a joint PME system, and youth advocacy. The added value could be further explored by creating more alignment of activities, increasing the visibility of GAA to enhance advocacy efforts, and by strategizing cooperation with other actors.

Learning and sharing knowledge is identified as the most important element that requires improvement within the GAA programme. More efforts should be focused on structured learning at various levels: facilitating cross-country and cross-regional learning, and learning within the GAA overall programme. Regular meetings (including Skype meetings) are explicitly considered as an important pre-condition for cross programme learning, and development of joint strategies and improvement of the different approaches to increase the lobby and advocacy results.

<sup>1</sup> Substantiation refers to the confirmation of the substance of an outcome description by knowledgeable external stakeholder(s). This step is meant to enhance the reliability of the evidence of the observed change in the outcome description.



In order to further increase effectiveness of the lobby and advocacy efforts, more focus can be brought in the GAA programme to enhance outreach and to facilitate up scaling of practice changes. Linkages between actors across the different pathways could be further strengthened, as well as linkages between local, district and national levels. An area for further strengthening of sustainability aspects of the GAA programme is organisational strengthening of local CSO partners, particularly more attention could be given to financial sustainability.

Adaptive programming has proven to be an inclusive and empowering approach. It facilitates timely adaptation of the GAA programme. The PME tools are generally rated as comprehensive and significant, yet at the same time as intensive, requiring much documentation. Additionally, the importance of refresher trainings has also been noted, as well as the need to streamline information flows (including accessibility of information).

**General recommendations for focus, strategy and activities 2019-2020:**

- Focus on influencing key leaders and /or networks of higher level leaders;
- Build synergies with other actors working on similar GAA issues, such as specialized CSOs, networks of CSOs and/or national alliances/institutes, research institutions, multi-lateral institutions, media actors, opinion leaders and make use of (existing) research;
- Develop a comprehensive approach on youth advocacy (including capacity development for meaningful youth participation on the national, regional and international level);
- Explore the potential to link advocacy efforts on local-district-national level and between the different pathways and strengthen capacities to enhance evidence-based advocacy;
- Focus on the capacity development on capability to adapt and self-renew: understand and navigate the policy environment and have access to relevant public and private decision makers;
- Enhance the capacity of GAA to include human rights mechanism and regional bodies in policy influencing;
- Enhance the capacity to engage with the private sector for good practices (strategies, approaches) and explore opportunities collaborate with specialized organisations;
- Create a cross-programme learning structure and an effective, relevant and practical knowledge sharing mechanism;
- Improve the quality and accuracy of Outcome Harvesting processes and documentation of outcomes;
- Support implementing partners to increase their financial sustainability.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA) is a joint initiative of Plan International Nederland, Terre des Hommes Netherlands and Defence for Children - ECPAT Netherlands. The GAA is led by Plan International Nederland and is implemented in strategic partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the Dialogue and Dissent framework. GAA envisions a world wherein all girls and young women enjoy equal rights and opportunities, and benefit equally from development outcomes.

The goal of the five year GAA programme 'Advocating for Girls' Rights' (2016 – 2020) is that, by 2020, governments and private sector actors ensure that girls and young women in ten countries in Africa and Asia feel free from gender-based violence and are economically empowered. The GAA programme is implemented in Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Bangladesh, India, Nepal and the Philippines. These programmes are supported by interventions aimed at influencing policies in The Netherlands and at the international level of multinational institutions, and African and Asian Regional bodies. Fourteen Alliance Programme Committees (APTs) are responsible for the implementation of these 14 Programme Components.

To realise its overall goal, the GAA applies a broad spectrum lobby and advocacy interventions to increase public support; to improve policies and practices of corporate/private sector actors, to seek implementation of effective legislation and public policies; and to improve practices of government actors in support of the prevention and elimination of gender-based violence (GBV) and economic exclusion (EE) of girls and young women. At the same time, the GAA focuses on the strengthening of capacities of civil society organisations and networks to influence government and corporate/private sector actors to eliminate gender-based violence and economic exclusion. The programme especially focuses on gender-based violence, commercial sexual exploitation of children, sexual violence and abuse, female genital mutilation/cutting, child marriage, economic exclusion, access to post-primary education and vocational training, decent work and female entrepreneurship (See Annex B: Overview of GAA Programme (sub)themes).

The programme is implemented by more than 60 Local NGO partners and networks of Plan International Nederland, Terre des Hommes Netherlands and Defence for Children - ECPAT Netherlands with their respective networks in the countries and regions.

Halfway its programme, the GAA engaged in a review and reflection process. The Mid-term Review (MTR) was designed to assess the effectiveness of the GAA programme and identify lessons learned in lobby and advocacy and Civil Society Organisation (CSO) capacity development. In each country, in the Netherlands, at regional levels and at international level, an extensive MTR process has taken place which resulted in 14 separate reports. In addition, a 'partnership assessment' and a GAA staff survey were conducted in the Netherlands, focussing on the added value of the collaboration of the Alliance Members. This underlying synthesis MTR report provides an overview of the main findings, lessons learned, conclusions and recommendations for the further development and implementation of the GAA program in 2019-2020.

## 2. METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

Halfway its programme, the GAA engaged in an internal review and reflection process; the MTR was designed to assess the effectiveness of the GAA programme and identify lessons learned in lobby and advocacy and CSO capacity development. The MTR was implemented in the period June-December 2018 and designed as an internal review, facilitated by an external lead consultant at overall level. The GAA MTR team consisted of the external lead consultant, the coordinator of the GAA programme and the PME officer involved in the GAA programme. The underlying synthesis report has been prepared by the Lead Consultant with input from the other MTR team members.

The MTR at Programme Component level was designed to answer two core questions:

1. To what extent is GAA so far **achieving its objectives, looking at intermediate and 2020 outcomes and programme baselines?**
2. What are the **identified success factors and challenges** that influence the extent to which the GAA achieves its objectives, and how can the alliance **apply these success factors to strengthen program interventions?**

The GAA MTR focused on usefulness, applicability and learning on and for the programme and its interlinkages and synergy between national, regional, international and at overall GAA level. All fourteen Program Components (ten countries, the Netherlands, two regional levels Africa and Asia, and the international level) have had their own GAA MTR process which resulted in 14 separate MTR reports.

Based on the standard Terms of Reference elaborated by the overall MTR team, the APTs developed their context specific Term of Reference and selected in most cases an external consultant or an external consultants team to perform the MTR. In the case of India, a mixed team of internal and external reviewers was selected, whereby the internal members do work at Terre des Hommes and Plan International India, but are not directly involved in the implementation of the GAA programme.

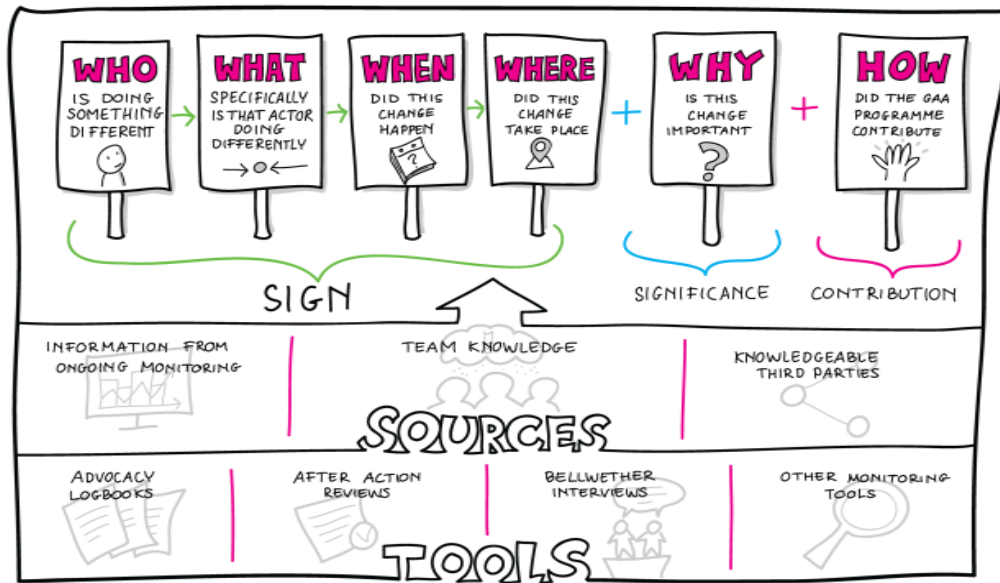
The APT in the Netherlands opted also for a mixed team; the review on the private sector part was performed by an external consultant, the public sector lobbying part and the overall analysis was done by an internal review team. In Ethiopia the data collection was done through peer review of GAA partners, the overall analysis was performed by an external consultant's team. At Asia Regional level, GAA staff from the countries involved played an important role in the selection of the Outcomes for substantiation. For the complete overview of the APT MTR processes and the external consultants - see Annex F.

A combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies have been applied, with a focus on qualitative approaches based on existing GAA monitoring data and reports such as the updated Outcome Lists, programme documents (baseline study), Annual Reports, Annual Plans and Advocacy Logs.

To further analyse the lobby and advocacy outcomes in the MTR document review, Key Informants Interviews and Focus Groups discussion, interviews with APTs and GAA partner staff were realized to gather profound insights in the progress and the dynamics of the programme. Furthermore, methods such as Most Significant Change (The Philippines) and Appreciative Enquiry (Asia Regional) were used. In all countries, review teams conducted field visits. To take into account ethical and safeguarding considerations, all evaluation teams were requested to adhere to the Child safeguarding code of the Alliance member.

The GAA programme has worked from the very beginning with 'Outcome Harvesting' to identify signs of change to assess the progress of the GAA programme. The APTs coordinating the 14 programme components elaborate their Outcome Lists based on Advocacy Logbooks (collection of signs) kept by the implementing organisations and partners involved. The 'signs' in the Outcome list are elaborated into brief descriptions of behavioural change at the level of each key target actor as identified in the Theory of Change of the programme component. These outcome descriptions minimally state the sign, the significance of the sign and the contribution

## OUTCOME DESCRIPTION



The Outcome Lists are updated, discussed and analysed in joint half-yearly meetings with all involved GAA organisations and partners and inform the annual plans and the annual reports respectively. The consolidated, updated and categorized Outcome Lists 2016 - June 2018 formed an important input for the MTR per programme component. Based on all reported and categorised outcomes, an overall quantitative analysis has been made that is included in this Synthesis MTR report. In addition, the 2020 outcomes developed on the basis of the ToC per programme component (updated in 2017) were used to assess the progress of the GAA program.

For the MTR, an extensive guide and various tools have been developed to instruct the MTR teams, including a tool for the quantitative analysis of the Outcome List and guidelines for the substantiation<sup>2</sup> of the 20% outcomes collected. Although guidelines had been set by the LC and Desk to support the APTs in the MTR process, for efficiency reasons and to allow for standardization and comparison for the synthesis report, the APTs were further in the lead to guide and select consultants, execute the MTR and set priorities in specified ToRs. In the MTR process, out of the total number of 761 outcomes, a total of 302 (39%) has been substantiated, the overall majority by external substantiators. Nearly all outcomes descriptions were fully agreed by the selected substantiators. For a complete overview - see Annex E.

For the analysis of progress in capacity development of NGO partners, the results of the Capacity Assessment Tool (based on the 5C model<sup>3</sup>) were used. This assessment is done annually by the GAA partners at the end of the year. The results from the end of 2016 and 2017 were included in the MTR process, as well as remarkable outcomes in the first half of 2018.

All APTs were requested to elaborate outcomes stories (positive and less successful stories). Almost 60 stories were received, of which two-thirds were positive stories. Lessons from the stories are included in the MTR report and provide valuable insight into how change did or did not take place (or not as planned), and into the way GAA partners contributed to these changes. Also, the outcome stories provide input for success and critical factors and triangulation of findings.

2 Substantiation refers to the confirmation of the substance of an outcome description by knowledgeable external stakeholder(s). This step is meant to enhance the reliability of the evidence of the observed change in the outcome description.

3 Based on the 5 Core Capabilities framework developed by the European Centre for Development Policy Centre for Development Policy Management to plan, monitor and evaluate results of capacity development processes the GAA distinguishes five core capabilities: (1) Capacity to Commit and Act; (2) Capacity to Deliver on development objectives; (3) Capacity to Relate to External Stakeholders and (5) Capacity to Achieve Coherence.

Additionally, a light partnership assessment was conducted between the three Alliance members in the Netherlands with regard to the added value of the collaboration. A staff survey was held among GAA staff in the Netherlands in order to include their experiences. The underlying synthesis report provides an overview of the main findings, lessons learned, conclusions and recommendations from this assessment and survey for the further development and implementation of the GAA programme in 2019-2020.

### Limitations

Although the MTR has been implemented in all program components according to the indicated methodology, a number of overall challenges and limitations can be listed;

- The limited time frame for the MTR was indicated by the consultants and the APTs as the main constraint, this was partly caused by longer processes for the selection of local consultants than anticipated and delay in the contracting of consultants.
- As a result of geographical spread and limited availability of (higher) government officials in particular, it was not always possible to reach the intended substantiators in person. This was partly resolved by using Skype, organising telephone interviews and/or conducting substantiation through email. The latter had the disadvantage that limited explanation could be given about the substantiation process.
- Not all Outcome Lists were updated, categorized and completed at the start of the MTR processes; this hampered the process for some of the consultants.
- Some consultants did not have experience in working with Outcome Harvesting as review/evaluation methodology, with the review of lobby and advocacy programs and/or with measuring progress of capacity development. This has been partially overcome by the accurate descriptions of methodologies in the GAA PME Manual and MTR guidelines, and with support by the APT and the overall MTR team through Skype meetings.
- As a consequence, the quality and depth of analysis in the APT MTR reports varied. Also, information was not always complete and timely. This has been partially resolved by consultations with APTs, and by adjusting the overall planning of the MTR process.

## 3. MAIN FINDINGS OUTCOMES & LESSONS LEARNED ON ADVOCACY

### 3.1. CONTEXT

The latest report by CIVICUS<sup>4</sup> shows that nearly six in ten countries are seriously restricting people's fundamental freedoms of association, peaceful assembly and expression. In the GAA countries Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Ethiopia, Uganda and Kenya, CSOs continue to face more restrictive legislation and regulations. Annual plans and reports indicate that local civil society organisations as well as larger NGOs with international ties need to comply with increasingly complicated requirements for registration, funding and reporting, and approval for implementation of programs, that curtail their spaces to influence public policy, especially on controversial issues, or to promote youth political engagement. Two GAA countries have improved their ratings in the latest CIVICUS update: Liberia and Ethiopia. The latter is a remarkable case. After years of popular unrest and severe repression of all forms of dissent, 2018 has witnessed a remarkable about-turn. New Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has released political prisoners, eased restrictions on electronic communication and made important progress towards reforming some the country's most repressive laws.

In many countries, important progress is made in the fight against child marriage, FGM and other harmful traditional practices<sup>5</sup>. At the same time, conservative forces continue to threaten progress towards equal rights for girls and young women, both at the level of intergovernmental fora and national politics, as well as in localised 'pockets of resistance'. The debate on gender inequalities and power relations that was sparked by the #MeToo movement is still very much alive, notably in Europe. With the exception of perhaps India, #MeToo has not markedly influenced the public debate in GAA countries.

Policy environments remained predominantly positive for advocacy on GAA themes, but in various countries as well as at regional and international levels, GAA organisations note that political and socio-economic tides are not in favour of issues related to gender and inclusiveness. Budget allocation at national levels does not favour ministries of Gender, Social Affairs, Education and other sectors that are key to the programme. In an already negative context for multilateralism, there is persistent resistance against the inclusion of (reference to) gender, sexual and reproductive rights and LTBTBI rights in international resolutions and statements. In the Philippines, Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia, but also at the regional level in Asia, GAA organisations felt, for shorter or longer periods of time and to varying degrees, forced to take an expressly apolitical stance, to keep a low profile and/or to dissociate from overt advocacy. Despite remarkable abilities to adapt strategies, GAA organisations in some cases had to shift their ambitions from aiming for progress to retaining previous results.

### 3.2. THEORY OF CHANGE

The overall Theory of Change of the Girls Advocacy Alliance describes how the alliance expects change to happen. The Theory of Change identified the desired long-term goals of the alliance programme and the conditions and stakeholders that must change in order to achieve the desired long-term goals. It indicates the causal relationships between these conditions (pathways of change). The GAA Theory of Change aims at the elimination of gender-based violence and economic exclusion of girls and young women. The Girls Advocacy Alliance's Theory of Change is structured around four strategic goals in support of the prevention and elimination of gender-based violence and economic exclusion of girls and young women:

<sup>4</sup> [Civicus State of Civil Society Report 2018](#)

<sup>5</sup> See e.g. [Secular trends in the prevalence of FGM/C among girls: a systematic analysis by Kandala, Ezejimofor, Uthman OA, et al \(BMJ Global Health 2018\).](#)

Pathways of Change	Strategic goals
Traditional, religious and community leaders	Increased public support for the elimination of gender-based violence and economic exclusion of girls and young women
Governments and international/regional intergovernmental bodies	Effective implementation of legislation and public policies and improved practices of government actors
Civil society organisations and networks	Increased influence of civil society organisations and networks (in particular girls' and young women's organisations) on government and corporate/private sector
Private sector actors	Improved policies and practices of corporate/private sector actors

The pathways of change each address one of these goals yet they are intertwined and mutually supportive. The pathways and strategic objectives are strongly related with main barriers identified in the external baseline study of the GAA Programme (2016):

- Ministries and government agencies have limited capacity and commitment to implement policies and programs on gender-based violence and economic empowerment. Responsibility and accountability systems are weak, and relevant ministries have insufficient power and resources to ensure gender mainstreaming and enforce implementation of policies and programs;
- Government officials and the wider public have limited awareness and understanding of laws and policies on gender-based violence, economic exclusion and gender equality. Cultural traditions and community attitudes hinder the enforcement of laws on child marriage and other harmful practices;
- Service delivery in the areas of protection and economic empowerment is weak, mainly due to capacity constraints. Legal support services for victims of violence and harmful practices are, for example, limited;
- The elimination of gender-based violence and economic exclusion is further hindered by limitations to the scope for an independent civil society to effectively advocate for gender equality;
- Finally, involvement and commitment of the private sector in promoting economic empowerment, addressing gender-based violence and providing decent work and employment opportunities for girls and young women is very limited.

The GAA expects that three different stages can be distinguished in the change process in which the key stakeholders in GBV and EE (Governments and intergovernmental agencies; private sector; community, religious and traditional leaders; and CSOs and CSO networks) are involved:

**Agenda setting:** Generation of public and political attention to specific problems or issues.

**Policy change:** Adoption or revision of laws and policies is the following stage of change; something which can be considered as 'policy change'.

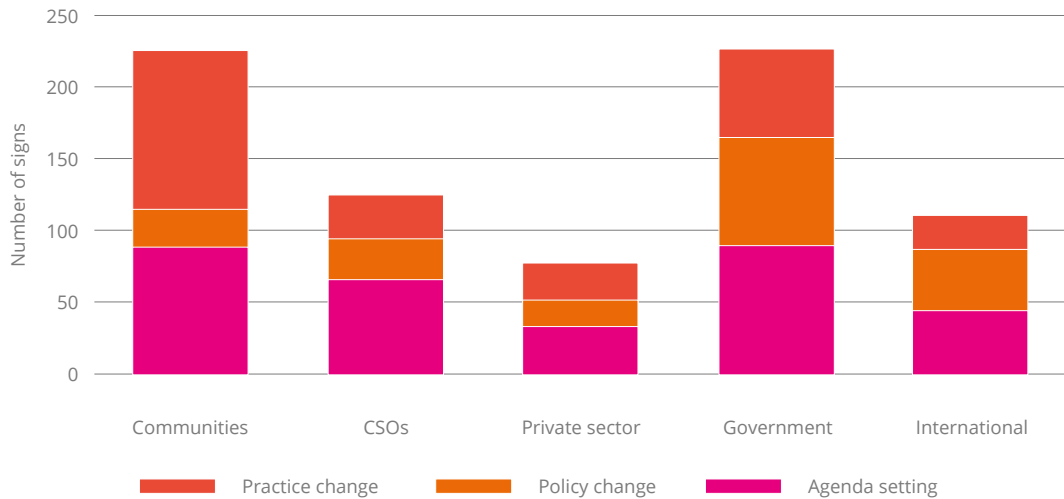
**Practice Change:** Effective implementation and follows up of existing laws and policies by key stakeholders mentioned above. Only policies and laws that are effectively implemented and enforced will generate positive and concrete effects in the lives of GAA beneficiaries: girls and young women.

As the programme is implemented in different contexts, including ten countries in Africa and Asia, regional and international levels, and the Netherlands, the fourteen programme components each adapted the overall Theory of Change to specific relevant context developments and context specific factors and actors.

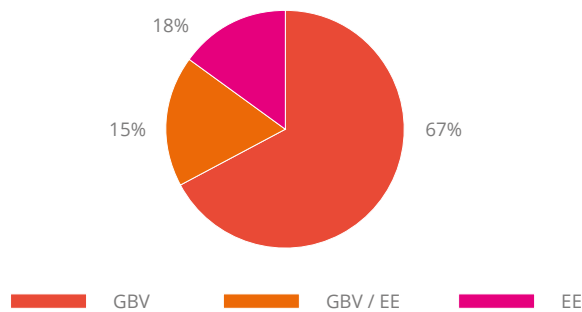
The efforts in the ten programme countries are supported by interventions aimed at influencing policies in the Netherlands, and at the level of regional bodies in Africa and Asia and at the international level of multinational institutions.

### 3.3. QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The overall GAA 'Outcome Harvest' from January 2016 to June 2018 yielded over 750 signs of change. Most of the signs were reported within the community pathway (30%) and the government pathway (30%), with fewer signs within the CSO pathway (16%), private sector pathway (10%) and the international Programme Components (14%). Overall, most signs are related to agenda setting (42%), followed by practice changes (33%) and policy changes (25%).

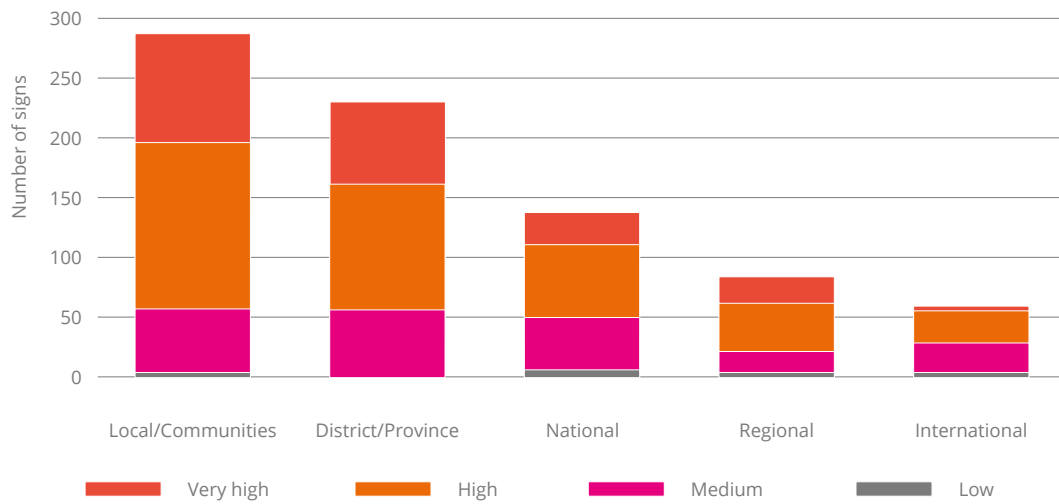


The majority of the signs relate to GBV themes, the further categorization shows that nearly half of the outcomes relate to ending Child Marriage (CM), Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) and Child Trafficking (CT). For further details see Annex D.



The majority of the signs are at local level (37%) followed by the district level (30%), at the national level (17%), with fewer signs at the regional (10%) and international level (9%). The vast majority is indicated as having high/very high significance, particularly at local and district level.



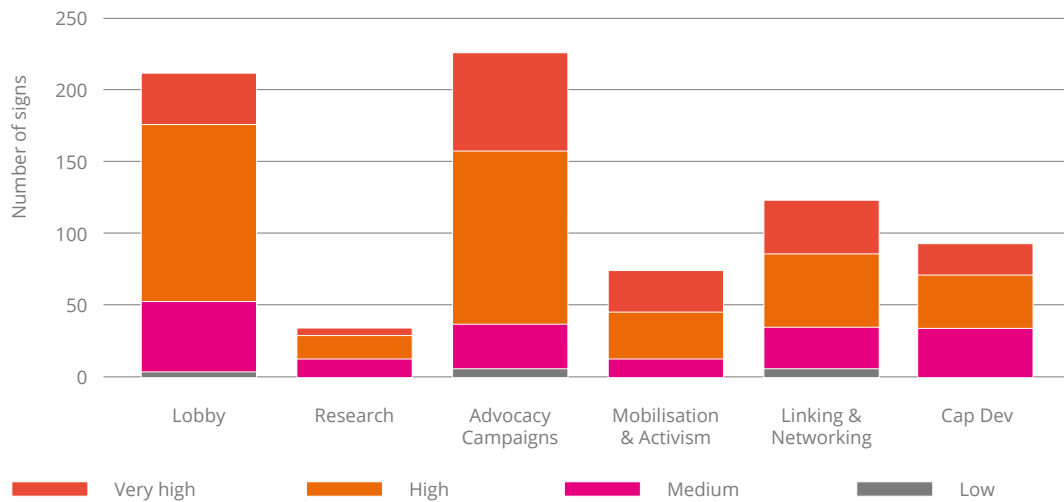


GAA identified six intervention strategies:

- 'Insider' strategies: (1) Lobby/Advice, (2) Research (for advising);
- 'Outsider' strategies: (3) Advocacy Campaigns (including awareness raising and the use of ICT and social media), (4) Mobilisation and activism (including marches, rallies and litigation);
- 'Crosscutting' strategies: (5) Linking and networking and (6) Capacity development (for local CSOs).

The two strategies 'Lobby' and 'Advocacy Campaigns' do not only appear to result in a higher number of outcomes, but also in the most significant results (S3 and S4). The use of 'Research' (2) as a strategy is least reported. This could be caused by the fact that research is often used in the preparatory phase for the lobby and is more often seen as a supporting strategy.

It should be noted that outcomes of strengthening of capacities of officials and key stakeholders are often attributed to the strategy 'Capacity Development' (6), whereas the original classification considers the strengthening of advocacy targets as an example of 'Lobby/Advice' (1). It is important to bring the correct categorisation of actions and strategies to the attention of the APTs.



Almost all the observed changes were categorised as positive (99%) and intended (95%). This could indicate that insufficient attention is paid to negative effects of programme interventions, especially because 16 of the 41 unintended changes are reported from one country (Bangladesh). An example of an unintended change points to negative side effects of increased reporting by communities of cases of GBV as well as HPTs; this can sometimes lead to security risks for people and/or groups who reported cases.

Another example was the rejection of a theme proposed by the GAA Geneva APT to the EU for the 2018 Annual Day on the Rights of the Child on 'Mainstreaming Gender Equality in the Rights of the Child' by the EU.

### 3.4. GAA PATHWAYS

#### 3.4.1. Lobby and Advocacy Outcomes Community Pathway and Media

Overall 2020 Outcome Community Pathway: Increased public support for the elimination of gender-based violence and economic exclusion of girls and young women

Most MTR reports indicate that the GAA organisations made important progress towards the 2020 Outcomes for the Community Pathway; GAA programmes are assessed to be 'well on track' towards these outcomes. Outcomes at Community level show that most progress has taken place at the levels of agenda setting and practice change. The activities within the Community Pathway have been particularly focused on Traditional and Religious leaders and on Community leaders, youth groups, boys, men, and girls and young women groups.

**Main strategies used:** Advocacy Campaigns, Mobilisation and Activism, and Lobby

In almost all MTR reports, multiple and impressive examples have been reported where traditional and religious leaders have not only become aware of GBV and EE issues (agenda setting), but also actively and openly express themselves against the negative consequences of GBV issues, specifically in the field of (early) Child Marriage and CSEC (practice change). The Ghana MTR report indicates that such leaders are respected and listened to. Within communities they have an arbitration role and due to awareness raising they are now able to identify GBV issues with criminal intent and take relevant actions. Traditional and religious leaders now direct people to statutory bodies to make complaints and religious leaders demand more often birth certificates when they are in doubts of the age of the bride.

The review found that there have been changes in the perception and behaviors of traditional and religious leaders towards gender-based violence (GBV) issues. Traditional and religious leaders interviewed indicated that the following factors had contributed to these changes:

- Women being called to discussion tables
- Traditional and religious leaders accept that GBV has legal and socio-economic consequences
- Community leaders come up with bye-laws
- Girls allowed engaging men and leaders as well as Imams and Traditional Authorities using community information systems and community radios to educate communities about the implications of GBV

*From Ghana MTR report*

Community leaders, youth groups, men, boys, girls and young women groups have been supported as part of activities in different GAA countries. In most community-level interventions, implementing partners contributed with awareness raising activities, facilitation of community dialogues and linkages with key stakeholders, orientation meetings on legislation on specific GBV and EE related issues, the negative consequence of Child Marriage and other HTPs. This has resulted in groups that are actively working for the community in the field of GBV and EE themes.

Implementing organisations also supported the development of bye-laws (rules or law established by an organization or community to regulate itself). Bye-laws existed before the programme, but are now for the first time developed in a participatory way and include issues as CM and GBV. The box below shows the results of such an approach by the Liberia APT. At the same time, there are examples of bye-laws that restrict the freedom of movement of girls and young women (e.g. girls and young women are not to use public transport late in the evening). Although it may happen for 'protection' reasons, this is clearly not the intention of the GAA.

The development of gender-mainstreamed community bye-laws has put the protection of women and girls on the agenda of intervention communities. The review found that the development of community bye-laws that now outline penalties on GBV is helping reduce GBV in intervention communities. The bye-laws are being developed through a participatory process, where all community members come together to establish laws that will protect young women and girls from exploitation and abuse. The coming into effect of these bye-laws has elevated GBV issues from being the concerns of individuals to the collective responsibilities of communities to protect women, young girls and children from abuse.

*From Liberia MTR report*

In some countries, the most influential leaders and/or networks of religious leaders have been selected for initial collaboration, in order to achieve an influential broader outreach. An example in case was reported in Nepal where the National Inter-Religious Network (NIRN) facilitated and established inter-religious networks in seven GAA working districts. These networks have been a key factor towards the engagement of religious leaders in activities against ending CM and other HTPs, as demonstrated in the boxes below.

National Inter-Religious Network (NIRN) is one of the alliances identified to involve religious leaders into GAA program as for almost a decade they are working against harmful social practices like child marriage, Chaupadi, Dowry and gender discrimination. The collaboration with NIRN was initiated through rounds of meeting. MoU was established with NIRN to formalize collaboration with GAA program. On 15 December 2017 in collaboration with NIRN, an event was organized in Kathmandu with participation of government authorities, more than 50 religious leaders and CSOs. In this event, the religious leaders made a declaration for ending GBV through faith leaders. After making a declaration, religious interacted with government representatives from National Human Rights Commission, National Planning Commission, and Ministries demanding to keep religious leaders roles in government interventions. The government representatives praised the platform as unique and important and committed for participation of religious leaders into government initiatives to end GBV/HTPs.

*From Nepal MTR report*

In India (Telangana State), GAA has engaged with Interfaith Forum which is the nodal body in the state wherein leaders from all religions in the state convene. The State Level Interfaith Group Meeting with the core group members was a culmination of all the advocacy efforts of APT with this particular group. The core group consists of very high-level members from various religious groups with key influencing powers. According to the members of Interfaith Forum, though these members have taken oath to stop CM within their communities, constant follow-up is essential to take forward the process. During the MTR interviews they suggested creation of multiple small videos on CM – something new every week, which can be sent to the important religious heads through WhatsApp at regular intervals. A point of limitation raised by them is worth noting – the work of Inter-faith Forum till date has been only at the state level. They have not taken their work to the district, Mandal or village levels. They are yet to create those spaces. Therefore, it would be important for GAA to establish relationship with inter-religious dialogue groups at the district levels. They agreed to help the process through their respective core members.

*From India MTR report*

GAA organisations often facilitate interaction between community groups and key leaders to argue for the prevention of harmful practices and to bring about concrete changes in behaviour and social norms. For example, access to TVET got included in some bye-laws, obliging husbands and fathers to allow their young brides and daughters to enter TVET.

GAA organisations supported girls and young women groups to gain skills and confidence to engage with leaders, key stakeholders and politicians and to argue from their perspective for the GAA agenda. At local level, girls and young women organized themselves in groups, participated in meetings and events, and organized their own meetings and club activities. In several cases, (intended) child marriage, child trafficking, sexual violence have been reported through interventions of these groups. Girls and young women are also involved in awareness raising campaigns, and in peer-to-peer counselling. Nearly all MTR reports indicated that awareness raising activities contribute to active leadership and higher retention of girls in schools.

In the Philippines, GAA organisations had been able to successfully mobilize youth organisations/groups in their target communities. Substantial efforts had been made to activate and strengthen these youth groups' capacities for lobby and advocacy work at the community level. Important progress has been achieved by the youth groups. They are now taking the lead in awareness raising campaigns among their peers in the school and community (e.g. community based awareness raising, training of Youth Development Councils in their community). Youth representatives gave speeches in Congress on the Human Trafficking Preventive Education Act. Some CSOs engaged youth groups linked to their own organisation. Other CSOs collaborated with established youth associations in their areas. The advantage of these youth groups is that they already have their own networks and activities. The MTR noted that CSO partners that

work with organized children and youth groups should also look into linking these groups to government councils or bigger youth organizations to increase their leverage and involvement.

In many GAA communities, as an effect of increased awareness, more perpetrators of CM, CSEC and CT were arrested and prosecuted than prior to the programme and more cases were reported to the authorities by community members. In a few cases perpetrators were penalized through the legal system. This could also be related to changing legislation and enforcement of laws in some of the GAA countries. Also, child marriages could be prevented and more victims or children at risk of harmful practices, such as underage FGM/Cutting, were identified. Greater awareness leads to more willingness to take action; this implies that services and referral systems must be in place and existing structures must be active, responsive and well-functioning (see further under the Government Pathway).

To assist victims of CM, CSEC, CT and CL, peer-to-peer support resulted to be effective. In urgent situations, direct support for victims had to be provided (support to re-enter into school, shelter, psycho-social care, and legal services) and alternatives had to be offered (skills building for empowerment, including economic empowerment). As these services could not be provided through the GAA programme, linkages were established with local service providers, other programmes of GAA organisations (for instance the IGA programme of Plan International Kenya), or by seeking cooperation with other NGOs or other service providers.

Community leaders including children and youth were reported to have formed groups to advocate for the GAA cause. Among the youth, leaders conducted various awareness raising activities/ campaigns. Most notably, children survivors had been organized and trained are now educating their classmates. They are now youth facilitators, bringing child trafficking as a topic in their classes. However, while extensive awareness and advocacy campaigns had been carried out at the community level, there is a need to work on setting up informal mechanisms for reporting of cases or lobby for Local Government Units to make mandated structures and reporting mechanisms functional.

*From Philippines MTR report*

As identified in the baseline study, cultural traditions and community attitudes hinder the enforcement of laws on child marriage and other harmful practices. Various MTR reports show that the underlying economic, cultural, traditional and social value systems of these HTPs are very persistent, especially in 'pockets of resistance', formed by hard-to-reach groups, informal religious leaders, people at the edge of the community and/or from outside of the community.

Various MTR reports recommend further strengthening of the capacities of the key leaders, champions, change agents and CBOs involved, in order to consolidate and further enhance changes in behaviour. GAA partners could continue to mentor these actors to deepen their knowledge on GBV and EE legislation, and to further strengthen skills and strategies for lobby and advocacy of key leaders, champions and change agents. It is also observed that there are many opportunities for further scaling up and creation of linkages to the national level. As resources are limited, it is important to make a choices, and to see where most impact can be achieved in the next two years e.g. work with the most influential leaders, networks, and youth and community leaders.

Furthermore, some MTRs indicate that the GAA programme could be further strengthened by more engagement of men and boys. This approach - and one of the assumptions of the GAA ToC - is not elaborated in all GAA countries. MTR reports repeatedly mention involvement of men and boys as an important condition for changing social norms.

### Lessons learned on the Community Pathway:

- The role of traditional and religious leaders is key to influence social norms and attitudes towards HTPs; working with key influencing leaders and/or networks of higher level leaders contributes to increasing the outreach of the GAA programme;
- Participative bye-laws including gender and GBV aspects seem effective, but can also limit rights of GYW;
- Investment in further enhancement of community/youth groups and youth advocates yields results;
- Greater awareness leads to more willingness to take action and to increased demand for services;
- Joint research into the key drivers and/or use of existing research on harmful practices and exchange of the experiences is necessary to better address persistent underlying factors and 'pockets of resistance';
- In some countries the involvement of men and boys could be further elaborated.

### Conclusions

Regarding the 2020 Outcomes (increased public support for GAA themes), most MTR reports indicate that the GAA partners made important progress in terms of practice changes and agenda setting. Awareness raising activities contributed to active engagement of traditional and religious leaders and community/youth groups with GBV themes. Furthermore, more linkages have been created between community groups/youth and local government. Awareness raising can be seen as a first and important step, more focus can be brought in the GAA programme to enhance outreach and facilitate up scaling of practice changes. As an effect of increased awareness, more cases were reported to the authorities by community members. The need to provide services to victims of HTP is essential specifically in urgent situations. The MTR identified a need to look more at underlying factors of HTP.

### Recommendations

- Focus on key influencing leaders and/or networks of higher level leaders by strengthening knowledge and advocacy skills to consolidate changes achieved and enhance further outreach;
- Further enhance youth leaders and youth advocates and connect them with the district and national level;
- Use (existing) research and facilitate sharing of experiences within the GAA programme on underlying factors of HTPs in order to better address these;
- Create linkages with existing programmes and services to refer victims;
- Enhance involvement of men and boys.

### Findings on Media

In the overall GAA ToC, media and informing the general public are included in the community pathway. GAA countries had different interpretations in their ToC's. Media is sometimes linked to the community level, but also to the CSO pathway or to the private sector pathway. Use of media is reported and considered important under various strategies; outcomes related to media are not separately reported or categorized. Several outcomes are reported on collaboration with local radio stations. In a number of MTR reports as well as in a number of Outcome stories, attention is paid to influencing mainstream media within the GAA programme, especially in Asia.

GAA Bangladesh has taken the media as an advocacy target. In line with the ToC, the media should present news and information on human trafficking and gender-based violence (GBV) in a gender sensitive and child sensitive manner. GAA partners have been collaborating with several Media Houses and Press Associations and organized in 2018 several workshops and press conferences on the issue of promoting gender and child sensitive reporting on GBV issues and e.g. promoting awareness against child trafficking. Regular content monitoring has been done which indicates that the objective on gender sensitive and child sensitive reporting has been partially achieved. Limiting factors include the fact that journalists selected for workshops were not from the decision making levels. Also, the number of specialized child and women affairs journalists is limited and turn-over is high. Moreover, Media Houses do not have policies on child friendly and gender friendly reporting. INCIDIN-led consortium (Integrated Community

& Industrial Development Initiative) is planning to extend the duration of workshops and to include decision makers from the Media Houses. To strengthen future interventions, INCIDIN Consortium moreover plans to share an in-depth report on this issue with the APT.

In India and Nepal as well, orientation and sensitisation of media is a priority area to create awareness among the general public on GBV and EE issues. Both ATPs identified the attitude of mainstream media towards GBV themes (often sensational, lack of attention for root causes) as a major problem and flagged limited knowledge of the Child Protection Protocols and child friendly reporting. At the same time, it is also indicated that GAA should work more closely with media and develop strategies to use them effectively to highlight CM and CT.

In Ghana, the Alliance members have good relationships with the media and a training to media was provided on trafficking, engaging media and building their knowledge on Child protection. A shared WhatsApp platform is used to inform media on GAA activities and on relevant developments, and to provide background information. Media recognizes the Alliance as a reliable source of information.

GAA Philippines is collaborating with Cebu media and the partnership is promising for the GAA. The GAA partner organisations involved could build on previous relationships with key media practitioners and had considerable experience in engaging with the media. Their track record in promoting children's rights and protection, especially on CSEC and online sexual exploitation of children (OSEC), proved key in getting media's interest.

In February and March 2017, the GAA Africa Regional programme organised a Regional Capacity Building Workshop on Increased Advocacy to Ending Child Marriage through Engagement of the Media (Western and Southern African Stream) for about 90 journalists from more than 23 countries. The training was important to enhance the capacity of media to address the root causes and different aspects of CM, and to challenge all stakeholders involved (for more information, please refer to section 3.5.2. on the Africa Regional programme component).

Various MTR reports indicate that the use of online and social media could be further explored.

In November 2017, at least 30 local media practitioners from radio, TV, print, online, social media and the academe attended the "Media Forum on Sensitivity in Handling Child Cases" organized by Children's Legal Bureau (CLB) to raise awareness on child safeguarding protocols when covering news that involve children. Prior to this forum, consultations were done with two media experts to plan the content of the forum. These identified experts, long time contacts of CLB staff, helped inform the forum's strategy. This included showing examples of live coverage stories that did not follow child protection protocols. Through a workshop, the participants were engaged to critically review the coverage and cite lessons learned in child safeguarding in light of child protection guidelines. Through the forum, CLB explained the logic of child protection to media. At the same time, it provided a venue for media to clarify issues to ensure that existing laws and protocols in covering child are strictly followed.

Recent news articles also show that reports of local news outfits such as Sunstar, The Freeman, Cebu Daily News are now more sensitive in their writing and news framing when stories involved children. In March 2018, a follow up forum was held. It became a space for media to further discuss issues related to covering children's concerns. They raised challenges with getting child-focused NGOs to talk to the media. "You make yourselves known," the media said to encourage NGOs to engage with them to share their advocacies and raise awareness on children's issues.

*From Philippines Outcome Story*

### Lessons Learned on Media:

- GAA organisations' collaboration with Media is facilitated by already established good working relations and by having a good reputation on promoting children's rights;
- Working with Media requires specific skills and long term investments of GAA organisations; capacity support to work with Media is essential;
- Training for journalists on GBV on comprehensive reporting on GAA issues and child friendly reporting appears effective, provided that (refresher) training takes place regularly and decision makers are involved as well. At the same time, it is indicated that the rotation of journalists is very high.

### Conclusions

GAA organisations have succeeded in establishing collaboration with Media to reach a larger audience with varying success. The focus on promoting gender and child-sensitive reporting on GAA themes seems very relevant, but requires a considerable investment in relationship building with Media and organisational skills. A challenging factor is that mainstream media seem difficult to influence.

### Recommendations

- The MTR reports show various approaches of working with the Media in order to promote the use of Child Protection Protocols and child friendly reporting. Sharing experiences on approaches to work with Media within GAA is recommended for mutual exchange and learning;
- Create linkages with Journalist Unions, Academia and networks to explore opportunities for joint seminars and other forms of collaboration to promote child friendly reporting and increased media attention for (the underlying causes of) GBV and EE;
- Use of alternative - social - media could be enhanced to generate more effective and broader reach.

#### 3.4.2. Lobby and Advocacy Outcomes Government Pathway

##### Overall 2020 Outcome Government Pathway:

Effective implementation of legislation and public policies and improved practices of government actors in support of the prevention and elimination of gender based violence and economic exclusion of girls and young women.

Within the Government pathway, a high number of outcomes is reported on all change levels. The outcomes indicate that political actors and public officials are attaching more importance to GBV and EE (agenda setting), that political actors and public officials are developing/updating programs, policies and guidelines to eliminate GBV and support EE (policy change), and that local and national Governments are effectively starting or improving the implementation of legislation and policies (practice change).

**Main strategies used:** Lobby, Linking and Networking, and advocacy

A cross-cutting approach signalled in the MTR reports is the focus of implementing organisations on direct cooperation with the (local/district) government, with government officials and government staff working within implementing structures. Implementing organisations have worked closely with the government at local and district level on improving services and structures (Reporting mechanisms, Child Protection Committees, referral systems, Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs), Health Services and changing attitude of police towards victims), enhancing knowledge of key stakeholders on GBV legislation and National Plans of Action and improvement of the legal system and juridical procedures. A challenging factor indicated in the MTR reports is the high turnover among officials, which calls for frequent refresher trainings and investment in relationship building.

At national level, working relationships are maintained with different line ministries and a broad range of semi-governmental agencies. These 'non-confrontational' lobbying and linking and



networking strategies mean that GAA organisations have a direct influence on the formulation and implementation of policies and practices. The relationships of GAA staff with government officials usually date from far before the GAA programme. GAA organisations are recognised for their technical expertise, and they are in the position to elaborate evidence based advocacy asks (presence at community level). They are moreover valuable partners as they are able to facilitate connections between communities and (local) governments.

Several MTR reports indicated the potential of GAA organisations to work at the national policy level and influence policy and implementation of policies. Contributing factors are the strong relationships with community actors and the possibility to create connections between local, district and national level and by further exploring evidence based advocacy. A reported challenge is to develop more relationships with 'decision making' ministries and processes (e.g. Ministry of Finance, increased budgets and enforcement of Laws). Strategic collaboration with other (multilateral) actors/networks (e.g. Girls not Brides) and with other actors (parliamentarians, opinion leaders, media) is less commonly reported in the MTR reports.

Most outcomes are reported at the level of district and local government. Some changes are highlighted below:

Working closely with relevant District level officials was strategic: At mid-term, all the five thematic areas of the GAA programme had dedicated ordinances that were at a very advanced stage of development. The MTR noted a unique Government-CSO relationship where the CSOs and Networks were not only implicitly enhancing capacities of district officials in the project areas but also played the usual watchdog role in a non-confrontational manner. The relationship contributed to the government actor becoming part of the GAA programme delivery in a very supportive manner. The MTR notes that in some cases, government at district level financed some of the GAA key activities. The unique relationship was indeed a success factor to the GAA accomplishment to date.

*From Uganda MTR report*

In the Philippines, at the city/municipal level, GAA's lobby and advocacy efforts contributed to good progress with the Local Government Units. Out of 34 target cities/ municipalities, 17 have so far adopted policies and/or implemented and strengthened programmes that address GAA issues, including:

- Policies - amendments of Children's Code and Gender and Development (GAD) code by the Department of Interior; of Local Government 's Standards, and other resolutions establishing activities to address GBV and/or EE
- Programmes - establishment of Multi-disciplinary Team Referral system, allocation of funds for various activities to address GBV and/or EE, including job fairs, awareness raising activities and orientation sessions

The key stakeholders in the chain for use of the legal system from police and health services providers the judiciary had all been given capacities of SGBV case management. The duty bearers were aware of potential use of bribes in the SGBV chain to try and discredit the case. MTR notes efforts by the family members of the perpetrator to try and bribe health officials and police along the chain. The capacity development helped and the case was successfully presented in the courts. The boda boda had also been sensitised to be allies in the fight against SGBV and provide the necessary support services to protect the AGYW.

*From Kenya MTR report*

In Ghana, Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) - including but not limited to the Domestic Violence Support Unit, Social Welfare, and Anti Human Trafficking Unit) - indicated that they have had trainings and support from GAA to undertake awareness creation and sensitization in communities and among community leaders, departments and agencies and traditional and religious leaders at the community level. The local government institutions' collaboration has not only been enhanced among and between them but also their collaboration with traditional and religious leaders. Previously, some of the departments found it difficult to get traditional and religious leaders involved in their sensitization work, but the GAA has created that link and this has resulted in especially religious leaders giving the MMDAs their platforms to educate their constituencies.

At state and national level, several examples illustrate GAA's advocacy efforts. In India, the MTR concluded that the most meaningful engagement of GAA has been with several government departments (Department of Women Development and Child Welfare, District Child Protection Unit and Police in both states, State and District Legal Authority, Andhra Pradesh State Road Corporations and Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya). GAA has successfully advocated with government to constitute Local Complaints Committees (LCC) at the district level in both the states. It has been found that the women employees in the unorganised sector are highly vulnerable, and are more likely to be sexually harassed. In order to address the concerns of the unorganised sectors, like small shops, enterprises and NGOs with less than 10 employees, the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2013 enables women to file complaints of sexual harassment to a Local Complaints Committee. Under this Act the State Government is empowered to appoint a District officer for each district in a state, who is responsible for appointment of members of Local Complaints Committee (LCC). As per the Act, there would be one LCC per district. The LCC will have jurisdiction throughout the district to hear complaints of sexual harassment in the unorganised sector or when the complaint is against the employer himself.

Furthermore, GAA India is focusing on state level on the policy and implementation gaps related to the Prohibition of Child Marriages Act, 2006 (PCMA); Compulsory Registration of Marriages Act, 2002 (CRMA) and the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 (ITPA). The programme has strengthened its relations with government through the review of the State Rules and by providing orientation and sensitisation of government officials to increase knowledge of existing legislation, implementation and enforcement mechanisms.

In Bangladesh, at the national level, GAA has proactively contributed to the development of legislative proposals (particularly around Child Marriage and Child Protection, Trafficking or Humans - including Young Women and Girls). GAA partner 'Prevention of Child Trafficking through Strengthening Communities and Networks' (PCTSCN) Consortium (implemented by 4 partners with INCIDIN Bangladesh as lead) has undertaken comprehensive yearlong (from June 2017 - July 2018) lobby and advocacy actions involving government agencies and CSOs and INGOs. The government approved the National Plan of Action on Human Trafficking 2018-2022 that specifically includes the issue of child trafficking with proper direction of resources. A combination of strategies was used: consultation meetings, policy briefs and technical support to duty bearers. GAA developed collaborative approaches and was constantly in dialogue with government officials and other decision makers.

In Liberia at National level, GAA organisations influenced the development of the National Child Protection policy. They convinced government of the importance of developing this policy as implementation of the Children's Law. After a joint kick-off meeting organised by the Ministry, Plan International Liberia and Defence for Children Liberia became part of the core group in technical advice in development of the National Child Welfare Policy that addresses all forms of violence against girls. After the process of providing technical support, research and focus groups, the policy was successfully adapted by government in 2017.

In Uganda, advocacy and lobby by the GAA contributed to the passing of a new Mining and Mineral Policy by the government in 2018 which criminalises the use of child labour in mines. The government also integrated labour inspection in their work plans. GAA engagement with government, particularly the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) has resulted in the government monitoring policy implementation in mines in Bugiri. The MTR

findings also noted budget increase for allocation of labour officers for financial year 2018/2019 by 2 million Uganda shillings constituting a 105% percent increase. GAA partner Platform for Labour Action (PLA) was incorporated into a government committee on CL issues due to their wealth of experience in the sector which could positively influence policies in the sector. On the practice change level, the Labour officer of the MGLSD conducted labour inspection of gold mines in Bugiri in June 2018 (source PLA, October 2018). This trajectory was accompanied by awareness raising activities in the target communities, and research of a group of youth researchers, and training to government officials.

The Sierra Leone Child Rights Act prohibits marriage under the age of 18, regardless of whether the marriage is carried out under formal, customary or religious law. However, the 2007 Customary Marriage Act also allows parents or local government officials to consent to a child's marriage. Tackling the issue of child marriage has been since a long time an objective of the GAA Alliance Programme Team (APT) in Sierra Leone: Defence for Children Sierra Leone, Plan International Sierra Leone and Youth and Child Advocacy Network (YACAN). In 2016 several meetings were organised by these organisations to engage government officials on the need to review and harmonise the law surrounding child marriage in Sierra Leone.

As a result of this lobby to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs (MSWGCA) and the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) to harmonise laws on child marriage, finally in September 2017 the Minister of Justice requested the formation of a sub-committee with the Law Reform Commission taking the lead to put together recommendations for the harmonisation of the child marriage laws for onward submission to the Law Officers Department.

The GAA team participated in all of the nine meetings of the subcommittee at the Law Reform Commission office. Following the conclusion of the subcommittee's report, the committee members embarked on a provincial tour to discuss the report, particularly its recommendations and elicit the views/suggestions of stakeholders. The nationwide consultative meetings - attended by the GAA team - were held between the 2nd and 5th of October 2017 in the cities of Makeni, Kenema and Bo. Drawing from the final reports and the consultative meetings, a group of legal practitioners came together and drafted a Bill called the Abolition of Child Marriage Act 2018.

The GAA team submitted recommendations to the draft Bill and participated in the consultative meeting on the Abolition of Child Marriage Bill on 2 October 2018. The legal practitioners will send a copy of the finalised proposed Bill to the GAA team, other CSOs and stakeholders, as well as submit it to the Attorney General and the Minister of Justice, who will then bring it to Parliament for discussion. The GAA APT in Sierra Leone will continuously monitor the process from the Attorney General's office to Parliament, lobby for pre-legislative meetings, offer recommendations to the Parliamentary Committee on Child Marriage and follow the process until the Bill passes into law.

*From Outcome Story Sierra Leone*

#### **Relation with International Programme Component**

With support of the GAA International programme, GAA uses international human rights monitoring and accountability mechanisms to ensure that national governments in the GAA countries uphold human rights obligations with regard to GBV and the EE of girls and young women. This was done in the case of Kenya (examination of CEDAW), Ghana (Examination of UPR) and Nepal (engagement with UPR, CEDAW) and meeting with the Special Rapporteur on violence against women. Working with human rights mechanisms is an important addition to the lobby efforts on national level, and vice versa, e.g. the systemic submission or on e.g. sexual exploitation to the various CRC and UPR processes has had an impact on the number and quality of recommendations on GBV themes (see further under paragraph 3.5.1. on the International programme component).

#### Lessons learned on Government Pathway:

- The 'insider' approach, training of and working with (local government) officials creates possibilities to advocate for implementation of the GAA agenda
- The high level of rotation among officials, which requires frequent refresher trainings
- Relationship building - and maintenance - are important success factors for achieving lobby goals; experiences have shown that this requires long-term investment, time and thematic knowledge and ability and capacities to engage in policy formulation processes in an early stage
- Working with human rights/accountability mechanisms shows an important addition to the lobby efforts on national level, and vice versa

#### Conclusions

Implementing partners are making good progress towards the 2020 Outcomes for the Government Pathway. They are well-equipped to engage with local and district governments thus contributing to better functioning of local/district structures. At national level, GAA partners also succeed in working closely with (line) Ministries, generally opting for an insider's strategy and involvement in policy development processes through dialogue and contribution of specific thematic expertise. GAA partners demonstrated to have the capacity to facilitate these processes. Working with the human rights mechanisms and regional bodies can further support policy influencing at the national level.

#### Recommendations

- Make use of the gained knowledge and experience from GAA organisations' 'insider' approach to explore the potential to link advocacy efforts on local-district-national level;
- Explore potential to work at the national level engaging in policy formulation and monitoring of implementation of policies;
- Strengthen capacity of implementing partners to influence at different stages in the policy process and share such experiences within GAA;
- Enhance collaboration with other actors: with traditional partners and non-traditional partners, and other CSOs and NGOs working in the same thematic fields to join efforts to effectively influence policy;
- Enhance the capacity of GAA to include human rights mechanism and regional bodies in policy influencing, specifically on the follow up of recommendations, monitoring and integration into on-going advocacy activities of GAA country programmes.

#### 3.4.3. Lobby and Advocacy Outcomes CSO Pathway and Youth Advocacy

**Overall 2020 Outcomes CSO Pathway: Increased influence of civil society organisations and networks (in particular girls' and young women's organisations) on government and corporate/private sector actors to eliminate gender based violence and economic exclusion of girls and young women**

Looking at the GAA overall ToC, CSOs are identified as important actors to further promote GAA's advocacy and thematic issues. Furthermore, CSOs can facilitate girls and young women's representativeness and agency in lobby and advocacy actions (agenda setting) and adopt gender sensitive measures and remove internal obstacles to GYW participation and (policy change). Subsequently, relevant CSOs can become gender sensitive and legitimate representatives of girls' and young women (practice change). As noted in the quantitative analysis, the CSO pathway is showing a moderate number of outcomes, mostly related to agenda setting.

**Main strategies used:** Capacity Development of local CSOs, Lobby and Linking and Networking

In the first year of the GAA programme, in some GAA countries a wide range of - local - CSOs has been approached in order to promote the broader GAA agenda and the elaboration and inclusion of gender sensitive policies in institutional policies. Subsequently, the strategy shifted towards more focussed collaboration with like-minded CSOs and thematically related networks.

The MTR reports show a number of examples of how collaboration is further strengthened through working with either existing networks of CSOs at district level, with CSO networks created through the programme, or with a selected group of CSOs. It was noted that working with CSO networks has yielded more results and immediate benefits vis-à-vis the objectives of the programme and contributed to improved lobby and advocacy. At the same time, there is also the demand to strengthen capacities of involved CSOs at local and district level, and to strengthen their involvement in the monitoring and implementation of legislation at the national level.

As part of working with the CSOs component of Theory of Change, GAA Nepal supported in forming/reforming district level CSOs networks in its working districts. These CSO network comprise of members representing different CSOs working at the district in the sector related to GBV and children. These networks are involved in addressing social issues happening in the community. Mostly they are addressing them through case management of GBV and HTPs cases in close coordination with the police and health facilities. Other activities include, community meetings, rallies, signature collection against child marriage in the district, street drama.... Although these networks engage in awareness raising on GBV and EE issues, they would benefit from more training to get a full understanding of the causes and consequences of these issues and be better able to advocate against them. In addition, lobby and advocacy training on how to select most effective lobby targets and develop adequate lobby messages and related strategies could help these networks to become more effective.....

*From Nepal MTR report*

In Uganda, the thematic CSO network for CSEC (Uganda Coalition against Trafficking in Persons (UCATIP), Set Her Free, Kawempe Youth Development Association) is committed to work in strong coalition to fight CSEC. In the context of the GAA programme, they have worked on improving member organisations' capacities to influence and support the government, shared their work plans and elaborated joint advocacy actions on CSEC related themes. The CSEC CSO coalition successfully pushed for the revision of the expired National Plan of Action (NAP) on CSEC. The government (MGLSD) revised the expired NAP for CSEC and presented it to the Minister. In October 2018 the NAP was at the final stages of its finalisation and publication. Government has added CSEC in their work plans due to the GAA advocacy work.

GAA organisations in Ethiopia have devised strategies to bring different stakeholders together; governmental organizations and CSOs. The collaboration includes development of a joint action plan, implementation and evaluation of the progress together at different levels such as community, CSO and government level. The MTR notes that implementing organizations are quite successful in influencing key decision makers and managed to get GBV and EE issues on the agenda, and the GAA programme contributed to a number of practice changes (effective referral linkages to combat CM/FGM, increased medical age verification, increased reporting and of CM/CSEC). The GAA model of devising strategy to bring different stakeholders together became a model for like-minded CSOs and CSO platforms in Ethiopia.

With technical and logistical support of the GAA team, the Child Rights Coalition (CRC) - Sierra Leone developed a national strategy on lobby and advocacy for the rights of girls and young women to be economic empowered and to be protected against gender-based violence.

The APT has derived advantages by either continuing on the past work or being part of policy initiatives; and by working closely with other child rights organizations in the respective states. To sight one of the many examples emanating from both the states, one of the implementing partners had worked closely with other child rights organizations in the state to lobby with the government in relation to formulating legislation on criminalising the end clients in trafficking. The government has constituted an advisory group to prepare the draft legislation. The Draft AP Prohibition of Purchase of Sexual Services Bill, 2018 is underway. However, the concerned official involved in the process has been transferred leading to sudden slowing down of the process. The Implementing partners have also played their due part in maintaining pressure with the central government, at various stages, to pass the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2018. This is a case where various organizations have complemented each other to influence the policy.

*From India MTR report*

In some countries, collaboration with other strategic alliances has been initiated. In Nepal, the National Alliance of Women Human Right Defenders (NaWHRD) was identified by the implementing organisations as one of the CSOs to collaborate for implementation of GAA activities at national and district level.

The NaWHRD is one of most important Alliances to defend and promote women human rights. Regular coordination was established in several districts between GAA organisations Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Centre (CWIN) and Women Rehabilitation Centre (WOREC) on the one hand side, and Women Human Rights defenders (WHRD) on the other hand side. The WHRD representatives were part of different meetings organized under GAA. The MTR report indicates that the partnership with an alliance like NaWHRD has given GAA organisations more leverage in furthering GAA goals and outcomes.

In Bangladesh, the GAA team strategically identified networks to engage with in lobby and advocacy work, such as the National Action and Coordinating Group (NACG) against Violence against Women and Children. The purpose of this group is to strengthen inter-agency work to end violence against women and children, including collaboration with and between governments and children groups. The NACG is composed of UN agencies, multi-lateral and bi-lateral agencies, NGOs, civil society organizations and children's (girls and boys) and young people's group.

However, many of the MTR reports indicate that cooperation with likeminded other CSO initiatives, 'non-traditional', and strategic and thematic networks could be strengthened.

In further analysis of the Outcome Lists, it would be good to interview APT members on the underlying causes of the low number of reported outcomes on the CSO pathway. It seems that not all obtained outcomes - in particular around the processes of CSO cooperation - are included in the Outcome List. Implementing organisations are often member of these networks themselves, outcomes in this area are not often 'claimed' as progress under the CSO pathway. GAA partners often contribute with capacity development activities to support CSOs and CSO networks (lobby capacity, linking and networking, and Capacity Development), and related outcomes are rather seen as outcomes of Capacity Development than as outcomes of lobby and/or advocacy towards CSOs and CSO networks.

#### Lessons learned on CSO pathway:

- Collaboration of GAA organisations with specialized CSOs, networks of CSOs, and strategic alliances and reputable institutions seems to yield good results to influence policy change;
- Within GAA, there are many different forms of 'strategic' collaboration; although contexts differ, these varying experiences are a good opportunity for GAA organisations to learn from each other on possible forms of collaboration with CSOs and CSOs networks;
- The reported outcomes do not give sufficient insight in the underlying causes of the low number of outcomes within the CSO pathway. Not all obtained outcomes – i.e. the CSO cooperation processes - are included in the Outcome List.

## Conclusions

On the progress on the CSO 2020 objectives a moderate number of signs are reported. Within GAA, CSOs play an important role in promoting the GAA agenda by facilitating girls and young women to participate in lobby and advocacy processes around themes that concern them. Experience has shown that working with CSO networks has yielded more and immediate benefit and contributed to improved lobby and advocacy. Within GAA, collaboration is mostly focussed on existing CSO networks, like-minded CSOs and thematically related networks on e.g. CSEC, child rights organisations.

## Recommendations

- Enhance 'Strategic' collaboration with other actors, specialized CSOs, networks of CSOs and/or National Alliances/Institutes, research institutions;
- Facilitate sharing of experiences among GAA organisations on different forms of 'collaboration';
- Recheck formulated and reported outcomes within the CSO pathway, and see how the process of collaboration can be translated into relevant 'outcomes'.

### Youth Advocacy at the national level

One of the objectives within the CSO pathway is to increase the inclusion and facilitation girls' and young women's groups to in decision making and policy development processes; many efforts are realised to support girls' and young women's groups to gain confidence to engage with leaders, key stakeholders and politicians, to facilitate these engagements, and to argue from their perspective for the GAA agenda. As mentioned under the community pathway, GAA organisations actively support girls and young women groups at the local level. At the regional level in Africa as well as in the Netherlands, GAA organisations supported youth advocates and facilitated their participation in various fora. In close cooperation with country APTs, GAA International carried out trainings for youth advocates in the Philippines, Nepal, Uganda, India, Ghana, Kenya and Liberia, using the youth advocacy toolkit and facilitators guide developed by GAA International.

Capacitated with knowledge and skills to engage in collective action, youth advocates began implementing advocacy plans on:

- Technical and vocational education and child marriage (Ghana);
- Child marriage and child labour (Uganda);
- Child marriage at the district level (Nepal);
- Child labour and commercial sexual exploitation of children by developing local and national collective advocacy and communications campaigns (Philippines);
- The implementation of the SDG agenda by the Dutch government with special emphasis on SDG5 (joint advocacy between the Girls Rights Watch of Plan International Nederland and the youth associations of political parties).

In Ghana, young female advocates have undertaken advocacy actions towards formal and informal decision makers. Girls groups were supported to put their issues on CM on the agenda of traditional leaders and the district assembly. At the regional level there is a stronger collaboration between the regional youth advocates and the MMDAs.

In India, some of the trained young advocates were selected as Trainer-of-Trainers under Kishori Vikas, a government programme for orienting adolescents. Currently, GAA has been playing a role in resource material development for the programme. It is a huge opportunity in front of GAA to engage and effectively use this government programme for deepening and sustaining their work with young adolescent girls.

More information about the work with youth advocates at the international level is described in the sections on the international and regional components. Conclusions and lessons below are based also based on those experiences.

### Lessons learned

- Working with youth advocates generates a lot of dynamism within the GAA program, and contributes to the active role of girls and young women;
- In some cases GAA has been working with already existing youth groups, or involved young people who have previously participated in other programs (e.g. Girl Power' Program under MFS II), which seems to yield more results.

### Conclusions

Youth advocates capacitated by GAA partners (with support of GAA International) initiated collective action by implementing their advocacy plans on GAA related themes (CM, TVET, CL, and CSEC). Youth advocacy seems to create a lot of dynamism; and this approach could be further elaborated.

### Recommendations

- Share experiences and approaches of working with youth advocates in the different GAA countries and develop a comprehensive approach on youth advocacy;
- Facilitate linking among the youth advocates themselves, and create linkages with youth groups at local and district level;
- Although youth advocates develop their own action plans and set priorities, it is also good to see how they fit in with the GAA agenda and how synergy can be created;
- It is also important to pay attention to safety aspects of the work of Youth Advocates.

#### 3.4.4 Lobby and Advocacy Outcomes Private Sector Pathway

**Overall 2020 Outcomes Private Sector Pathway: Improved policies and practices of corporate/private sector actors in support of the elimination of gender based violence and economic exclusion of girls and young women**

Within the 'Private Sector' pathway, a limited number of outcomes is reported. Most signs are reported on private sector actors recognizing their role in addressing GBV and EE, entering into dialogue with CSOs, and committing to take action to eliminate GBV (agenda setting). In addition, a smaller number of signs is indicating that private sector actors implement and monitor corporate policies in support of girls' and women's EE and the elimination of GBV (practice change). Signs related to development of programmes, corporate policies and guidelines to eliminate GBV and support EE are least reported (policy change). The number of reported signs related to the private sector is relatively low compared to the other pathways.

**Main strategies used:** Lobby and Linking and Networking

Almost all reports indicated that effectively influencing the Private Sector Pathway is considered to be challenging due to limited experience, knowledge of engagement and relationships with the private sector. GAA organisations collaborated with local enterprises by linking them with CSEC victims and by supporting them to create jobs for CSEC victims or vulnerable youth. Collaboration was also initiated with transport companies in Uganda and Kenya in order to effectively combat child trafficking. Below you find findings as reported in some of the GAA countries:

In Uganda, GAA organisations engaged with the private sector to comply with the country's labour laws and to promote the implementation of gender responsive laws. GAA organisations successfully engaged with smaller companies; 30 of these are now complying with the provisions of labour standards and contracts, and are implementing gender responsive workplace policies. As indicated under the 'Government Pathway', GAA organisations effectively advocated for the monitoring of Child Labour policies and enforcement, specifically in the mining sector. Private sector actors involved in the GAA programme have stopped employing young children.



In Sierra Leone young women with support from the GAA programme, held a meeting with Sierra Leone Bottling Company (SLBC) HR and a representative from Ministry of Labour in September, 2017. The purpose of the meeting was to express their concerns and challenges young women face when seeking job opportunities in the companies and to advocate with the company to create opportunities for young women's employment. The representative of the company opted to inform their recruitment company to give a quota or percentage of the available jobs to young women within the community. A public notice board at the company will be placed where young women can easily access information, particularly job adverts.

*From Sierra Leone Outcome Story*

In Bangladesh, Ready Made Garment (RGM) factories were taking measures to review their policies and Code of Conducts regarding decent work. In 2017, GAA organisations facilitated the process where twelve RMG factories approved factory level discussions with management and workers' representatives to assess the safety and equity in job and career opportunities in their factories for women workers, and to explore ways and means to promote the establishment of safe, equitable and inclusive work-places for woman-workers in the RMG sector. One of the participating factories made specific commitments to bring about desired changes. Besides GAA other stakeholders (e.g. World bank) also contribute to more equal opportunities for women in RMG industries.

Experience reveals that engagement with the private sector requires long-term relationship building. At the same time it is indicated that there are often changes in CEO positions and that formalization of the relationships (e.g. through Memorandums of Understanding) is important. It is essential to establish contacts with key persons who have decision-making authority at a high level. Collaboration with branch organisations or umbrella organisations was indicated as an effective strategy, as described in the example below. This example also shows that the trajectory towards a MoU also required a period of trust-building. A key moment in the development of the relationship with the Hotel Association Nepal (HAN) was the participation of the HAN in the Nepal Country Level Policy Round Table on Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism Industries. This meeting was organized as part of the GAA regional Asia program through CWIN.

Hotel Association Nepal (HAN) and Trekking Agencies Association of Nepal (TAAN) have signed an MOU with GAA partner Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Centre (CWIN-Nepal) in May 2018 and agreed for the development of missing policies i.e. gender policy, child protection policy, ethical recruitment, decent work principles (safety and security at the workplace) and its code of conduct. Once these policies are developed HAN and TAAN will cascade these policies to its member's hotels and HAN and TAAN will establish a mechanism to monitor the implementation of these policies. As hospitality sector in Nepal provides huge opportunity for youth to get job in hotels, HAN was chosen as one of the major stakeholders for GAA. HAN being the umbrella organization of hotels can play a vital role in addressing gender based violence among girls and young women at the workplace.

*From Nepal Outcome Story*

MTR reports noted that engagement with the private sector is relatively new for GAA organisations in the programme countries and requires specific skills.

### Lessons learned Private Sector Pathway

- It requires a long-term commitment and existing relations from GAA organisations to effectively collaborate with the private sector;
- Some of the experiences show that small scale initiatives seem effective and contribute to the private sector objectives of GAA at local level;
- Formalization of the relationships with the private sector (MoU) proved to be important for sustainability of the collaboration.

### Conclusions

Progress towards the Private Sector Pathway 2020 outcomes is less advanced than progress in other Pathways. The limited number of examples of cooperation with the private sector illustrates that progress within this pathway has been a challenge for many APTs. There is an identified need to provide more capacity development in this area; a realistic and effective option could be to collaborate with those implementing partners who are able to further develop their good practices. Another factor contributing to success could be to collaborate with more specialized partners (experience with engagement with private sector).

### Recommendations

- Enhance GAA organisations' capacity to engage with the private sector (strategies, approaches), support would have to be provided from the Netherlands to facilitate exchange of experiences;
- Develop good practices of lobby and linking with the private sector (with support from the Netherlands);
- Explore opportunities for GAA organisations to collaborate with more specialized organisations.

## 3.5. FINDINGS ON THE INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL COMPONENTS

### 3.5.1. Findings on the International Component

The GAA international programme aims to contribute to full utilization of the existing human rights monitoring and accountability mechanisms to ensure that national governments (of GAA countries) adhere to international normative frameworks addressing GBV and EE of girls and young women and effectively follow up on policy recommendations. Global March Against Child Labour (CMACL) and End Child Prostitution and Trafficking International (ECPAT) participate in the GAA International programme as implementing partners and as members of the International APT.

GAA International engages most notably with the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the Human Rights Council (HRC, Special Procedures) and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The programme strives to promote the accountability mechanisms surrounding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) using the HLPF and the underlying Voluntary National Reports (VNR). The MTR of GAA International focused on the advocacy interventions targeting human rights mechanisms, the support provided to GAA organisations related to youth advocacy within the human rights mechanism processes, and the added value of the collaboration at the level of the GAA International APT.

The results of the MTR show that GAA International is to a large extent on track with the objectives of the GAA International 2020 outcomes with regard to human rights mechanisms and support for youth advocacy. The majority of the changes on human rights mechanisms are related to policy changes, mostly in the form of adopted recommendations and/or resolutions (CEDAW, CRC, UPR, and HRC). GAA International contributed to the adoption of the Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics, the Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, the general comment on adolescence by the CRC and the updating by CEDAW of the general recommendation on violence against women. It should be noted that, as is generally the case with regard to human rights mechanisms, the adaptation of these resolutions and development of instruments and guidelines is the outcome of processes that had been ongoing for a number of years.

In terms of agenda setting, progress has included the incorporation of inputs of CSOs into the work of CEDAW (Kenya and Nepal) and UPR (Ghana and Nepal); the development of evidence-based recommendations on GBV and EE; and the monitoring of the performance on girls' rights and GAA themes by human rights monitoring bodies. GAA International has provided capacity and technical support to the country APTs on working with international accountability mechanisms and training and supporting youth advocates. GAA international has assisted country APTs to integrate the follow-up to the conclusions/recommendations into on-going advocacy activities and long-term advocacy strategies of GAA program countries. This collaboration has strengthened the links between national and international advocacy. The example of Kenya in the box below is a case in point.

In the case of Kenya, GAA International provided technical support during the drafting of the questions for the list of issues, prior to the drafting of the NGO report, during the meeting between the Committee and the Kenyan CSOs as well as providing a briefing on follow-up within the GAA program. The Kenya APT felt that the most important aspect of this process was that it created a link between GAA International and the country specific program. The Kenyan APT noted that they had been unsure as to the added value of GAA International until they participated in the review process in Geneva. They also felt that they would not have seen the significance of CEDAW had GAA International not explained the relevance to their work.

*From GAA International MTR report*

Success factors indicated by the MTR are the extensive and substantive knowledge on GBV and EE themes of GAA organisations. This allows APT members to contribute evidence-based inputs into the work on human rights mechanism. The focus on follow-up to the recommendations of human rights mechanisms (reporting as a goal) is also of great importance, although this should be integrated into the on-going advocacy activities and strategies of GAA countries involved.

An important challenge indicated by the APT MTR is related to the difficult international political context. Increased conservatism within the political sphere makes it difficult to achieve progress in some areas related to EE and GBV (the resolutions of the Human Rights Council regarding the inclusion of references to sexual and reproductive human rights for girls). GAA International has had to shift its focus to maintaining standards rather than striving for more progressive standards.

Another important challenge is formed by the knowledge and experience that is required at the level of country APTs to effectively work with international accountability mechanisms. Generally, there is a lack of capacity to strengthen programme interventions in this area and to support the integration of human rights mechanisms into country programmes. The MTR noted that the APT does not fully exploit opportunities for joint lobby actions. There is also room to strengthen the visibility of GAA at the international level, which could contribute to further strengthen the effectiveness of its advocacy efforts. Effectiveness of activities towards the GAA programme countries could gain from stronger coordination.

### **Youth Advocacy**

The GAA International programme also seeks to support girls and young women in GAA countries to conduct meaningful and effective advocacy in the international arena on issues that affect them.

Youth are being seen more as agents of change and are becoming increasingly present in international initiatives. GAA International has taken advantage of this opening by ensuring that GAA youth advocates are available to attend and participate in international events such as the day of general discussion on protecting and empowering children as human rights defenders of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. GAA international is also creating initiatives for youth advocates, such as the 'take-over' of the UN during the International Day of the Girl. The MTR indicates that there is the potential for youth advocacy on GBV and EE in reporting to the international human rights mechanisms.

Trained youth advocates were selected to participate in international events such as the New York UN take-over during the International Day of the Girl (strategy-advocacy campaign), and to speak at the Annual Youth Education and Empowerment Summit (strategy-linking and networking) and at the day of general discussion of the CRC on child human rights defenders (strategy-lobbying). Although trained youth advocates participated in international events, they have not yet been involved in the human rights monitoring and accountability mechanisms.

The identification and selection of the participants, the training in preparation of the meeting and logistical support was a joint contribution between GAA International and the country APT. The APT in Sierra Leone noted that it was the initiative of GAA International who brought forward the idea about including a child rights defender from Sierra Leone as a speaker in the day of general discussion and the Sierra Leone APT worked closely with the International program in the development of a concept note and the logistics of bringing a youth advocate to the meeting.

The selection of a GAA youth advocate from Sierra Leone as a speaker on the empowerment of girl child human rights defenders during the day of general discussion on protecting and empowering children as human rights defenders of the Committee on the Rights of the Child was seen as a positive outcome as it ensured that the issue of girl child rights defenders was placed squarely on the agenda of the day.

*From GAA International Outcome Story*

### Conclusions

GAA International is to a large extent on track with its 2020 objectives with regards to human rights mechanisms and support for youth advocacy. Important steps are being taken by contributing to adopted recommendations and/or resolutions. Steps are being made to facilitate access of youth to the international arena. Working with country APTs on reporting to the human rights mechanisms helped to strengthen the links between national and international advocacy. Challenges remain, particularly with regards to the difficult international political context and increasing conservatism, and the limited use of opportunities for joint lobby actions and synergies between GAA partners.

### Recommendations

- In terms of advocacy towards human rights mechanisms, GAA International should develop strategies and targets in order to address the challenges that increased conservatism pose to the political context, for example by targeting less politicized arenas and by combining evidence-based research with lobby and networking with like-minded lobby organisations;
- GAA International needs to initiate more activities/training with country programmes on how to integrate the conclusions and recommendations of HRM into ongoing advocacy activities and use them as a tool to reinforce long-term advocacy objectives;
- The APT should make more use of opportunities for joint lobby actions and seek to increase the visibility of GAA International where this could further strengthen the effectiveness of its advocacy efforts, the work at country level needs stronger coordination;
- With regards to youth advocacy: provide additional, event-specific training around international events and reporting to international accountability mechanisms. Furthermore, GAA International should work with country APTs to ensure that youth advocacy is integrated into country programmes.

#### 3.5.2. Findings on the Regional Components: Regional Africa

In the Africa Regional Programme, the APT consists of Plan International Africa Regional Office, Terre des Hommes Netherlands, Defence for Children Regional Africa and ECPAT International. GAAs Regional Africa Programme also has Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) and the International Federation of Women Lawyers (la Federacion Internacional De Abogadas – FIDA) as regional partners and 5 sub-regional CSOs with presence in GAA countries. The regional programme aims to influence regional governance bodies in Africa (African Union and Regional Economic Communities) and is complementary to the GAA influencing in the six African countries (Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone).

The Africa Regional Component has a long term goal of empowering girls and young women in Africa and their civil society organizations to use regional monitoring and accountability mechanisms to hold their governments accountable on the fulfilment of their protection and rights. GAA Africa Regional has made contributions at national, sub-regional and regional levels. The alliance organisations have a track record in the areas of ending CM and CT and CSEC, and they and their partners form part of large networks with presence in several countries.

Halfway the program, the GAA seems to be effective in influencing regional bodies. Most reported signs are related to agenda setting of CM, CSEC and CT, and inclusion of youth in regional spaces and strengthening sub-regional and regional monitoring and accountability mechanisms (e.g. Maputo Protocol). Less signs are reported on policy change and practice change. GAA successfully advocated for the inclusion of GBV and EE themes in the protocols, strategies, and policies at regional level - as demonstrated in the box below.

Adoption of the Joint General Comment on Child Marriage by the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) and the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) and subsequent popularization by the GAA. In May 2017, the AU Committee on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) adopted the Joint General Comment on Child Marriage. The Joint General Comment (JGC) provides a comprehensive framework to end child marriage in member states.

The GAA actively engaged in continental ECM influencing spaces, particularly in a number of platforms where the JGC was discussed and provided inputs on the general comment during the ACERWC 28th Session in the Gambia in October 2016. The GAA also supported the translation of the JGC, its printing and dissemination.

*From GAA Regional Africa*

In the context of the GAA Regional Africa programme component, engagement seems to be most advanced on ending Child Marriage. The MTR notes that themes and issues like ending Child Marriage, Child Trafficking, Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Gender-Based Violence currently get more attention. The AU has made certain commitments around these issues, opening up the space for engagement at national, sub-regional or international levels. Additionally, the presence of legal, legislative and policy frameworks – Maputo protocol, Declaration by AU Heads of State and Government of the year 2017 as being for 'Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investments in Youth' - offers levers for advocacy for change. The presence of other actors working on the same issues, like UN bodies, other CSOs, bilateral and multi-lateral development partners, creates further momentum for GAA themes.

The APT organisations have relevant understanding of the policy influencing context, with good networking in the policy circles and institutional networks, and active participation in task forces and technical working groups. GAA is actively collaborating with other advocacy initiatives; 'Gender is My Agenda Campaign' (GIMAC), where a coalition of likeminded organisations seems to be working effectively. The second area of collaboration is in Child Trafficking and CSEC, where both FIDA in Uganda and DCI in the ECOWAS region have worked as part of CSO networks to deal with this complex issue. Additionally, the MTR identified the need to enhance local CSO' capacities to build and sustain relationships and identify emerging opportunities at regional level; training, mentoring and knowledge management are identified as crucial areas for support.

With regards to media engagement, GAA Africa Regional organised a Regional Capacity Building Workshop on Increased Advocacy to Ending Child Marriage through Engagement of the Media (Western and Southern African Stream) which was conducted in February and March 2017 respectively for about 90 journalists from more than 23 countries. GAA collaborated with the AU ECM Campaign Secretariat delivering sessions on 'Gender and Media' and 'Media engagement

with other actors' working against Child Marriage', emphasizing child friendly reporting. GAA also contributed to the drafting of a Media Action Plan and a monitoring framework on ending Child Marriage in Africa (including a tracking system, put in place by the AU ECM secretariat). The training was important to enhance the capacity of media to address the root causes and the different aspects of ECM, and to challenge all stakeholders involved. Journalists developed country specific action plans. Monitoring frameworks have been developed on ECM reporting. This outcome is seen as a major agenda setting contribution with the potential for policy change and practice.

Given the complex nature of the issues at stake and the inherent uncertainties of advocacy work, the Alliance could do with greater synergy building. For instance, the work around ending Child Marriages, Child Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children could be strengthened by advocacy on the Maputo Protocol reporting processes, and the AU Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa. Like the Maputo Protocol, the Solemn Declaration prohibits Gender-Based Violence and additionally offers avenues for strengthening the effectiveness of GAA's work on the provisions on prohibition of the abuse of women as wives and sex slaves; raising public awareness and sensitization about GBV and trafficking in women and promotion and protection of women's rights, including the right to development. Building strategic positions and policy statements around GAA work on these issues could ensure greater synergy and leverage.

The MTR notes that several pathways have not fully exploited linking and synergizing e.g. youth advocacy better tied to work at national advocacy processes on specific issues, i.e. ending child marriage, reporting on the Maputo Protocol or Child Trafficking. While inclusion is an end in itself, the youth movement could spur more tangible action on specific national and regional advocacy campaigns, in a more structured and consistent way. Similarly, a thread needs to connect the ending Child Marriages campaign that links pan-African level action to national and sub-regional advocacy processes. Framing these issues within existing national discourses and priorities would be important.

### Youth Advocacy

Various efforts have been made to enhance youth participation in regional and sub-regional advocacy processes. GAA facilitated youth to engage in high level policy dialogue on gender equality and education with UN Women Executive Director, and organised a training of 36 youth from the GAA programme countries and from other African countries on relevant treaties and protocols. Furthermore, the 29th and 30th GIMAC platform included youth recommendations in the GIMAC outcome documents presented to the ministers for gender. And GAA facilitated women and girls to have their first engagement with the current ACHPR Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa.

### Conclusions

With regards to its envisaged 2020 outcomes, GAA Africa Regional made important progress on agenda setting level, and contributed to several GBV related policies. Youth was successfully facilitated to have access to regional spaces and innovative approaches (report score cards) have been developed in relation to regional monitoring and accountability mechanisms. Convergence of activities within the different pathways and creating linkages with the national level can create more synergy, even as capacity development support for contracted GAA organisations at country level for Lobby and advocacy specifically. GAA could make more use of the momentum of increased attention for GBV themes (CM) at regional and sub-regional level. The MTR identified the need to create more synergy by enhancement of collaboration with other actors.

### Recommendations

- Identify which outcomes are the most critical to attaining the programme goals;
- Building convergence across outcomes on different pathways is critical;
- Strengthening of the link between the national and sub-regional/pan African level;
- Reach out to and build synergies with other actors working on similar issues as the GAA such as other CSOs, UN agencies, bilateral and multi-lateral actors, or the private sector.

### 3.5.3. Findings on the Regional Components: Regional Asia

In Asia, GAA is implemented by the regional APT, consisting of the Plan International Asia Regional Office, TdH-Netherlands - Asia Office, ECPAT International Secretariat - Bangkok, and Global March Against Child Labour (GMACL). This Asia regional component is implemented in South and Southeast Asia. It focuses on interventions aimed at influencing policies and practices of Asian regional bodies, to address Gender-Based Violence and Economic Exclusion of girls and young women. Specifically, GAA advocates for safe economic migration and decent work opportunities, and against Commercial and Sexual Exploitation of Children and Child Marriage.

Over the last two years since the formation of the GAA Asia Regional Programme, the APT has reported significant progress towards its envisaged 2020 outcomes and focused on influencing Intergovernmental and multilateral bodies, Private Sector and regional Coalitions CSOs, CSO and youth networks in South and Southeast Asia to put forward the GAA regional agenda. Due to the close engagement of the APT organisations with various target actors, the programme managed to contribute to significant signs of change towards the desired outcomes for ACWC, SAIEVAC and ADB at the agenda setting and policy change levels. ECPAT's work with the ACWC, particularly in advocating for OCSE as a priority area, resulted in the ASEAN body adopting OCSE as a priority and green lighting the proposed joint collaborative project on 'Regional Platform for Promoting Comprehensive and Harmonized Legislations aimed at Preventing and Combating Online Child Sexual Exploitation.'

Plan International worked with the ADB to incorporate gender themes into their Strategy 2030, an instrument which sets the direction of Bank operations until 2030. Plan International, as a knowledge partner, has also technically supported the development of technical assistance instruments in Education and Youth Participation & Innovation. These policy change level outcomes were the result of meaningful partnerships with the ADB's NGO and Civil Society Centre (NGOC) and Youth for Asia.

In the Private Sector pathway, Plan pursued partnerships with Youth Career Initiative (YCF), a youth employment programme, AIESEC Bangladesh, and Accenture, to influence the hospitality & tourism industry, readymade garments (RMG) sector in mainstreaming decent work principles and inclusion of women in their operations. Progress with the private sector has been less successful. With YCI, activities have so far yielded agenda setting level outcomes.

In the CSOs, CSO networks and youth networks pathway, capacity support activities were conducted with the goal of enabling civil society actors to prioritize the GAA agenda and influence regional bodies and platforms. Plan International, ECPAT, and GMACL have been successful in introducing the GAA agenda to actors such as AIESEC, Youth for Asia (YFA), ECPAT and GMACL network.

The MTR indicated long-term relationships as a success factor for effective lobby at the level of regional bodies in Asia - e.g. ECPAT's productive lobbying with ACWC and SAIEVAC were the result of foundational relationships with key actors in the bodies. Plan International's long-standing partnerships with ADB and AIESEC allowed for space to introduce GAA themes into their operations.

Capacity support for CSOs, CSOs networks and Youth networks was considered as another important contribution to progress. The GAA programme aims to develop the capacities of regional coalitions of CSOs, CSO networks and youth networks to enable them to effectively engage regional bodies through lobby and advocacy activities. As such, the GAA regional APT targeted their respective organisations' CSO networks (e.g. ECPAT International network of CSOs, GMACL network, GMACL's PWB network) to include GBV and gender themes.

The MTR noted limited synergy among the alliance organisations in the GAA Regional Asia programme component, and identified the need to strengthen the linkages with the countries to develop a joint message to enhance GAA's advocacy work. The APT also indicated the need to invest more time for joint analysis and reflections on achieved outcomes in order to align their respective GAA activities.

### Youth Advocates Regional Asia

With regards to Youth advocacy, GAA has provided capacity support to youth networks such as AIESEC and ADB's Youth For Asia to sustain youth participation in influencing SAARC, ASEAN, ADB. Both examples show that meaningful youth participation is a challenge in itself. The MTR report notes a lack of exchange on experiences. It moreover concludes that participation of youth is not yet institutionalised.

Plan International's worked with ADB's Youth For Asia (YFA) and the organization of the annual Asian Youth Forum is a testament to the importance of giving the youth, especially the marginalized, a voice. About one hundred fifty (150) youth delegates from all over Asia were invited to participate in the 5th AYF back-to-back with the 50th ADB Annual Meeting in Yokohama, Japan last May 2017.

With the theme, "Youth for Prosperity of Asia and the Pacific", the AYF provided a unique opportunity for the youth to come up with solutions to support sustainability and equitable prosperity in the region. Further, their participation in the Annual Meeting enabled youth delegates to raise their inputs on ADB's agenda in the coming years Plan has always been one of the core supporters of the AYF; this strong support enabled YFA to back the participation of over thirty (30) youth delegates from marginalized backgrounds and Plan programs. ADB's development of a technical assistance for education, which was significantly supported by Plan as well, allowed for concrete investment of resources in such major events. This is a welcome sign of progress towards the meaningful integration of youth voices in the Bank's operations in the future. Plan has succeeded in bringing youth together in such huge and visible events, the meaningful integration of youth voices in the Bank's operations remains to be seen.

Another example is how GMACL engaged youth advocates by inviting former child labourers and/or GMACL beneficiaries to consultations, meetings, and forums about child labour issues. The youth's role in these events is to share real-life stories, putting a human face to the lobby & advocacy activities of CSOs and CSO partners. The engagement that GMACL activities have with the youth, however, is limited to observer-level participation and story-based influencing. GMACL posited that integrating deeper participation of young people is a challenge because of their limited capacity to contribute. This runs the risk of youth participation becoming tokenistic.

*From GAA Asia Regional MTR report*

### Conclusion

Regarding the 2020 Outcomes, the GAA Asia Regional Programme has made important progress in the region's policy and practice environment with regard to GBV and EE themes (OSEC, youth agenda).

Factors contributing to success actors are strong engagement with regional intergovernmental bodies, and active and able technical support in GAA issues. The MTR identified the need to increase synergy within GAA and increase visibility, need for stronger linkages with the countries.

### Recommendations

- Enhance synergy within GAA regional APT by developing a joint message to enhance GAA's advocacy work;
- Work closely with the country APTs to identify relevant issues at country level, and use the regional platform to address them strategically. This also applies to any regional engagement where outcomes manifest or are implemented at the country level;
- Build clear partnerships with key private sector influencers to effectively advocate for practice change towards decent work principles and increasing access to decent work for youth and young women;
- The APT also indicated the need to invest more time for joint analysis and reflections on achieved outcomes in order to align GAA activities.



### 3.6. FINDINGS ON THE PROGRAMME COMPONENT NETHERLANDS

The advocacy in the Netherlands is being implemented by Plan International Netherlands, Defence for Children – ECPAT Netherlands and Terre des Hommes Netherlands. The latter has selected the Global March against Child Labour (GMACL) as implementing partner. Together, GAA organisations and GMACL are influencing the Dutch government and companies, directly or through (and with) existing networks of (like-minded) CSOs. The Dutch GAA programme has two components: (1) lobbying towards private sector actors (in relation to Responsible Business Conduct in global supply chains); and (2) lobbying towards the Dutch government and Parliament (regarding the inclusion of children's rights and gender equality in development and trade policies).

**Main strategies used:** Lobby, linking and networking and research

With regards to the envisaged 2020 outcomes of this programme component, limited progress is made on private sector; the public sector outcomes indicate moderate progress. Outcomes are mostly related to GBV/EE topics, at the level of agenda setting and policy change.

All APT organisations involved in the Netherlands programme component have been actively working within the IMVO covenants<sup>6</sup> (metallurgic covenant, food covenant, the banking covenant, the garment and textile covenant and the insurance covenant) providing inputs addressing gender equality and child rights violations in their production and supply chains. Plan International Netherlands also shifted the tactic from working with individual companies on investment in young women and integration of gender equality at the start of the programme towards working through the IMVO covenants.

Regarding the public (government) lobby, GAA members have targeted relevant policy makers within government ministries in order to effectively influence them on child rights violations and gender discrimination and GAA issues in public policies and policy reports (a.o. Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) of the Netherlands), new policy on trade and development cooperation of MoFA, the Dutch position on elimination of child labour, gender equality issues in private sector subsidy frameworks of the Netherlands Enterprise Agency. GAA members actively engaged with Members of Parliament on the inclusion of child rights and gender equality in Dutch policy.

Halfway the programme, GAA Netherlands is reporting several outcomes. The main outcomes are:

- Gender and child rights issues have been included in the IMVO covenants, though there is also a widespread feeling that an issue of gender is still insufficiently being addressed and acknowledged by signatories of IMVO agreements. Furthermore, the attention for child rights seems to be narrowed down to the sole issue of child labour in supply chains;
- The CSO perspective and the views of young people have been included in the VNR of the Netherlands for the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in 2017;
- The new Dutch trade and development cooperation emphasizes gender equality as a cross-cutting objective throughout all priority issues;
- The Dutch position on child labour for the Global Conference has been strengthened by including more explicit language on the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of children and youth;
- Cooperation with different (child-rights focussed) NGOs has been strengthened and resulted in joint action.

The MTR on the private sector advocacy of GAA NL indicates that the GAA NL programme would gain strengths enhancing synergy of the collaboration. Currently, GAA members address GAA related topics mostly individually, but the overall benefit of the alliance has not been translated in a joint strategy or focus for lobby. What seems to be missing, is a common advocacy ask

<sup>6</sup> Agreements promoting International Responsible Business Conduct; The 'covenant tables' are multi-stakeholder settings in which various NGOs take part together with representatives from private sector associations and the government to make agreements about fair, sustainable, safe, environmentally and animal-friendly production and elimination of Child Labour.

(which binds together the child rights and gender equality issues of GAA) and a common advocacy strategy towards Dutch companies, based on a mapping of existing relationships, programmatic expertise, and concrete 'offers' of each of the GAA member organisations.

Linking and networking is particularly relevant for the public sector lobbying. To win a seat at the negotiation table, it is much easier for GAA members to work as part of a broader NGO coalition of child rights organisations than to approach the lobby targets as individual organisations.

The internal review showed that with reference to the political lobby component of GAA NL, actions have been more aligned and better coordinated. GAA members have jointly planned and implemented the lobby towards the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the new Dutch policy on trade and development cooperation and the elaboration of the VNR of the Netherlands. One of the enabling factors is the existence of broad child rights coalitions (like KROS<sup>7</sup>) and the Child Rights Collective<sup>8</sup> of which the GAA partners are members. GAA partners are contributing by giving inputs on lobby documents, policies, strategy papers, attending meetings, and working on linking and networking. In all lobby efforts GAA partners provided input specifically on the position of girls and young women, the focus on ending Child Marriage, Harmful Traditional Practices in general and the importance of post primary education and decent work.

One of the lessons learned after two and a half years of GAA advocacy is that effective influencing of private sector practices requires adequate knowledge of the situation 'on the ground', the context of girls, boys, families and communities that are directly or indirectly affected by the products and processes of Dutch companies. All GAA members have on the ground experiences and have developed programmatic responses to the major child rights violations caused by (directly or indirectly) by companies. The MTR identified the need to map the successful interventions and develop a more comprehensive 'menu' of measures and interventions which companies can pursue in order to mitigate the negative impacts of their production and sourcing practices. Another lesson is that cooperation with other NGOs participating in IMVO agreements is essential for success. The review pointed out that Plan International Netherlands - as supporter of the Textile Agreement - was not directly perceived by other NGOs as the expert on gender equality in the garment sector. This demonstrates that we need to continue to strengthen our interventions at the bottom end of the supply chain (the practical business case) but do this as much as possible in cooperation with other NGOs (UNICEF, Fair Wear Foundation, FNV, and CNV).

### Conclusions

The GAA Netherlands showed partial progress on private sector component, the public sector outcomes indicate moderate progress. Outcomes are mostly related to GBV/EE topics, at agenda setting and policy change level. GAA partners have been engaging with the IMVO covenants for the private sector, and there is an identified need to develop a joint GAA strategy (joint strategy and policy asks, concrete business cases, strategic collaboration with other actors). Influencing public policies with regard to GAA themes was effectively done through participation in relevant networks. Both components need stronger mutual alignment.

### Recommendations

In order to increase effectiveness, the following recommendations should be considered:

On the private sector lobby and advocacy:

- GAA's lobby efforts will be more effective if GAA organisations develop a shared and strong advocacy message and ask, that each of the GAA organisation will carry out as member (or supporter) of various IMVO agreements. The challenge is to elaborate a message that integrates the child rights and gender aspects of GAA (as well as the double focus on protecting girls and young women against violence, as well as creating the conditions for their economic empowerment);

<sup>7</sup> The group of NGOs working on child rights within development cooperation and (in Dutch: Coalitie Kinderrechten in Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (KROS)), KROS is an - informal - network of 11 child rights CSOs in the Netherlands.

<sup>8</sup> In Dutch: Kinderrechtencollectief.

- The strategy to lobby the steering committees of the different IMVO agreements can potentially enable the alliance to meet its goals. Though each GAA member will be lobbying different IMVO agreements, experiences and approaches at different tables should be shared in the GAA NL APT to maximize learning;
- Develop stronger business cases. In order to 'seduce' companies to include child rights and gender considerations into their due diligence, GAA members must have something interesting to offer to companies. A practical business case shows the return for business on investing in child rights and gender equality;
- The GAA lobby and advocacy that is targeting the Dutch Government should be more aligned with GAA's actions towards the private sector stakeholders involved in the various covenants. One of the issues which GAA members could take up as part of their public lobby, has to do with the role of government in the monitoring and enforcement of IMVO covenants. To date, the Dutch government has not been willing to take a more pro-active, normative, stance towards parties that have signed the covenant;
- Joint planning of future advocacy and lobby actions towards the tourism sector.

**On the public lobby:**

- More focus in the lobby towards the Dutch government (this relates to the last recommendation above);
- Prepare for the upcoming evaluation of the Dutch IMVO covenants which is scheduled for 2020;
- Strengthen engagement with platform WO=MEN. This platform has the potential to influence the Dutch policies on matters related to gender equality;
- Elaborate common advocacy messages based on a mapping of each other's expertise, relations with companies, successful interventions.

## 4. THEORY OF CHANGE & ASSUMPTIONS

Looking at the findings on the different pathways, there are relevant linkages both between the levels of change and between the four pathways. The outcomes of the GAA programme as validated by the MTR process do not provide arguments to change the order and nature of changes as outlined in the ToC.

As far as the levels of change are concerned, most programme components have focused on agenda setting and policy change in the first half of the program, and now expect to see more practice changes. However, in reality, the pathways of change are not linear; in many cases the 'jump' to practice change can be done immediately because change does not always depend on (formal) policies and legislation alone. For a large part, change depends on shifts in social norms and is also often about improving the implementation of already existing policies and legislation, e.g. by improving cooperation between implementing agencies.

The categorisation of changes into these three stages seems less applicable to the Community, CSOs and Private Sector pathways because changes are not always related to (formal) policies. The APT MTR reports showed that the three change levels 'agenda setting', 'policy change' and 'practices change' are interpreted somewhat differently across the various GAA programme components. More guidance to the APTs might be useful for more consistent interpretation of the change levels.

During the implementation of the GAA programme, particularly at the local level relevant inter-linkages are created between community leaders and/or groups, government officials and CSO's, confirming interconnectivity of the community pathway, the (local) government pathway and the CSO pathway.

The connection between the community pathway, the government pathway and the CSO pathway, and the fourth pathway (Private Sector) is less obvious.

Looking at the assumptions, most assumptions are still valid and relevant. However, more attention could be paid to assumptions (3) Use of ICT, social media and research improves the quality (relevance, urgency) of lobby and advocacy actions; (8) involvement of men and boys; and (9) Mass media reflect and sustain popular norms and values. The program committee could review the ToC and adjust it, based on the outcomes of the MTR, for the second half of the GAA programme. This holds especially for the CSO Pathway and the change levels, notably the description of envisioned changes at the levels of agenda setting, policy change and practice.

### Assumptions of GAA's Theory of Change

1. CSOs, in particular girls and women's right organisations, have long-term commitment to shape political agendas, create political will and monitor implementation.
2. Collaboration between CSOs with different mandates to fight for a common goal will strengthen each individual CSO and benefit all their constituencies.
3. Use of ICT, social media and research improves the quality (relevance, urgency) of lobby and advocacy actions.
4. CSOs are able and willing to use increased organisational capacity for effective lobby and advocacy actions.
5. Lobby and advocacy strategies, at all levels, have to be substantiated and supported if not carried out by a substantial part of the group they are supposed to benefit.
6. Stronger CSOs that are accountable to their constituency cannot be neglected by democratic states.
7. Stronger CSO networks ensure that the issues of Gender Based Violence and economic exclusion gain priority on the public and political agenda.
8. Involving boys and men's organisations and traditional and religious leaders increases public awareness and norms change on Gender Based Violence.
9. Mass media reflect and sustain popular norms and values.
10. Gender Based Violence cannot be eradicated without economic empowerment.

## 5. VALIDITY OF THE REPORTED LOBBY & ADVOCACY OUTCOMES

The substantiation of 20%<sup>9</sup> of the reported outcomes so far was an important aspect of the Mid-term Review of the Girls Advocacy Alliance.<sup>10</sup> Substantiation refers to the confirmation of the substance of an outcome description by knowledgeable external stakeholder(s). This step was meant to enhance the reliability of the evidence of the observed change (sign) in the outcome description.

The consolidation and updating of the Outcome List as of June 2018 was done alongside the MTR process, in coordination with the APTs and the implementing partners. More than 750 signs have been reported halfway the programme. Based on the reported signs per Programme Component a selection of 20% of outcomes was made, with exception of Ghana and Ethiopia and India, where 100% and 61% of outcomes have been selected, respectively.

The criteria for the selection of outcomes for substantiation differed per Programme Component. A set of criteria was developed in the GAA MTR Guidelines and Tools but APTs were free to make their own selection. Suggested criteria were:

- Outcomes that highlight crucial behaviour changes and that are largely significant in light of the end outcomes of the programme;
- Outcomes for which evidence is not easily available or accessible. If evidence is already available in the form of supporting documentation, substantiation by external informants does not add much value. Instead, focus on those outcomes that can only be confirmed by consulting external key informants or stakeholders;
- Substantiation is also advisable if the contribution of the programme to an outcome is uncertain or marginal, and/or if the significance of an outcome is not clear – or if organisations or staff have different opinions on these aspects. Substantiating these kinds of outcomes often brings valuable insights;
- In a series of outcomes that are causally related, it is suggested to substantiate only the most recent outcomes.

In some cases, outcomes for substantiation were randomly chosen by the external consultants. In other cases, it was decided in consultation with the APT to obtain an equal spread for each change level and pathway, or to select only those outcomes that were rated as (highly) significant. In the case of Africa Regional, the outcomes were first grouped together and the outcomes with the most correlation were substantiated.

The overall analysis revealed that a limited number of outcome lists was not updated during the MTR and that information on contribution and significance was incomplete. The quality of the outcome list deserves further attention, particularly the aspect of correlation of outcomes (outcome chains) and merging of overlapping outcomes.

Substantiation of the outcomes was in the majority of cases conducted by the External Consultants. Substantiation was done through a combination of key informant interviews and Focus Group discussions, and was in some cases complemented with information from secondary sources (reports, minutes, published documents, and articles in media). Three hundred outcomes have been substantiated, and sufficiently validated according to the views of the consultants and review teams confirming the outcome description. In the majority of cases, contribution and significance were included as well.

9 The GAA PME manual states that 20% of the outcome descriptions must be substantiated, this percentage is indicative within Outcome Harvesting.

10 Sometimes this process is also referred to as 'validation', but in this document the official Outcome Harvesting term 'substantiation' shall be used.

GAA Programme Components	total signs	signs selected for substantiation	%	Total Substantiated	%
Total	761	302	39%	296	39%
Without ETH, GHA, IND	568	129	23%	124	22%

A complete overview of the figures on substantiation can be found in Annex E.

The percentage of substantiated outcomes of the GAA programme during this MTR process is slightly above the usual percentage for Outcome Harvesting (20%) and in line with the instructions of the GAA PME manual.

## 6. ACHIEVED OUTCOMES & LESSONS LEARNED IN CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Capacity Development takes place at various levels in the context of the GAA programme. In line with the overall GAA ToC, Capacity Development of contracted local CSO partners is considered a result area in itself, with a specific planning and monitoring cycle and instrument (Capacity Assessment Tool). Below sections reflect on the strengthening of organisational capacities for Lobby and Advocacy of these local CSOs involved in the GAA programme, either as contracted implementing partner organisations, or as collaboration partners.

### 6.1. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OF CONTRACTED LOCAL CSO PARTNERS

Strengthening of the organisational capacity of contracted local CSO partners of the GAA for lobby and advocacy is an important condition for achieving the 2020 GAA programme objectives in the overall Theory of Change. In the 10 GAA countries, partner selection took place at the start of the programme based on pre-defined selection criteria.

During the inception phase, all APTs ensured that the combination of local CSO partner organisations involved in the implementation of their joint programmes met the following principles:

- Women Rights Organisations (WRO) have a proven potential for influencing policies and legislation for girls and (young) women. The Girls Advocacy Alliance therefore aims to partner with at least one WRO per country or region;
- The partner organisations together offer the thematic expertise and the range of strategies necessary to tackle the issues identified in the joint programme proposal and to realise the changes envisaged in the joint Theory of Change;
- Based on initial meetings and assessments and existing relations and networks, active and transparent collaboration between the partner organisations can be expected, including sharing of knowledge and tools.

Working within the Strategic Partnership 'Dialogue and Dissent' required a specific set of capacities in the area of lobbying and advocacy and networks and expertise. GAA was seen as an opportunity to connect different organizations with different levels of experience in lobby and advocacy (GAA members themselves, lobby organizations, thematic organizations, and/or local CSOs with strong linkages with communities). This 'balanced' mix implied that mutual learning could be facilitated and it was considered as long term investment in capacity development of lobby and advocacy. Based on their thematic expertise, partners of TdH focus more on CSEC, CL, CT and - partly - CM, partners of Plan International focus on CM and EE, and partners of DCI on (implementation of) GBV/EE legislation and Child Rights policies at national, district and local level.

Until now, in total more than 60 local CSO partners have been involved in the GAA programme as (implementing) partners organisations. At country level, GAA almost always consists of a combination of Alliance members, mostly local CSOs, thematic CSOs and networks and in some countries also women organisations. In some countries, shifts of partnership relations have taken place. In Bangladesh, in 2017 it was decided to end the relationship with a number of more local focused CSOs, and the conscious choice was made to collaborate with other CSOs and networks working at the national level. For the activities with the RMG industry, a specialized partner has been approached, who has access and experience in engaging the private sector on decent work and GBV.

At the start of the programme (or at start of the collaboration) all GAA partners conducted a participatory assessment of the organisational capabilities, focusing on capabilities for lobby & advocacy, using a Capacity Assessment Tool (CAT), based on the 5 Core Capabilities framework developed by ECDPM to plan, monitor and evaluate results of capacity development processes. The GAA adapted the CAT by using specific indicators (pointers) for the lobby & advocacy competences related to each core capability. In line with the ECDPM framework, the GAA distinguishes five core capabilities:



The initial capacity assessment in 2016 formed the baseline of organisational capacities of GAA partner organisations to measure the development of organisational capability of CSO partners over time. A follow-up capacity assessment was conducted in December 2017. The initial assessment indicated the 'Capability to Relate to External Stakeholders' as the strongest organisational capability of local CSO partners. This is also reflected in the MTR reports; GAA partners seem well able to identify, develop and maintain relationships with constituencies, relevant advocacy targets and other CSOs and CSO networks. The baseline indicated the 'Capability to Deliver on Objectives' and the 'Capacity to Commit and Act' most often as the least developed organisational capabilities. At the start of the programme GAA partners were less confident on strategic planning and implementation and monitoring of advocacy work, including the framing of advocacy messages and the use of fact-based evidence and research. In 2017 partners were more critical on 'the Capability to Adapt and Self-Renew', including their abilities to understand and navigate policy processes, and to adapt to changing contexts.

The capacity assessment provided the basis for tailor-made and locally owned Capacity Development agendas to strengthen organisational capabilities, lobby and advocacy strategies and skills, and thematic expertise. The MTR reports noted that the Capacity Development needs assessment - using the CAT - was found to be effective and appropriate by the GAA partners. Based on the assessments, the needs of individual GAA partners were considered, as well as the joint needs of the GAA in a country. Specific capacity development activities were included in the annual plans and realised in 2016 - 2018. The table below indicates which capacity development activities have been undertaken:

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**GAA Capacity Development Activities 2016 - June 2018**

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Organizational Strengthening	Strategic Planning  PMEL  Fundraising Strategies  Financial Management
Capacity Development for L&A	PMEL training Amsterdam 2017  Lobby and Advocacy trainings, Advocacy Strategies, advocacy asks, advocacy messages)

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**GAA Capacity Development Activities 2016 - June 2018**


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Capacity development on specific / thematic issues	<p>Engagement with the media, development and use of communication materials, press releases, social media, online action</p> <p>Technical trainings on thematic topics, including, child labour/migration/marriage, Commercial Sexual Exploitation, TVET and JOVT, labour laws, Child Protection Policy, gender responsive budgeting (GRB)</p> <p>human rights mechanisms Youth Advocacy</p> <p>Gender sensitivity, Gender &amp; Child / GYW rights, Gender Policy write shop</p> <p>Private sector engagement workshop</p>
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The capacities for the GAA have been an effective way to disseminate the necessary skills to engage the different pathways to attain the goals. For example, the gender budget training conveyed ways that the government is mandated to allocate resources. A deeper understanding of the budget making process allowed for partners to align themselves to the process and identify entry points within the bureaucracy where the outcomes can be felt (e.g. funding of TVETs that will support the implementation of the school re-entry policies).

*From Kenya MTR report*

The starting point was that through participation in the GAA and the (joint) capacity development activities, partners could mutually reinforce each other. In almost all MTR reports, the joint development of the ToC, the Outcome Harvesting meetings and the annual planning meetings are mentioned as important components of capacity development. The meetings provided in-depth insights into joint progress, joint analysis of the GAA outcomes and the importance and significance of Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation for Lobby and Advocacy. For some of the implementing partners, (the exclusive focus on) lobby and advocacy was relatively new and required a new set of skills to be able to deliver on the GAA programme objectives. Sharing experiences helped them to better understand the GAA programme and opportunities, confirming the idea of mutual learning. Several GAA partners have used the capacity development of the GAA to further elaborate their organisational ToC within the own organization, supporting the design of strategic lobby and advocacy plans and provide capacity support within their own CSO networks.

#### **Capacity Development provided through the International and Regional Programme Components**

The GAA International APT provided capacity development and technical support to the country APTs and relevant local CSO partners, and has worked to assist country APTs to integrate the follow-up to the conclusions/recommendations of human rights mechanisms. An important challenge is formed by the knowledge and experience that is required at the level of country APTs to effectively work with international accountability mechanisms. More capacity support is needed to strengthen programme interventions, ensuring the integration of the conclusions/recommendations of human rights mechanisms into on-going advocacy activities and using them as a tool to reinforce long-term advocacy objectives at country level.

GAA Regional Africa provided trainings to contracted CSOs to effectively engage with Governments and sub-regional bodies on the Maputo Protocol monitoring and reporting processes. GAA supported Women and girl's rights CSO to effectively engage with ACHPR Special Rapporteur on Women's Rights in Africa use of the Special Mechanism during a first collective meeting.

Within the framework of the Africa Regional MTR nine contracted CSOs conducted a CAT assessment. The identified needs are: improvement of monitoring and research skills, capacity to generate credible evidence and documentation of achievements, and the capacity to adapt strategies and approaches in changing contexts. Additionally, the capacities to understand policy processes and joint advocacy messaging could be enhanced.

GAA Asia has, at varying levels, succeeded in conducting capacity development activities with contracted CSOs, CSO networks and Youth networks due to their identification and development of clear agenda and effective learning tools (e.g. Plan's youth safeguarding policy tools and SDG e-learning tools, GMACL's trainer's training toolkit for gender sensitivity and SDGs). Because of this, capacity development events are able to meaningfully engage their participants, provide in-depth focus on GAA topics, and encourage concrete actionable changes that participants can adopt in their respective lobby and advocacy activities with national and regional bodies.

## 6.2. LINKAGES BETWEEN LOBBY & ADVOCACY AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

The capacity development support provided by the GAA programme to CSO implementing partners, in many cases also benefitted APT organisations and was identified by the majority of the MTR reports to be crucial for enhancement of their lobby and advocacy outcomes. As described by the consultant for the Kenyan MTR process; "the lobby and advocacy skills gained by the APT and the CSO networks were the vehicle through which the GAA programme was delivered". In addition to the Outcome Harvest meeting, organizational strengthening, specific support on PME and support in the field of lobby and advocacy are mentioned as important elements contributing to improved capacities. In particular, the MTR identifies strengthened lobby and advocacy skills and monitoring of lobby and advocacy outcomes.

Reported areas of Capacity Development outcomes that contributed to lobby and advocacy results:

- Improved understanding of the role/position of different actors in lobby and advocacy processes
- Lobby and advocacy training helped in improving identification and targeting of the right stakeholder
- Enhanced understanding and knowledge on how to undertake lobby and advocacy initiatives
- Gained insights in effective policy influencing through strategic advocacy
- Increase thematic expertise on GBV and EE themes
- Better understanding of the significance of PME
- Improved capacity to formulate policy asks
- Improved capacity to realise evidence based advocacy
- Youth advocacy

It was also indicated in various MTR reports that the capacity development of implementing partners was combined with awareness raising and trainings of other actors: (1) CBO's, communities, key leaders, community groups, and girls' and young women and advocacy, and (2) key stakeholders and duty bearers on key GBV and EE themes and legislation and enforcement (local, district and state level officials). This combination contributed to the effectiveness of the lobby and advocacy outcomes. At the same time, it is noted that better linking with processes and opportunities at the national level can scale up the outcomes further by making use of the experiences and evidences from the local communities. The focus could be shifted to influencing policies at the national level (policy formulation, implementation of action plans, budget allocation). To increase the effects of evidence-based advocacy, it is indicated that further elaboration of evidence at local level also will require additional resources (research, documentation) and skills to formulate adequate policy asks.

### Learning agenda and Knowledge Development

At the start of the programme, a learning agenda was developed with key learning questions related to the core assumptions of the overall GAA ToC, focussing on changing social norms, the role of civil society and the linkages between GBV and Economic Exclusion. From 2017 on, all programme teams included a learning question in their programme plans and were asked

to plan specific learning actions. Although the learning questions were addressed in the joint half-yearly meetings, limited follow-up on the questions was noted and no exchange took place between different countries and/or program components. Some MTR reports call this a missed opportunity. Experiences and acquired knowledge on 'how change is taking place' are not documented systematically and are not retained if staff members leave the program and in-country and cross country learning should be facilitated (see also under Added Value).

### Lessons learned on Capacity Development

On the basis of the experiences in the first half of the GAA programme, the following lessons learned can be formulated:

- With regards to the organisational capacities of contracted partner CSOs, the Capacity to Adapt and Self-renew requires most attention, more specifically to better understand and navigate the policy processes in the public sector;
- Capacity Development of APT organisations as well as contracted partner CSOs is identified as crucial for L&A outcomes, it is important to organise regular refresher trainings, also to provide new staff members of all implementing organisations with insights into the operation and opportunities of the GAA program.
- The capacity development support provided by GAA should also be more practical and hands-on, for example through coaching, mentoring, peer-to-peer support and webinars;
- Implementing organisations will require additional resources (research, documentation) to elaborate evidence at local level and skills to formulate adequate policy asks on GBV and EE themes;
- More capacity support is needed for all implementing organisations to strategically use international accountability mechanisms for policy influencing.

### Conclusions

The tailor-made and locally owned Capacity Development activities contributed to the increased capacities of GAA partners, particularly the Outcome Harvest meetings, organizational strengthening, specific support on PME and support in the field of lobby and advocacy. The joint meetings (ToC, Outcome Harvesting, and annual planning) have been important components of capacity development, confirming and facilitating the concept of mutual learning. The Capacity Development activities turned out to be crucial for enhancement of GAA partners lobby and advocacy outcomes, in particular enhanced understanding and knowledge on how to undertake lobby and advocacy initiatives (advocacy targets, formulation of policy asks, evidence based advocacy). The learning questions (how change is taking place) have been insufficiently followed up, even as cross country and cross programme learning.

### Recommendations

- Focus on the capacity development on capability to adapt and self-renew: Understand and navigate the policy environment and have access to relevant public and private decision makers;
- Enhance cross country and cross programme learning; different countries have gained experience in specific areas (including engaging with Media Private Sector and policy influencing processes and youth advocacy) and lessons could be shared;
- Enhance development of research skills and guarantee adequate documentation of experiences;
- Organise regular refresher trainings, also to provide new staff members of all implementing organisations with insights into the operation and opportunities of the GAA program. There is also a need for practical - hands - on support to develop effective policy influencing through strategic advocacy.

## 7. ADDED VALUE & COLLABORATION WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

One of the important elements of the MTR was to look at the added value of the collaboration within the GAA Programme, to identify lessons learned and to explore how added value could be further enhanced in the remaining period 2019 – 2020. At the start of the GAA programme, the contribution and added value of each organisation and the expected gains from their collaboration as an Alliance have been formulated. An assessment of the added value of the collaboration in the various programme components was included in the MTR processes by the external consultants and/or was done by APTs themselves. In the Netherlands, the lead consultant facilitated a session on Added Value with the Alliance Programme Committee.

The underlying assumption was that by combining the Alliance partners' networks the scale of the interventions could be increased; that by combining thematic expertise, the effectiveness and synergy of interventions could be enhanced; and that by capitalizing on GAA's comparative advantages, the efficiency and effectiveness of the interventions could be enhanced at national, regional and international level. In addition, the MTR noted that the GAA could build on previous experiences of collaboration between DCI-ECPAT and Plan International Nederland within the framework of the 'Girl Power' Program under the Dutch MoFA subsidy framework MFS II (2011 – 2015).

All Alliance Members form part of strong networks of global, regional, national and local organisations, including girls' and young women's organisations, Child Rights coalitions & organisations. Within the GAA programme in the Netherlands, Alliance Members Plan International Nederland, Terre des Hommes and DCI-ECPAT work together from their different perspectives and thematic expertise. Plan International Nederland has much experience in international development focused on girls, and has a wide network of corporate donors and partners. DCI - ECPAT brings detailed knowledge on (inter)national laws, children's rights, juvenile justice and other legal issues. Terre des Hommes is strong in addressing CSEC and child labour, e.g. linking company's behaviour to children's rights and engaging with companies through their supply chain.

With the exception of Nepal, where the GAA program is implemented solely by Plan International, the Alliance organisations work together in all Programme Components in various combinations. Defence for Children - ECPAT Netherlands is active in the GAA programmes in Sierra Leone, Ghana, Liberia and Ethiopia; Terre des Hommes in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda, and in India, the Philippines and Bangladesh. Plan International Nederland participates in all programme components. In the Netherlands and at regional and international level, all three organizations are involved.

The relevance of the GAA project lies in the fact that it builds on progress made at the national level to engage local religious and traditional leaders, local governments, private sector and young women and girls to change knowledge, practices and attitudes that perpetuate GBV at the community level.

*From MTR report Kenya*

The following aspects of added value are subscribed in the MTR reports and by the Staff Survey, and are illustrated by a number of Outcome Stories:

**Sharing expertise, capacities and networks:** in every program component, there is collaboration within the APT. Each APT consists of the 'lead' Alliance Members, the local representatives of the other Alliance Members involved in the program, and their local partner organisations. In some cases the 'lead' local representatives of the Alliance Member is the only implementing

partner of that Alliance member. This is the case for DCI in Liberia and Sierra Leone, where DCI is implementing directly, not through local partner organisations. Each organisation contributes with experience, expertise, capacities and networks. In several countries, learning and reflection sessions organised by the APT and GAA partners enabled the organisations involved to learn from one another and enhanced their capacities and strategies. In India partners agreed to divide tasks in sharing the findings of a research study into Child Trafficking. Partner organisation HELP conducted the study, organised a workshop in Andhra Pradesh and shared the study findings. Partner organisation Tharuni took up the dissemination of the report in Telangana. Also, GAA partners worked together to mobilize their respective networks around the GAA agenda. This was the case, among other countries, in the Philippines, where most partners are Child Rights organisations who have now included girls' rights in their operations.

In Uganda all GAA members APT and Implementing Partners brought to the table their expertise in the different thematic areas. Plan International enjoyed the geographical presence in many districts making her physical presence in many regional and districts favourable for the implementation of the GAA programme. TdH was observed to have comparative advantage in institutional capacity strengthening issues thereby taking responsibility for all APT Annual Capacity Development plans and supporting the processes.

*From Uganda MTR report*

**Broader geographical presence** is achieved through cooperation within GAA. GAA partners often work in different geographical areas. As a consequence, the program has a larger outreach and partners can learn from different approaches in different contexts.

**Joint monitoring and capacity development:** the development and implementation of the adaptive management/PME system (including development of and working with ToCs, sharing of action plans, development of training materials and joint analysis in half-yearly Outcome Harvesting sessions, and tailor-made and locally owned Capacity Development plans based on CAT assessment) has created a basis for collaboration and exchange within the Programme Components.

**Creating space and capacity for Youth Advocates:** the support and capacity development of Youth Advocates gives dynamism to the program at local, national, regional and international levels and can be seen as one of the cross cutting strategies within the program. Concrete actions in this area up till now include the development of a Youth Advocacy Toolkit and the training of Youth Advocates in 8 countries.

Girls, boys and young women are supported as important actors and members of groups that can speak out on GAA themes at local, national, regional and international levels. Plan International took the lead in this topic because they already have longer experience and are responsible for this part within the international program.

**Joint voices are stronger voices;** in several countries (Kenya, Bangladesh) working in partnership provides an opportunity to push the government for an agenda change without being pin-pointed as a single organization and to make it look like a collective desire rather than the agenda for an individual entity.

An example of the added value of the GAA programme is the upcoming youth advocate training in Sierra Leone, whereby someone from Plan International will give the training, assisted by colleagues from Plan Sierra Leone and DCI- Sierra Leone. At the same time, and the activities are linked, there will be someone from the GAA communication team (who is working at DCI) who will join a journalist and photographer in their visit to Sierra Leone to make an article and a photo reportage about youth advocates. This com delegation will also take part in the training, and make some film recordings during the training. I think this is a brilliant example of working together in a team (DCI/Plan and external photographer/journalist) in order to contribute towards the goal of GAA: ending GBV. -

*From Staff Survey*

**Strategic Partnership;** It was also indicated that being part of a Dutch Strategic Partnership with the Dutch MoFA provides a certain level of 'protection'. Information exchange and joint analysis of political context is happening with the Netherlands Embassies in Accra (also in relation to Liberia and Sierra Leone), Ethiopia, Uganda, Bangladesh and the Philippines. Programmatic collaboration and alignment is taking place with the RNE in Manilla.

At the same time, a number of opportunities are also mentioned that could further enhance the added value of the GAA programme:

**Joint action and alignment:** for each program component, a joint ToC and joint objectives for 2020 were formulated. Partners contribute to these joint objectives through their activities in specific and 'divided' areas (thematically and/or geographically). This division can contribute to a situation wherein partners operate in their own areas, and opportunities for collaboration remain underused. The MTR reports note that more alignment, sharing of experience and joint activities could be developed to enhance synergy. Regular coordination meetings (quarterly) of partners can facilitate updating of plans, activities and identify convergence points and opportunities for joint advocacy action.

**Joint vision:** the three Alliance members all have somewhat different missions and visions that inform their way of working. It can sometimes be hard to find agreements on how to approach certain issues (e.g. age of target groups, vision on Child Labour) in the countries where GAA is collaborating. The strength of GAA can be in the complementarity of visions, knowledge and approaches; the MTR notes that more exchange and knowledge of each other's underlying assumptions can help to enhance the added value of the collaboration.

**Visibility of GAA:** feedback from substantiation and Key Informant Interviews reveals that GAA is not always seen as an entity. In many cases, GAA members are functioning from their individual NGO background from a pragmatic approach, partly because they are mostly well known for their 'institutional' reputation. Operating as an entity (or promoting GAA as an entity) should not be a goal in itself, but even where it could add value, the potential of joint action is not always used. Joint - public - activities have been limited. Although efforts were made at the alliance level to support joint communication in programme countries (e.g. branding guideline, communications toolkit), joint communication strategies and messages are not yet clearly developed. As a result, GAA's visibility has remained limited.

**Linking and Learning:** more efforts could be focused on structured learning at various levels: creating more space for learning in the countries, facilitating cross-country and cross-regional learning, and learning within the GAA overall program. The APTs can gain a lot by strengthening the learning mechanisms (including access to good practices, progress in thematic areas, research and documentation) and by collaborative work, such as the development of common position papers and the documentation of lessons on how to undertake lobby and advocacy initiatives. There is a huge potential for learning from GAA in the global context and avoid duplication of efforts across all levels of the program and reinforce gained insights in thematic issues (in-country, cross-country and cross programme) and links to international research on GAA themes need to be taken up.

**Linking with other actors:** more linkages could be established with other actors, such as opinion leaders, academia, research institutes, multilateral organisations and SDG initiatives (SDG 5 and 8). Collaboration with other thematic related networks as Girls Not Brides and linkages with specialized organisations and institutions in the field of IGA, protection services and private sector engagement can be enhanced. In the field of Media, collaboration with Journalist Unions and specialized Media NGOs could be enhanced.

Summarizing, the collaboration provided added value in the form of sharing complementary expertise, capacities and networks, the use of a joint PME system, the development and deployment of Youth Advocacy and cooperation with the Embassies. The cooperation between the Alliance organisations is assessed as positive and relevant by the Alliance. At the same time, in the remaining period more use could be made of joint action and alignment, increasing the visibility of the Alliance, and joint learning and sharing knowledge. The GAA could also seek more cooperation with other strategic actors, NGOs and networks that work in the same thematic fields and align GAA activities with SDG initiatives.

## 8. REFLECTIONS ON EFFECTIVENESS, EFFICIENCY & SUSTAINABILITY

### Effectiveness

Halfway through the programme, analysis of the outcomes shows that good progress has been made, particularly in the field of agenda setting and at the level of communities and (local) government. At the same time, emerging outcomes are visible in the area of policy and practice changes.

The GAA programme shows that working through CSO networks, working with networks of key leaders, champions and change agents and working in Multi Stakeholder settings increases the programme's rippling effect. GAA partners' capacity development on lobby and advocacy contributed to the use of different - strategies of GAA partners resulting in actual behavioural change of community leaders and officials. Furthermore, the MTR reports confirm the relevance of the thematic areas of the GAA programme.

In order to be able to consolidate the achieved outcomes in the next two years and to further develop strategies and increase the outreach of the program, the MTR identified the following areas:

**Linkages and synergy:** interaction between actors across the different pathways could be further strengthened. An area for further exploration is the potential of enhancing linkages of advocacy efforts between local-district-national levels. It is recommended in various MTR reports that opportunities for scaling up activities (outreach to the national level, sharing good practices with other organizations) in the next two years must be optimally utilized. Linkages between the GAA countries, across countries and the international and regional can be further explored.

**Working with networks** of traditional and religious leaders and CSOs seems to yield more results; collaboration can be enhanced with strategic thematic networks working on similar themes.

**As indicated under the previous chapter more joint collaborative action and coordination** can bring more convergence in every sphere of action and enhancement of effective use of resources, even as development of knowledge sharing mechanisms to enhance cross programme learning.

**Private Sector engagement** is experienced by the vast majority of the APTs as a challenge. As indicated under the Private Sector pathway in the previous section, small steps have been taken in several countries. Exceptions are Bangladesh, Nepal and Uganda, where clear entries have been found. For the next two years, a revision of the strategy and activities within the private sector pathway needs to be done, with focus on good practices. Documentation, sharing of those experiences and offering concrete support (including access to networks, knowledge on engagement and collaboration with the Private Sector) from the overall GAA program can support further development of the Private Sector pathway. Another consideration could be to look for additional - experienced - partners in the field of collaboration with the private sector and/or facilitation of the thematic area of Economic Inclusion.

### Efficiency

The standard ToR for the MTR includes a question on Efficiency. Under this question, the ToR aimed to address the utilisation of resources (funding, time, expertise) and to consider alternative approaches, including, for example, more focus on specific (sub) themes, (geographical) areas or levels of the Programme. The various consultants involved in the MTR processes at APT level approached this question very differently. No indication is given in the APT MTR reports about the need to reduce the number of themes or geographical areas. However, it is recommended in various reports that opportunities for scaling up activities (outreach to the national level, sharing good practices with other organizations) in the next two years must be optimally utilized. Improvement of communication between APT members and GAA partners,



and the linking of different activities are also mentioned as areas for improvement (which is more related to effectiveness). Given the character of GAA as a lobby & advocacy program, it seems difficult for the consultant to respond this question. A financial analysis (important for analysing possible cost-benefit analysis) was not included in the scope of this MTR.

### Sustainability

The MTR reports indicate that the design of the programme includes important sustainability mechanisms; capacity development at the different levels, and awareness raising of religious, community and youth leaders is contributing to building their agency. The strengthening of CSOs networks of GAA and the facilitation of multi-stakeholder processes increases sustainability after the programme ends. At the national level, the participation of GAA implementing organisations in networks forms windows of opportunities that provides platforms for advocating and lobbying for policies, legislations and institutional reforms. The impact of the policy influencing and legal provisions, both at national, district and local level has a wider outreach to non-GAA areas. The capacities on lobby and advocacy for APT members and GAA partners are lasting skills which could be applicable to any other area of their work.

Having noted these positive areas for sustainability, and informed by MTR findings, the MTR also indicates areas for further strengthening of sustainability aspects of the GAA programme:

**Formalisation of relationships** through MoU's or other forms of cooperation agreements is seen as key to move beyond the personal relationships and for strengthening institutional collaborations. This applies to all levels; from local to international and for both government and private sector, where rapid changes of decision-makers can take place through appointment of staff rotation and/or elections.

**Organizational strengthening of local NGO partners** in the field of strategic planning and financial sustainability is needed to guarantee the sustainability of these organisations in the longer term. In addition, consideration can also be given to identification of emerging funding opportunities and development of joint project proposals related to the GAA themes.

Overall, the GAA is showing important progress towards the 2020 outcomes. With regards to linkages and synergy, the MTR indicates that interaction between actors across the pathways could be further strengthened. Areas for exploration are the potential of enhancing linkages of advocacy efforts on local-district-national level and enhance the focus on strategic (thematic) networks and strategic key leaders. Opportunities for scaling up activities must be optimally used in the next two years. The alignment and linkages of activities between the GAA countries and the international Programme Component, and the GAA countries and regional Programme Components and the GAA countries (per continent) need more attention.

With regards to sustainability, the MTR indicated important sustainability mechanisms are the strengthening of CSOs networks of GAA and the facilitation of multi-stakeholder processes increases sustainability after the programme ends (sustainable relations). This also implies for the policy influencing and legal provisions at different levels and increased (organisational) capacities. Areas for further strengthening of sustainability aspects of the GAA programme are formalisation of relationships through MoU's and Organizational strengthening (adaptive management, PME and financial management/joint proposal development).

## 9. SUCCESS & CRITICAL FACTORS

Although contexts and the thematic focuses differ considerably across Programme Components, the outcome stories and the staff survey give a clear picture of the success and critical factors that define the progress of the GAA program and of the setting in which partners operate.

Generally the following success factors are indicated:

- Long-term relationships exist and are maintained between GAA organisations and key stakeholders, notably senior officials, district governments, line ministries involved with children's affairs, gender, justice and social welfare, and regional bodies. Most partners are part of technical working groups created by the various line ministries, but there is less contact with the ministry of finance, economic relations or health;
- Long-term relationships date from long before the GAA program and contributed to a good 'trust base', which is specifically important in working toward policy changes in governments and regional bodies;
- Credibility of GAA partners based on strong thematic expertise on GBV & EE issues;
- A 'non-confrontational' lobby approach and linking and networking strategies mean that GAA partners have a direct influence on the formulation and implementation of policies and practices;
- Alliance members and GAA partners are in the position (convening power) and have the skills to facilitate processes with multi stakeholders;
- Overall the GAA programme has strong buy-in from government, communities and CSOs
- Relevant linkages of GAA partners with the communities (CBO's, key leaders, community groups, girls and young women groups and key leaders) and with key stakeholders particularly at the local level. The combination of training and awareness raising of key leaders and community groups, linking and networking of officials and community groups facilitates lobby and advocacy;
- Linkages with the communities provide GAA implementing organisations the ability to elaborate evidence based solutions and evidence based lobby approaches;
- Linkages with international institutions, human rights monitoring bodies, and regional bodies (international agreement commitments and treaties) strengthened the GAA lobby and advocacy efforts (e.g. CEDAW, SDGs, SAIEVAC, AU);
- Formalized relationships (MoUs) with local to international and for government, inter-agency organisations and private sector, where rapid changes of decision-makers can take place through appointment of staff rotation and/or elections.

### Critical Factors

- Within the GAA, much more use could be made of each other's expertise, approaches, strategies and materials;
- Community/Youth leaders are aware of GBV issues, but not yet aware of prevalent laws, policies and mechanisms to prevent GBV issues. There is a need for more investments in the strengthening of knowledge and information of these key actors to consolidate achievements and to further challenge persistent social and cultural norms;
- It is not always easy to ensure effective implementation of certain policies, the (local) governments often lack means and sometimes willingness to go beyond policy adaptation;
- Engagement with the Private Sector is relatively new for many GAA partners;
- A noted challenge/dilemma is the limitation that lobby and advocacy programs have on provision of services. This makes it difficult to address service delivery needs that arise in awareness raising activities around CM, CT, CSEC and EE;
- Lobby and activities remain challenging in the country contexts. It requires a lot of investment in building and maintaining relationships with government counterparts for informal lobbying;
- In relation to lobby and advocacy towards government officials (notably investments in knowledge and information), the high staff rotation is identified as a limiting factor;
- Working with mainstream media is challenging.

## 10. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE (GOVERNANCE, COOPERATION & PMEL)

The Programme Components are steered by an Alliance Programme Team (APT) coordinated by the Lead Alliance member and consisting of the local representatives of the other Alliance Members and implementing organisations involved in the program. The collaboration within the GAA Alliance is generally assessed as positive and constructive, APT members easily contact each other and are responsive to the needs of GAA partners in most countries.

### Lead organisations per Programme Component

Sierra Leone	Liberia	Ghana	Ethiopia	Kenya	Uganda	Region Africa
DCI-ECPAT	DCI-ECPAT	DCI-ECPAT	Plan	TdH	TdH	Plan

India	Bangladesh	Nepal	Philippines	Region Asia	Netherlands & International
Plan	Plan	Plan	TdH	Plan	Plan

As indicated under the sub-chapters on added value and reflections on effectiveness and synergy, the GAA programme in the majority of the Programme Components would gain strength from more information and knowledge sharing to enhance synergy at APT level, between the countries, and with the regional and the international components. Almost all MTR reports indicate that more regular meetings (including Skype calls) to exchange on progress and fine-tuning activities could be very supportive to increase effectiveness of the GAA programme.

In particular for the international and regional components and in countries where APT members and GAA partners are spread across the country, 'physical distance' is experienced as a limitation. Although the distance can be partially resolved by regular Skype consultations, the half-yearly face-to-face meetings are explicitly mentioned as an important pre-condition for alignment of activities, development of joint strategies and updates on emerging opportunities. Also organizing regional meetings with the countries and more presence of international and regional staff at country meetings could contribute to cross-programme learning.

The overall GAA programme is managed from the Programme Committee, where the three Alliance members and the Programme Coordinator participate and meet monthly. In the partnership assessment, the collaboration was assessed as open, flexible and based on equality. However, the Programme Committee identified the need for more steering of the programme. The MTR is a good moment to further focus on successful strategies, making more use of the potential added value of the programme.

Since the start of the programme, several joint meetings are organized with the GAA staff in the Netherlands to discuss the progress of the programme. Within the MTR process, both the Programme Committee and the GAA staff have indicated that more attention needs to be given to learning and - in depth - sharing of experiences and learning's. Suggestions include knowledge exchange on programmatic developments, strategy and themes; webinars on specific topics, joint capacity support and facilitation of exchange between Programme Components through regional meetings (Asia/Africa) and the creation of a structured learning mechanism based on the demands and needs of the Programme Components.

The collaboration within the Strategic Partnership with MoFA in the first half of the programme has not been intensive, partly due to various changes of the contacts in the Ministry. It could be looked at how more substantive content can be given to the partnership.

## PMEL

In 2016, the GAA desk developed an extensive PME system and cycle. The PME manual based on 'Outcome Harvesting' was launched at the beginning of 2017 and formed the basis for training in Amsterdam of all involved GAA PME officers. The half-yearly Outcome Harvest Meetings fit in well with Annual Planning and Annual Reporting cycle, facilitating inclusion of findings on context developments, and the analysis of strategies used and progress on the outcomes. In all Programme Components the joint meetings on the analysis of the Outcome List in August 2017 and January/February 2018 are highly appreciated.

Based on the experiences described in the MTR reports, adaptive programming (working with Theory of Change, Outcome Harvesting) has proven to be an inclusive, empowering and flexible approach. The process of steering seems flexible and useful, enables joint learning and reflections, and facilitates timely adaptation of the GAA programme. The implementing partners needed some time to get used to working with Theory of Change and Outcome Harvesting. The PME tools are generally rated as being comprehensive and significant, and at the same time as time intensive and requiring high levels of documentation. The Advocacy log book is an effective instrument in keeping track of the programme in a systematic way, reducing the chance of losing data and providing a comprehensive system for documentary evidence in support of outcomes achieved through lobbying and advocacy.

The substantiation process is seen as challenging, partly because it is new for GAA partners to ask feedback to - external - stakeholder about outcome descriptions, contribution and significance. This is partly because substantiators have often been involved in lobbying and advocacy activities. Within the MTR process this was done by the external consultants, but the experiences also showed that improvements to enable the substantiation process are necessary (e.g. complete and accurate formulation of outcome descriptions, including the contribution of the GAA partner(s) and the significance of the outcome, and timely selection of substantiators and sharing of supporting documentation).

What was noted is that establishing and updating of the Outcome List requires clear ownership, discipline, and consequent follow-up on collection of signs. It is also necessary to identify who is responsible for quality control. The process of compiling the outcomes is not always properly followed. The MTR shows that documentation in some cases was found to be erratic or incomplete.

Furthermore, adaptive management is a challenge in itself and not all participating GAA organisations are institutionally equipped (administrative and financial procedures) to deal with adaptive programming. The PME system is particularly challenging for smaller organizations without specialized PME staff. More support and refresher trainings could be offered, also to keep the knowledge about the PME methodology up to date and taking frequent staff changes into account.

The GAA MTR process was set up in such a way that a quality improvement could be made on the Outcome Lists (check on completeness, outcome signs (not output), significance and contribution, and categorisation). Due to time constraints, the GAA desk had not been able to provide full feedback on the earlier versions of the OH lists (2017). The need for more hands-on support on the development, updating and maintenance of Outcome Lists and on learning on adaptive programming is clearly stated.

The total PME package is assessed by the APTs and GAA Staff as intensive (direct reporting from GAA partners to the Alliance Member involved, GAA annual plans and annual reporting, Outcome Harvest, Results framework and IATI data). It provides a multitude of information, but not always in an accessible form to support further in-depth analysis. In the context of the follow-up on the MTR, it can be checked whether and how information flows can be streamlined more effectively and how duplication of information requests can be avoided.

## Finance

Several MTR reports mention that more attention could be given to the financial sustainability of local CSO partners of the GAA, e.g. through supporting or facilitating joint additional funding initiatives. The MTR report Nepal suggested creating a 'Flexibility fund' for partners by withholding 5% of the GAA country budget in order to be able to respond to emerging opportunities.

In the MTR process defined the following needs on the Organisational Structure of the alliance and its programme:

- Need for regular and more frequent (e.g. quarterly) meetings at the level of APT/GAA partners to exchange on progress and fine-tuning activities;
- Need to create a cross-programme learning structure and an effective, relevant and practical knowledge sharing mechanism (including topics for research) elaborated in consultation with the programme teams;
- Further improvement of the quality and accuracy of Outcome Harvest process, outcome descriptions and recording;
- Need for strategies to address the challenges in training newly joint staff and partners and provide refresher trainings to properly equip them with all necessary knowledge and skills on PME;
- Small implementing partners (esp. those without M&E officer) need to be further assisted with the PME system. It could also be looked at how PME and reporting for CSO partners can be simplified;
- Support to implementing partners to increase their financial sustainability

## 11. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall analysis of the GAA programme shows that important progress has been made towards the envisaged Outcomes for 2020. At GAA overall level most changes are related with agenda setting and practices changes, policy changes are less reported. Most progress is reported within the community pathway and the government pathway.

The majority of the outcomes are related to local and district level, related to significant behaviour changes of key leaders and youth expressing them openly against negative consequences of GBV/EE. Several GAA partners engaged with media to increase outreach, the focus on promoting gender and child-sensitive reporting on GAA themes by the media seems very relevant. Important outcomes are reported at national level; in several countries GAA partners effectively succeeded working closely with (line) Ministries and influence policy making processes. Working with the human rights mechanisms and regional bodies can further support policy influencing at the national level. Within the CSO pathway a moderate number of outcomes are reported, experiences within GAA has shown that working with CSO networks has yielded more and immediate benefit and contributed to improved lobby and advocacy. Progress towards the Private Sector 2020 outcomes is less advanced, the limited number of examples of cooperation with the Private Sector illustrates that progress within this pathway has been a challenge for many APTs.

GAA International is to a large extent on track with the 2020 objectives with regard to human rights mechanisms, links between national and international advocacy have been strengthened. GAA Africa Regional made important progress on agenda setting level and contributed to several GBV related policies. Regarding the 2020 Outcomes the GAA Regional Asia Programme has made important progress in the region's policy and practice environment with regard to GBV and EE themes (OSEC, youth agenda). Both Africa Regional and Asia Regional could increase synergy through enhance linkages and alignment with the countries in their region. The GAA Netherlands showed partial progress on private sector component, influencing public policies with regard to GBV/EE themes was effectively done through participation in relevant networks. Outcomes mostly related to GBV/EE topics indicate moderate progress. Both components need stronger mutual alignment.

Youth advocacy seems to create a lot of dynamism. Youth advocates initiated collective action by implementing their national advocacy plans on GAA related themes. Youth was successfully facilitated to have access to the international and regional spaces.

Overall, the outcomes of the GAA programme as validated by the MTR process do not provide arguments to change the order and nature of changes as outlined in the pathways of change of the overall GAA ToC. ToC's assumptions are still valid and relevant.

The tailor-made and locally owned Capacity Development activities contributed to the increased lobby and advocacy capacities of GAA partners. The Capacity Development activities turned out to be crucial for enhancement of GAA partners lobby and advocacy outcomes and confirming and facilitating the concept of mutual learning between different implementing partners in the GAA countries.

The GAA collaboration provided relevant added value in the form of sharing complementary thematic expertise, capacities and networks, the use of a joint PME system, and Youth Advocacy. The added value could be further explored by creating more alignment of activities, increasing the visibility of GAA to enhance advocacy efforts, and by strategizing cooperation with other actors.

Learning and sharing knowledge is identified as the most important element that requires improvement within the GAA programme. More efforts should be focused on structured learning at various levels: facilitating cross-country and cross-regional learning, and learning within the GAA overall program. Regular meetings (including Skype calls) are explicitly considered as an important pre-condition for cross programme learning, and development of joint strategies and improvement of the different approaches to increase the lobby and advocacy results.

In order to increase further effectiveness of the lobby and advocacy efforts more focus can be brought in the GAA programme to enhance outreach and facilitate up scaling of practice changes. Linkages between actors across the different pathways could be further strengthened, even as linkages between local-district-national levels. An area for further strengthening of sustainability aspects of the GAA programme are organizational strengthening, and particularly attention could be paid financial sustainability.

Adaptive programming has proven to be an inclusive and empowering approach and facilitates timely adaptation of the GAA programme. The PME tools are generally rated as being comprehensive and significant, and at the same time as intensive, and requiring a high level of documentation. Additionally, the importance of refresher trainings has also been noted even as streamlining of information flows (including accessibility of information).

#### Recommendations on lobby and advocacy (focus, strategy & activities 2019-2020):

- Focus on influencing key leaders and /or networks of higher level leaders;
- Build synergies with other actors working on similar issues as the GAA such as other CSOs, specialized CSOs, networks of CSOs and/or National Alliances/Institutes, research institutions, UN agencies, bilateral and multi-lateral actors, or the private sector, Embassies involved in Strategic partnerships and other Strategic Partnerships working on the same issues/countries;
- Enhance engagement with Media actors, opinion leaders and make use of (existing) research;
- Improve the alignment and linkages of activities between the International Programme Component and the GAA countries, and Regional Programme Components and the GAA countries (per continent);
- Develop a comprehensive approach on Youth Advocacy (including capacity development for meaningful participation on the national and international level). Sharing of experiences between the youth advocates could be facilitated.

#### Recommendations on Capacity Development (focus & activities 2019-2020):

- Focus on the capacity development on capability to adapt and self-renew: understand and navigate the policy environment and have access to relevant public and private decision makers;
- Make use of the gained knowledge and experience from the 'insider' approach to explore the potential to link advocacy efforts on local-district-national level and between the different pathways and strengthen capacities to enhance evidence-based advocacy;
- Organise regular refresher trainings (Outcome Harvesting, lobby and advocacy training), also to provide new staff members of all implementing organisations with insights into the operation and opportunities of the GAA program. Practical - hands - on support could be provided to strengthen effective policy influencing (e.g. coaching, mentoring, peer-to-peer support, webinars);
- Enhance the capacity of GAA to include human rights mechanism and regional bodies in policy influencing, specifically on the follow up of recommendations and integration into on-going advocacy activities in the GAA countries;
- Enhance capacity to engage with the Private Sector for good practices (strategies, approaches) and explore opportunities collaborate with specialized organizations (experienced with Private Sector engagement).

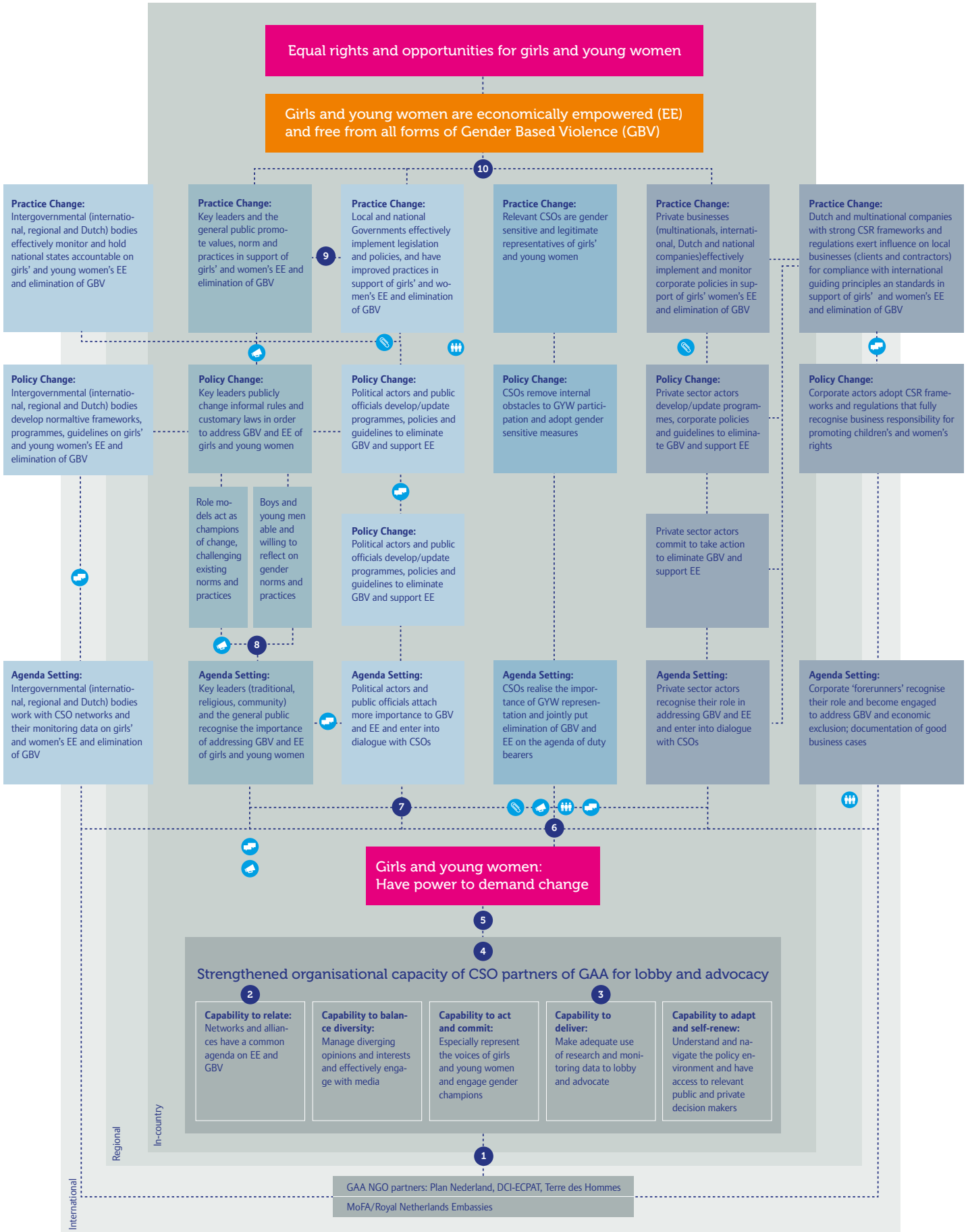
**Recommendations on Organisational structure and PMEL:**

- Facilitate regular and more frequent (e.g. quarterly) meetings at the level of APT/GAA partners to exchange on progress and fine-tuning activities. AT GAA level facilitation of exchange between Programme Components through regional meetings (Asia/Africa) could be organized;
- Create a cross-programme learning structure and an effective, relevant and practical knowledge sharing mechanism (including topics for research) ;
- Small implementing partners (esp. those without M&E officer) could to be further assisted with the PME system. It could also be looked at how PME and reporting for CSO partners can be simplified;
- Improve the quality and accuracy of Outcome Harvest process, outcome descriptions and documentation of outcomes;
- Support to implementing partners to increase their financial sustainability; e.g. by supporting joint development of additional funding proposals.





ANNEX A: THEORY OF CHANGE OF THE GIRLS ADVOCACY ALLIANCE



### Assumptions Theory of Change

1. CSOs, in particular girls and women's right organisations, have long-term commitment to shape political agendas, create political will and monitor implementation.
2. Collaboration between CSOs with different mandates to fight for a common goal will strengthen each individual CSO and benefit all their constituencies
3. Use of ICT, social media and research improves the quality (relevance, urgency) of lobby and advocacy actions.
4. CSOs are able and willing to use increased organisational capacity for effective lobby and advocacy actions.
5. Lobby and advocacy strategies, at all levels, have to be substantiated and supported if not carried out by a substantial part of the group they are supposed to benefit.
6. Stronger CSOs that are accountable to their constituency cannot be neglected by democratic states.
7. Stronger CSO networks ensure that the issues of Gender Based Violence and economic exclusion gain priority on the public and political agenda.
8. Involving boys and men's organisations and traditional and religious leaders increases public awareness and norms change on Gender Based Violence.
9. Mass media reflect and sustain popular norms and values.
10. Gender Based Violence cannot be eradicated without economic empowerment.

**ANNEX B: OVERVIEW OF THE GAA THEMES PER PROGRAMME COMPONENT**

The GAA Theory of Change aims at the elimination of gender based violence and economic exclusion of girls and young women. In this context, the programme pays particular attention to:

**Gender-Based Violence (GBV)**

- Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)
- Sexual violence and abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Child trafficking
- Child marriage

**Economic exclusion**

- Access to post-primary education
- Access to Technical Vocational Education and training (TVET)
- Decent work
- Female entrepreneurship

	BGD	ETH	GHA	NIN	KEN	LBR	NPL	PHL	SLE	UGA	AFR	ASIA	NLD	INT
Worst forms of Child Labor								■		■				
Sexual harassment in the workplace	■													
Female entrepreneurship									■				■	■
Decent work		■	■				■		■					
TVET			■	■		■								■
Access to post-primary education				■		■			■					■
<b>Economic exclusion / empowerment</b>		■			■						■	■	■	■
Child sex tourism														■
Child marriage	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Child trafficking	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
FGM		■							■					
Sexual violence and abuse		■	■			■	■	■	■					
CSEC		■	■		■	■		■		■				
<b>GBV</b>			■			■					■		■	■

**ANNEX C: OVERVIEW OF LEAD ALLIANCE ORGANISATIONS AND CONTRACTED CSO PARTNERS PER PROGRAMME COMPONENT**

<b>Africa (regional)</b>			
GAA	Lead: Plan International Netherlands	Defence for Children - ECPAT	Terre des Hommes Netherlands
Contracted CSO partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE)</li> <li>The African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies (ACDHRS) - potential partner 2019 and further</li> </ul> <p>Implementation through Plan International Africa Regional Office</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defence for Children International Sierra Leone</li> <li>Implementation through ECPAT International – Africa representative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Uganda Association of Women Lawyers (FIDA)</li> <li>Eastern Africa Child Rights Network (EACRN) – potential partner 2019 and further</li> </ul>
<b>Ethiopia</b>			
GAA	Lead: Plan International Netherlands	Defence for Children – ECPAT	Terre des Hommes Netherlands
Contracted CSO partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation and coordination Plan International Ethiopia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forum for Sustainable Child Empowerment (FSCE)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Association for National Planned Programme for Vulnerable Children And in Need Ethiopia (ANPPCAN)</li> <li>Jerusalem Children and Community Development (JeCCDO)</li> </ul>
<b>Ghana</b>			
GAA	Lead: Defence for Children - ECPAT	Plan International Netherlands	
Contracted CSO partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ghana NGO Coalition for the Rights of the Child (GNCRC)</li> <li>Defence for Children International Ghana</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child Resource and Resource Centre (CRRECENT) – 2016 &amp; 2017</li> <li>Social Initiative for Literacy and Development Programme (SILDEP)</li> <li>SONGTABA Securing Basic Rights for Women and Girls</li> <li>International Child Development Programme (ICDP) – 2018 &amp; 2019</li> </ul>	
<b>Kenya</b>			
GAA	Lead: Terre des Hommes Netherlands	Plan International Netherlands	
Contracted CSO partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women Empowerment Link (WEL)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coalition on Violence against Women (COVAW)</li> </ul>	

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**Liberia**

GAA	Lead: Defence for Children - ECPAT	Plan International Netherlands
Contracted CSO partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defence for Children International Liberia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>United Funding and Development for Underage Mothers (UFDUM) – 2017 and further</li> <li>Youth United and Development Association (YUDA) – 2017 and further</li> <li>Community Safety Initiative (CSI) – 2017 and further</li> </ul>

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**Sierra Leone**

GAA	Lead: Plan International Netherlands	Defence for Children – ECPAT
Contracted CSO partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defence for Children International Sierra Leone</li> <li>Youth and Child Advocacy Network (YACAN)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defence for Children International Sierra Leone</li> </ul>

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**Uganda**

GAA	Lead: Terre des Hommes Netherlands	Plan International Netherlands
Contracted CSO partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protecting Families Against HIV/Aids (PREFA) – 2016 &amp; 2017</li> <li>The Uganda Association of Women Lawyers (FIDA) – 2016, 2017 and 2018</li> <li>Platform for Labour Action (PLA) – 2016, 2017 and 2018</li> <li>Uganda Youth Development Link (UYDEL) – 2018 and further</li> <li>Rahab Uganda – 2019 and further</li> <li>Dwelling Places – 2019 and further</li> <li>Somero Uganda – 2019 and further</li> <li>Ecological Christian Organisation (ECO) – 2019 and further</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joy for Children (JFCU) – 2016 &amp; 2017</li> <li>Trailblazers Mentoring Foundation (TMF)</li> <li>Restless Development Uganda (RD)</li> </ul>

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**Asia (regional)**

GAA	Lead: Plan International Netherlands	Defence for Children - ECPAT	Terre des Hommes Netherlands
Contracted CSO partners	Implementation through Plan International Asia regional Office	Implementation through ECPAT International – International Secretariat (Bangkok)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Global March Against Child Labour (GMACL)</li> <li>ECPAT International - International Secretariat (Bangkok)</li> </ul>

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**Bangladesh**


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GAA	Lead: Plan International Netherlands	Terre des Hommes Netherlands
Contracted CSO partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Integrated Community &amp; Industrial Development Initiative (INCIDIN) Bangladesh – 2016, 2017 &amp; 2018</li> <li>◦ Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA) – 2016, 2017 &amp; 2018</li> <li>◦ LAMB – 2016, 2017 &amp; 2018</li> <li>◦ Aprajeo Bangladesh – 2016, 2017 &amp; 2018</li> <li>◦ Green Hill – 2016 &amp; 2017</li> <li>◦ Nazrul Smrity Sangsad (NSS) – 2016, 2017 &amp; 2018</li> <li>◦ Association for Community Development (ACD) – 2016, 2017 &amp; 2018</li> <li>◦ Rupantar – 2016, 2017 &amp; 2018</li> <li>◦ National Girl Child Advocacy Forum (NGCAF) – 2017 and further</li> <li>◦ Association of Voluntary Actions for Society (AVAS) – potential partner 2019 and further</li> <li>◦ Bangladesh Society for the Change and Advocacy Nexus (B-SCAN) – potential partner 2019 and further</li> <li>◦ Change Associates – potential partner 2019 and further</li> <li>◦ National Girl Child Advocacy Forum – potential partner 2019 and further</li> <li>◦ RDRS Rangpur – potential partner 2019 and further</li> <li>◦ Institute of Communication Studies (ICS) – potential partner 2019 and further</li> <li>◦ WE CAN – potential partner 2019 and further</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Integrated Community &amp; Industrial Development Initiative (INCIDIN) Bangladesh</li> <li>◦ Ain-O Salish Kendra (ASK)</li> </ul>

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**India**


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GAA	Lead: Plan International Netherlands	Terre des Hommes Netherlands
Contracted CSO partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Mahita</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Society for Help Entire Lower &amp; Rural People (HELP)</li> <li>◦ Tharuni</li> </ul>

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**Nepal**


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GAA	Plan International Netherlands
Contracted CSO partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Women Rehabilitation Center (WOREC)</li> <li>◦ Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Center (CWIN)</li> <li>◦ National Alliance of Women Human Rights Defenders (NAWHRD) – potential partner 2019 and further</li> <li>◦ National Inter-Religious Network (NIRN) – potential partner 2019 and further</li> <li>◦ AIESEC – potential partner 2019 and further</li> </ul>

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## Philippines

GAA	Lead: Terre des Hommes Netherlands	Plan International Netherlands
Contracted CSO partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Philippines Against Child Trafficking (PACT)</li> <li>◦ Bidlisiw Foundation</li> <li>◦ Fellowship for Organizing Endeavours (FORGE)</li> <li>◦ Exodus from Child Labor to Integration, Play, Socialization and Education (ECLIPSE)</li> <li>◦ The Share-A-Child Movement (TSAMCI) - 2016</li> <li>◦ Children's Legal Bureau</li> <li>◦ Samahan ng mga Pilipina para sa Reporma at Kaunlaran (SPARK) – 2018 and further</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ ECPAT Philippines</li> <li>◦ Pambansang Koalisyon ng mga Kababaihan sa Kanayunan (PKKK)</li> </ul>

## International

GAA	Plan International Netherlands	Defence for Children - ECPAT	Terre des Hommes Netherlands
Contracted CSO partners	Implementation through Plan International Liaison Offices New York and Geneva	Implementation through Defence for Children International – International Secretariat in Geneva and ECPAT International Secretariat in Bangkok	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Global March Against Child Labour (GMACL)</li> </ul> Implementation through Terre des Hommes International – International Federation in Geneva

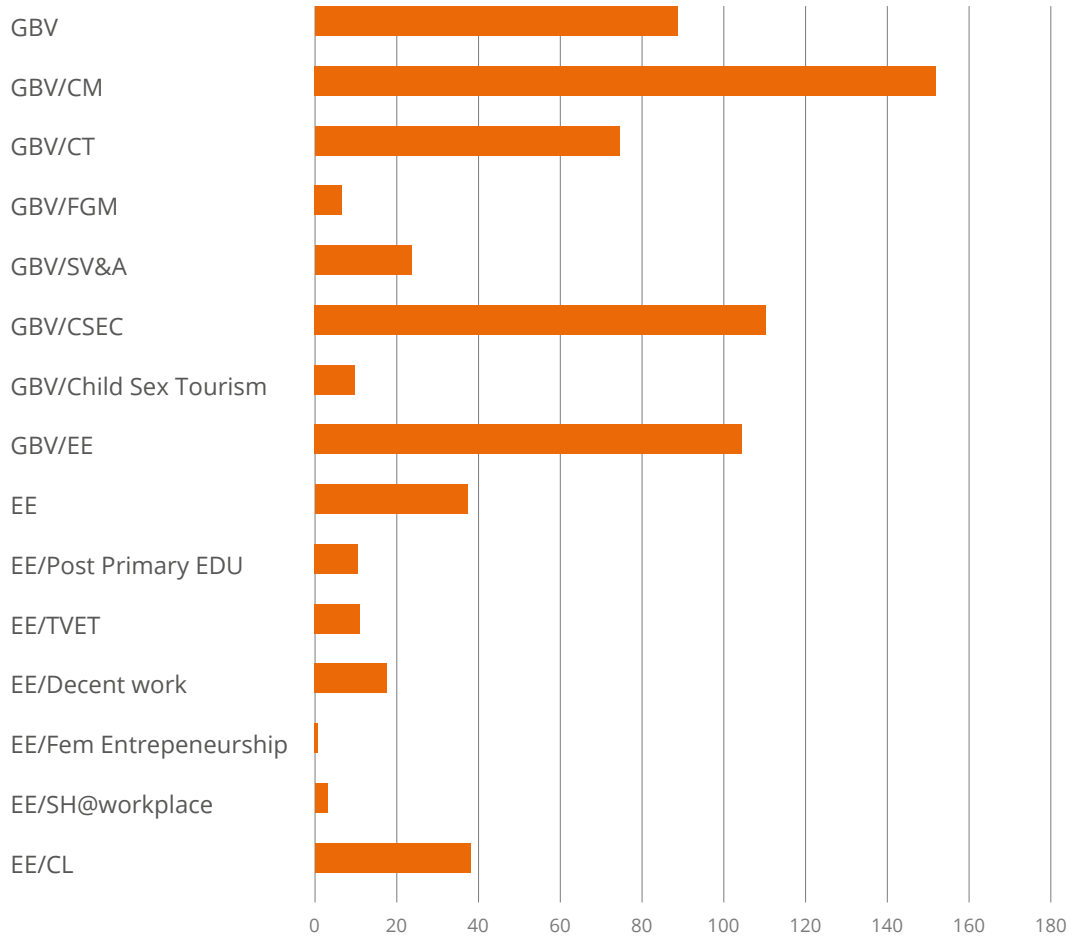
## Netherlands

GAA	Plan International Netherlands	Defence for Children - ECPAT	Terre des Hommes Netherlands
Contracted CSO partners	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.



**ANNEX D: GAA MTR DATA**

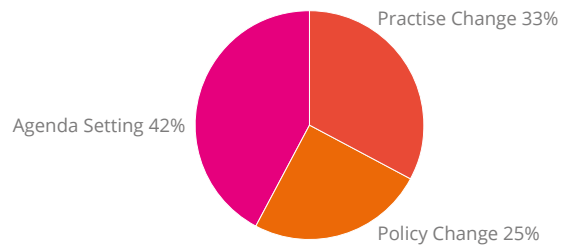
**Distribution of Signs / Sub-themes**



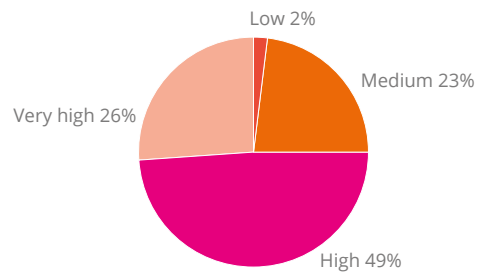
Total signs reported: 761

<b># Total Signs</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>100%</b>
Positive change	753	99%
Negative change	8	1%
<b># Total Signs</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>100%</b>
Intended changes	720	95%
Unintended changes	41	5%

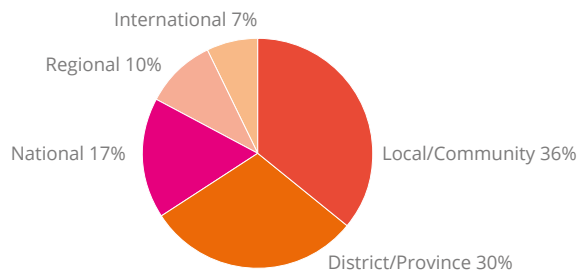
### % Signs / Change level



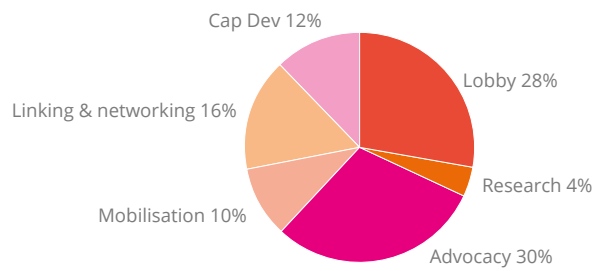
### % Signs / Significance



### Main level the outcome generates results:



### % Signs Main strategies



**ANNEX E: OVERVIEW SUBSTANTIATED OUTCOMES GAA MTR 2018**

<b>GAA Programme Components</b>	<b>total signs</b>	<b>signs selected for substantiation</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Total Substantiated</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Not substantiated</b>
International	53	7	13%	7	13%	
Netherlands	15	3	20%	3	20%	
<b>Africa regional</b>	36	7	19%	7	19%	
Ethiopia	52	52	100%	51	98%	1
Ghana	88	88	100%	88	100%	
Sierra Leone	30	8	27%	8	27%	
Kenya	44	12	27%	11	25%	1
Liberia	20	7	35%	7	35%	
Uganda	97	27	28%	26	27%	1
<b>Asia regional</b>	67	14	21%	13	19%	1
Bangladesh	93	18	19%	17	18%	1
Philippines	83	17	20%	17	20%	
Nepal	29	9	31%	8	28%	1
India	54	33	61%	33	61%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Figures without</b>						
<b>Ethiopia, Ghana &amp; India</b>	<b>568</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>5</b>

## ANNEX F: OVERVIEW 14 APT MTR PROCESSES AND CONSULTANTS

GAA Programme Components	MTR Process	Consultant(s)
International	external	Mrs. Laura Theytaz-Bergman
Netherlands	internal/external	Private sector: Bureau Wortel; Mrs. Marieke de Vries, Public sector: internal review by the APT
Africa regional	external	Mr. Opiyo Makoude
Ethiopia	Internal/external	Data collection internal peer review GYB Consulting PLC
Ghana	external	Kanko: Mrs. Mary Tobbin Osei
Sierra Leone	external	BDO consultancy: lead consultant Mrs. Waltina Garber
Kenya	external	Primson Management Services: team leader Dr. Nedy Matshalaga
Liberia	external	Mr. Abraham Billy
Uganda	external	Primson Management Services - team leader Dr. Nedy Matshalaga
Asia regional	external	Mrs. Pamela S. Suanco
Bangladesh	external	Gatheway Consultancies: Mrs. Ranjana Sharma Building for Welfare Services; Mrs. Karin van der Belt
Philippines	external	ENABLRS; Mrs. Dorothy Mae G. Albiento, Mrs. Lourdes Marina Padila-Espenido
Nepal	external	Gatheway Consultancies: Mrs. Ranjana Sharma Building for Welfare Services; Mrs. Karin van der Belt
India	internal/external	MTR team consisted of 2 external consultants and 4 internal staff member's of PLAN International India and Terre des Hommes, who are not directly involved in the programme

# GIRLS ADVOCACY ALLIANCE



**Girls first**

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Tel: +31 (0)70-310 5000  
[www.terredeshommes.nl](http://www.terredeshommes.nl)



Development Cooperation  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

The Girls Advocacy Alliance is one of the strategic partners of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Dialogue and Dissent framework.