

ANNUAL
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2019

GIRLS
ADVOCACY
ALLIANCE



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACCA	African Coalition for the Corporate Accountability
ACERWC	African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
ACRWC	African Charter 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
BoD	Board of Directors
CBO	Community based Organisation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CM	Child Marriage
CRC	Committee on the Right of the Child
CSEC	Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibilities
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DCI	Defence for Children International
DCI-ECPAT	Defence for Children – ECPAT Netherlands
DFID	Department for International Development
DV	Domestic Violence
EAC	East African Community
EC	European Commission
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECPAT	End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (nowadays: “International network organization to End the Sexual Exploitation of Children”)
EE	Economic Exclusion
EU	European Union
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
GAA	Girls Advocacy Alliance
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMACL	Global March against Child Labour
GO	Girls’ Organisations
GYW	Girls and Young Women
HLPEE	High Level Panel on Economic Empowerment
HLPF	High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
HRC	Human Rights Council
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
ICT	Information Communication Technology
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
L&A	Lobby & Advocacy
LGBTQ	Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgenders and those Questioning their gender identity or sexual orientation
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
NACG	National Action and Coordination Groups to End Violence against Children
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation

OH	Outcome Harvesting
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PM	Permanent Mission
PME&L	Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
REC	Regional Economic Communities
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
SIGI	Social Institutions and Gender Index
S4YE	Solutions for Youth Employment
TdH	Terre des Hommes
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Organisation for Education, Science and Culture
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNGC	United Nations Global Compact
UNHQ	United Nations Head Quarters
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNSP	United Nations Special Procedures
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
USAID	the United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization
WRO	Women's Rights Organisation

INTRODUCTION

The Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA) is a 5-year joint program (2016-2020) of Plan International Netherlands, Terre des Hommes Netherlands and Defence for Children - ECPAT Netherlands. The GAA is led by Plan International Netherlands and is implemented in strategic partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the Dialogue and Dissent framework.

Goal of the program is that ultimately, governments and private sector actors make sure that girls and young women in Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Bangladesh, India, Nepal and the Philippines no longer face Gender-Based Violence and Economic Exclusion. To this end, the GAA aims to influence key stakeholders in governments, the private sector and civil society organizations (CSOs) as well as community leaders to initiate lasting changes in their society that will benefit girls and young women.

Most notably, we enable civil society organizations in their lobby and advocacy work, so that they can influence their governments for strengthened accountability, more inclusive growth and development, and a reduction of the inequality faced by girls and young women in their countries. We also support CSOs to make private sector players more accountable for their contribution to the economic empowerment of girls and young women. Whenever possible we involve the Dutch government as a strategic partner in these efforts.

At the same time, the program mobilizes key decision makers to address harmful social norms and values. These norms and values often keep citizens from demanding justice and from playing a positive role in the protection of girls and young women from harmful practices and from motivating them to explore their full potential.

Finally, the program also addresses the government and private sector in the Netherlands and uses regional and international accountability mechanisms in support of the efforts in the ten program countries.

This fourth Annual Report covers the period January – December 2019. It assesses the progress of the Girls Advocacy Alliance program towards its objectives and considers the program's effectiveness. In addition, the report includes information on the indicators for Strategic Partnerships under the Dialogue & Dissent framework that were introduced by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in October 2017 as part of its revised Dialogue & Dissent Results Framework. It also explores changes in the external context and reflects on the relevance and validity of the program's Theory of Change.

On 21 April 2020, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs cordially granted the Girls Advocacy Alliance a one-month extension of the submission date of its narrative and financial report for 2019.

Reporting process

In February 2020, all Alliance Program Teams (APTs) gathered and analyzed signs of changes as a result of their program interventions for the period January - December 2019. These Outcome Lists and accompanying Annual Reports by the APTs form the basis of the overall analysis and report presented in this document. Besides the Outcome Lists and the APT Annual Reports, also participatory Capacity Assessment reports are used for this report.

Financial progress

Financial information from the alliance organizations indicates that after a long start-up phase in 2016, the rate of implementation has increased markedly in 2017 and 2018, and still further in 2019. Implementation was generally on track in 2019. Remaining under-expenditure is expected to be absorbed in the course of 2020. The initial planning for the final year of implementation, 2020, leaves room for intensification of activities if planned adjustments to the Covid-19 pandemic can be realized.

Covid-19 and expected impact on GAA in 2020

A budget neutral amendment of the Annual Plan for 2020 was submitted to the Ministry on 11 May 2020, outlining the expected impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the program's

implementation and outcomes in 2020, as well as the planned response of GAA organizations. In its response to the crisis, the alliance will focus on the immediate and longer-term expected effects for girls and young women, notably increased risks of sexual and domestic violence, economic exclusion and loss of access to education. Secondly, the alliance aims to use its resources to support local (partner) CSOs to manage the impact of the crisis on their organizations. And finally, the alliance intends to monitor effects of the crisis on civic space and address unjustified containments of this space where relevant. Throughout this response, the alliance will continue to work exclusively through its strategies of lobby and advocacy and capacity support.





1. ADVOCATING FOR GIRLS' RIGHTS

1.1. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA) envisions a world wherein all girls and young women enjoy equal rights and opportunities, and benefit equally from development outcomes – more specifically, a world wherein girls and young women are free from all forms of gender-based violence and are economically empowered.

To achieve this, the GAA applies a broad spectrum of lobby and advocacy interventions to increase public support; to improve policies and practices of private sector actors, to seek implementation of effective legislation and public policies; and to improve practices of government actors in support of the elimination of gender-based violence and economic exclusion of girls and young women. At the same time, the GAA focuses on strengthening capacities of civil society organisations and networks (in particular Girls and Young Women organisations) to influence government and private sector actors to eliminate gender-based violence and economic exclusion.

The GAA program is implemented in ten countries¹ in Africa and Asia and has two regional program components. Two program components address gender-based violence and economic exclusion at international policy levels and at the level of Dutch public and corporate policies.

1.2. THEORY OF CHANGE

The Theory of Change (ToC) of the Girls Advocacy Alliance describes how the alliance expects change to happen. It identifies the long-term goals of the program, the conditions and stakeholders that must change in order to achieve these, and the causal relationships between these conditions (pathways of change). It also includes the assumptions underlying these expectations.

Long-term goals, key stakeholders and levels of change

The GAA ToC aims at the elimination of gender-based violence and economic exclusion of girls and young women. The program pays particular attention to Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC), sexual violence and abuse, Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C), child trafficking, child marriage, economic exclusion, access to post-primary education and vocational training, decent work and female entrepreneurship.

The Girls Advocacy Alliance's ToC is structured around four strategic goals:

1. Effective implementation of legislation and public policies and improved practices of government actors
2. Improved policies and practices of corporate/private sector actors
3. Increased influence of civil society organisations and networks on government and corporate/private sector actors
4. Increased public support for the elimination of gender-based violence and economic exclusion of girls and young women

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 the issues of gender-based violence and economic exclusion: governments and international/regional inter-governmental bodies, private sector actors, traditional, religious and community leaders, and civil society organisations and networks.

During the inception phase of the program in 2016, the Alliance Program Teams developed a ToC for each of the 14 program components. These adapted ToCs describe the specific goals, pathways of change and key actors as well as the underlying assumptions on how we think change happens in a particular context.

¹ Country programs in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Liberia, Nepal, the Philippines, Sierra Leone and Uganda; regional program components in Asia and Africa.

Update of the Theory of Change

Based on reflections on pathways of change and assumptions by APTs, the GAA ToC was updated in October 2019. Reflections were included in the alliance Annual Plan for 2020. In chapter 4 of this Annual Report, a visual representation of this update is provided and discussed.



2. EXTERNAL CONTEXT

2.1. CHANGES IN THE EXTERNAL CONTEXT

During 2019 the growth of the world economy recorded its weakest pace since the global finance crisis a decade ago. Rising uncertainties about the economic climate, geopolitical tensions and the increase of trade barriers have had a negative impact on economic growth. Though these global tendencies affect all GAA countries, some of them (like Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nepal) are particularly hit due to specific socio-economic weaknesses, high levels of inflation, corruption and weak macroeconomic policies.

The economic problems are compounded by negative tendencies in the area of democracy and politics. Last year, we witnessed a continuation of the trend of democratic erosion, affecting new as well as established democracies. The practice of populist parties and autocratic leaders undermine political pluralism, rule of law and the respect of fundamental civil and political rights. Autocratic regimes such as Russia and China are 'exporting' their governance model to other countries in Africa and Asia while Western governments that used to be the promoters of democracy like the USA are no longer interested in defending the value of democracy in international diplomacy. With the exception of Ethiopia and Ghana, these worrying trends are visible in all GAA countries. They have huge consequences for girls and young women, as these autocratic leaders are paving the way for conservative and religious groups vehemently opposing gender equality and sexual and reproductive rights.

But despite the worsening political context, 2019 has also been the year of massive protests. Citizens are mobilizing for different reasons (climate, corruption, inequality and falling standards of living, lack of accountability). One of the striking features of the current wave of protests is the relatively large representation of young people, particularly girls and young women. In various GAA countries, girls and young women are increasingly organizing themselves, using social media, petitions and public marches to express their discontent with persisting gender inequality and the political exclusion of (young) women.

2.2. THE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

The enabling environment scores for GAA countries remain alarming. Ghana is the only country whose civil society environment is classified by CIVICUS as 'narrowed'. The others are either 'obstructed' (Nepal, Philippines, Kenya, Liberia and Sierra Leone) or 'repressed' (Uganda, Ethiopia, Bangladesh and India). While the recent developments in Ethiopia still seem to point into a positive direction (although the intensified violent clashes between different ethnic communities are deeply worrying), other GAA countries do not show signs of improvement. Restrictive legal and administrative measures (including measures limiting CSO access to (foreign) funding), violence against activists and CSOs, the spread of an anti-democracy and anti-human rights discourse by State officials and/or leading politicians and the curtailing of the press are - to a greater or lesser extent - visible in all GAA countries. Not all CSOs are equally affected by the shrinking of civic space but organizations and activists who are promoting gender equality and youth participation are definitely among the actors that are being targeted by repressive states and conservative movements. In many contexts, the very same trends compromise girls' and young women's spaces at community level to speak up, act and influence.

These global tendencies affect international policy space. Decision making processes in the UN Human Rights Mechanisms as well as the UN General Assembly are not easily accessible for civil society. Visa restrictions, the threat of harassment and intimidation and the non-cooperative stance of many member states delegations, are posing real barriers to the participation of young people in international spaces. Due to the current funding crisis at the UN, certain treaty bodies' sessions (CRC, CEDAW) that allow for civil society participation have almost been cancelled while member states have openly criticized the mandate of the Special Procedures. At the African Union (AU), member states have questioned the mandate of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) and the protection mandate of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACmHPR).

2.3. EFFECTS ON PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTCOMES

In a deteriorating civil society environment, GAA members and partners need to maneuver with great caution. It is far more challenging for GAA partners to influence opinion on controversial topics and navigate around the institutional barriers that are being set up. In this context, GAA partners generally invest more time and energy in building strong relationships with government officials, to avoid any backlash and resistance. Collaboration with other CSOs in broader alliances with a common advocacy agenda and the engagement with influential ‘champions of change’ (among traditional leaders and/or policy officials) are also essential strategies in a shrinking civic space.

During 2019, GAA has stepped up its efforts to support and strengthen youth advocates and girl-led groups. Though the promotion of girls’ political agency is a goal in itself, stronger girl and youth-led organizations are particularly needed to counter the ongoing backlash against democracy, human rights and gender equality. An autonomous, well-organized civil society, which is truly representative of the voices of girls and young women and less dependent on (and marginalized by!) international NGOs, happens to be the best guarantee against autocratic, populist leaders. This implies however, that the support to young female activists and their organizations, needs to be combined with a systematic investment in safeguarding measures that protect these activists against all possible risks.





3. PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

3.1. OUTCOMES OF LOBBY & ADVOCACY

Collection of outcomes of the program in 2019

To do justice to the complex and ever changing realities of Lobby & Advocacy programs, the GAA has adapted in its PME&L system key building blocks of adaptive programming, notably the use of Theories of Change and Outcome Harvesting. Throughout the year, all organisations involved in the implementation of the program keep an advocacy log of relevant changes observed at the level of key stakeholders and advocacy targets. Twice per year, APTs and local partner organisations jointly reflect on the collected signs of change, and determine whether and how their interventions contributed to these changes.

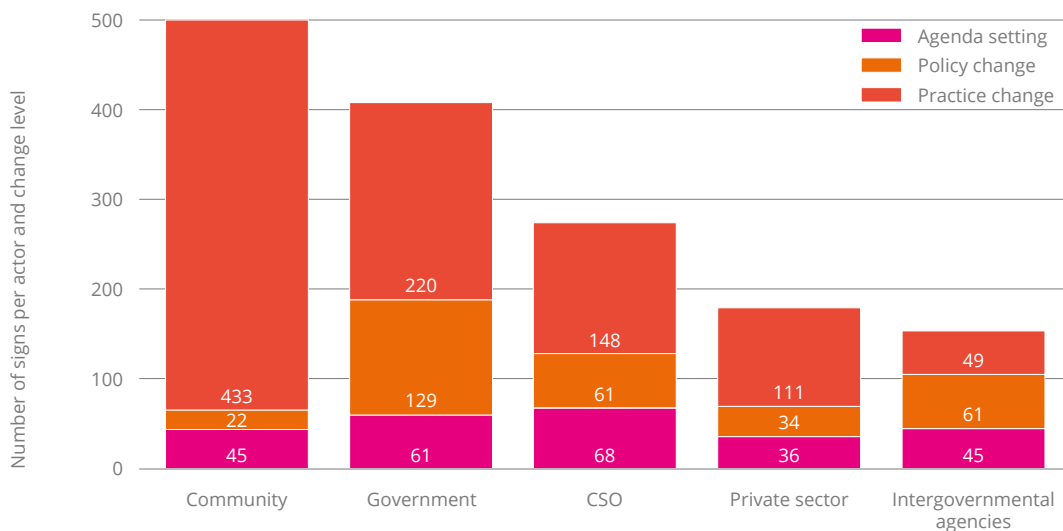
A total number of 1.520 signs of change have been documented by the Alliance Program Teams in 2019. These are considered as changes at the level of the key stakeholders of their joint GAA programs to which they assessed their interventions as a plausible contribution. This is a significant increase compared to the numbers of changes recorded in 2017 (219) and 2018 (751), mainly because much advocacy work from previous years is only 'paying off' in the final years of the program and has resulted in an 'accumulation' of signs in 2019. It is also a reflection of deliberate capacity strengthening and growing experience in Outcome Harvesting and extra attention given to the Outcome Harvesting documentation system.

The number of outcome signs differs per country and depends on, among other factors, the size of the program, the number of organisations involved, and the nature of lobby and advocacy activities implemented. Also, the level of aggregation of signs differs per APT. Countries with a larger number of organisations and/or themes, like Bangladesh, Uganda and the Philippines, reported larger numbers of signs.

Analysis of signs of change

The majority of the 1.520 outcomes documented relates to themes associated with GBV, notably Child Marriage, Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Child Trafficking. Together, these three subthemes account for nearly fifty percent of the reported outcomes. A much smaller number of changes was observed by the APTs on Economic Exclusion specifically. This is in line with the overall focus of the program and the expertise and experience of the GAA organisations. The number of signs of change with regards to Economic Exclusion did increase as compared to 2018 however (245 and 86, respectively). The number of signs of change related to both GBV and EE increased as well, from 170 in 2018 to 289 in 2019.

In the figure below, an overview of signs per actor category and change level is presented.



Considering the different key stakeholders and geographical levels of change, it is observed that most signs of change were reported at the level of community leaders and the general public (33%) and at the level of governments and intergovernmental agencies (combined these account for 37% of signs), with fewer signs observed within CSOs (18%) and private sector (12%). The majority of the outcomes are related to changes at local and district/province level, together accounting for 71% of the documented signs, followed by 17% of changes taking place at national level and 12% at international and regional Africa/Asia level. The main strategy of influencing in 2019 has been lobbying (36%), followed by Advocacy Campaigns including Awareness raising (31%) followed by Capacity development (of CSOs) (12%).

The largest group of signs of changes represent changes in practices at community level, which account for 29% of all signs. Overall, practice changes constitute the majority of signs for all advocacy targets, namely 63% of signs. The only exception is for the intergovernmental level, where most changes were recorded as linked to processes of policy change – in line with the expected outcomes at this level. The smallest number of changes is linked to the agenda setting level (17%), which is in line with the expectation as it was the fourth year of the program.

In the following sections, signs of changes are presented for each of the four key stakeholder groups of the GAA Theory of Change: government and intergovernmental agencies, community leaders and the general public, Civil Society (Organisations) and the private sector.

3.1.1. Government and intergovernmental agencies

A relatively large number of outcomes has been documented at all change levels (agenda setting, practice change and policy change) that can be linked to GAA's involvement with governments. These outcomes indicate that political actors and public officials are attaching more importance to Gender Based Violence and Economic Exclusion of girls and young women, that they are developing or revising policies and guidelines linked to GAA themes, and that they are effectively starting implementation of new legislation or policies, or improving the implementation of existing ones.

The numbers of signs seem to indicate that GAA organizations have been most effective in influencing government at local and district levels. They are well able to engage with governments and draw attention to GBV and Economic Exclusion of girls and young women. They have been able to contribute to better functioning services and structures (such as reporting mechanisms, referral systems and Child Protection Committees), enhancing knowledge of key stakeholders on GBV legislation and National Plans of Action and improvement of the legal system and juridical procedures.

In the Philippines for example, various positive signs of change were observed relating to the protection of girls and young women against CSEC at the Local Government Unit (LGU) level. LGUs for instance enforced the filing of CSEC and child abuse cases in Cebu, the LGU of San Fernando drafted an Ordinance in Strengthening Child Protection in Travel and Tourism, and the LGUs of Argao, Balamban, City of Naga, Compostela and Lapu-lapu City deployed barangay protection and safety officers (BPSO) in identified hotspots of CSEC activities to strengthen the implementation of curfew ordinance for the period July to December.

At national level, in a number of countries GAA organisations work closely with line ministries and a broad range of semi-governmental agencies. Through dialogue, contribution of thematic expertise, facilitation and other 'insider strategies' they are involved in the development of e.g. Child Protection Policies, Child Marriage Acts and various National Action Plans. In Sierra Leone for instance, GAA organizations successfully lobbied the Child Justice Task Force to include measures to address the limited prosecution of SGBV cases in the revised Child Justice Strategy. As a result of GAA advocacy, the Sierra Leonean Ministry of Justice amended the sexual offences Act with respect to minimum sentences and other measures aimed at the prevention of sexual harassment. In India, as a result of GAA advocacy towards the Endowment Department and Minority Commission, the Department called out to Muslim and Hindu leaders to solemnize marriages only after verification of age proof certificates, and to register all marriages.

GAA organizations often linked advocacy efforts at local/district level and initiatives at national level. In Bangladesh, GAA actions contributed to improved implementation of legislation to ensure safe internet use at national level as well as at district level. The Minister of ICT Division committed to include a special provision in the Digital Security Act 2018 for online safety and security of children and a Digital Security Agency was formed to monitor and ensure online security. At district level, District Education Officers issued circulars to schools to incorporate the “Handbook on Safe Internet Use” in their regular ICT curriculum. In India as well, the above-mentioned advocacy initiatives at state level were linked to actions aimed at local leaders tasked with the actual implementation of state calls.

Influencing intergovernmental agencies and the Dutch government

GAA activities in the ten program countries are supported by interventions aimed at influencing intergovernmental institutions at international level as well as at the level of African and Asian Regional bodies. In addition, GAA addresses Gender-Based Violence and young women’s economic empowerment at the level of Dutch public (foreign) policies. Through connecting international levels with national GAA programs, the GAA was able to further strengthen its national level policy influencing.

By utilizing existing networks and sustaining positive relationships with key institutions, the GAA Asia Regional Program was able to collaborate successfully with regional intergovernmental bodies such as the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and the Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), the South Asian Initiative to End Violence against Children’s (SAIEVAC), PWB, the Asian Development Bank and the International Association of Students in Economic and Commercial Sciences (AIESEC). GAA was for instance instrumental in supporting the development of the SAIEVAC regional strategy on sexual abuse, exploitation and online safety. The action plan was adopted and endorsed by the SAIEVAC 8th governing board. The ADB has begun developing ADB’s Youth Strategy to define meaningful youth engagement – an indication of institutionalization of youth participation in ADB. GAA provided technical input to the development of the strategy.

In Africa at the regional level, GAA organizations effectively lobbied regional governance bodies, notably the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the East African Community (EAC). They were able to put context-specific GAA themes and issues on the agendas of these governance bodies, notably Child Marriage (CM), Commercial and Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) and Child Trafficking (CT), and strengthened sub-regional and regional monitoring and accountability mechanism on GVB and EEs. The GAA Regional Africa program has for instance been actively involved in advocacy efforts for countering cross-border trafficking in Mano River Union States (Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea, and Ivory Coast). GAA contributed to the development of the state reports of Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia on the implementation of the ECOWAS plan of action to end human trafficking. Also, GAA actions contributed to increased awareness of border security officials and community leaders in border communities, and to the introduction of stricter controls and screening of travelers. The regional team in Africa also noted negative changes, notably with regards to gains made in the field of Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) at the level of the AU Permanent Representatives Council and Executive Council. Member States are challenging already agreed upon commitments around SRHR language. Adoption of the AU gender strategy and the political declaration on Beijing 25 was stalled as a consequence.

At international level, GAA organizations in 2019 influenced three resolutions of the Human Rights Council and contributed to the expansion of the mandate of the UN Working Group on Discrimination of Women to include girls. Also, a joint submission to the Special Rapporteur on CSEC was successfully included in the 2020 annual report of the Special Rapporteur. At the High Level Political Forum in New York, the UN Major Group on Women and the UN Major group on Children selected a GAA delegate to speak on behalf of the Major Group, which is an example of the result of advocacy work leading up to the meeting, engaging beforehand, giving inputs etc. Since the Major Groups are the only channel of influence towards the SDGs, this has been a major opportunity for GAA to influence the agenda.

The GAA International team supported GAA countries teams to report to international accountability mechanisms, and to follow up on conclusions and recommendations of these mechanisms. This has led for instance to a successful involvement during the 3rd cycle Universal Periodic Review for Kenya, where a written submission was delivered, and an oral statement on the Human Rights situation in Kenya (focusing on GBV) by a youth advocate. The International team moreover played an instrumental part in the preparation and organisation of the Global Youth Meet Up in the Netherlands in September 2019, from supporting youth groups in GAA program countries with selecting members for participation, to the actual training sessions in the Netherlands and accompanying participants.

In the Netherlands, GAA organizations, together with Global March against Child Labour (GMaCL), actively participated in several IMVO covenants, in particular the agreements in the food and metallurgic sector and to a lesser extent the garment and textile sector. In steering committees' meetings as well as broader stakeholders convening, GAA organizations advocated for the necessity to include a gender lens in the due diligence framework adopted by all signatories. We provided examples of how a gender responsive due diligence helps companies to identify and address the risks of gender discrimination and violence in their supply chains. Based on a business case investigation in the garment sector in Bangladesh, evidence was shared among Dutch textile brands on the gains for businesses of promoting (young) women's economic empowerment and decent work. This was done in close collaboration with the Fair Wear Foundation. All our lobby actions related to the promotion of gender responsive due diligence were coordinated with other key allies such as the WO=MEN platform and Win Win Strategies. In the food covenant, GMaCL has managed to start a gender working group which will assist parties in the development and implementation of action plans.

3.1.2. Community leaders and the general public

In 2019 GAA continued to be an active influencer at community level, and the majority of outcomes that have been achieved can be linked to this level. Many positive signs of change have occurred at the level of community leaders and community members, indicating increased commitment and changed practices in addressing gender-based violence and economic exclusion of girls and young women.

In Liberia, chiefs and other community members who had been trained as GAA Ambassador/ Agent of Change have visibly started to take up key roles in advocating for girls and young women to be safe from GBV as well as promoting access to education and advocating for their (re)enrolment in various schools. As a result of consultative and dialogue meetings, religious and traditional leaders and chiefs in several communities are actively reporting cases of GBV to the police whereas before, these issues were considered as 'family matters'. In Ethiopia, GAA organizations' involvement effectively influenced community-based organizations (iddirs) to review their by-laws and include articles on GBV and economic exclusion of girls and young women. As a result, iddirs also took up awareness raising on GAA issues. Community groups continued to address HTPs, resulting among other things, in the cancellation of more than 45 early marriages in 2019. In India, as a result of dialogues and meetings with GAA organizations, key religious leaders included messages on the legal age of marriage and the importance of education for girls in their sermons and campaigns. They moreover started discussing the issues among peer leaders, and increasingly include age checks of bride and groom as a standard procedure for marriages.

Similar changes were observed in Ghana, where GAA organizations have mobilized a group of 22 progressive traditional and religious leaders as Champions of Change and provided them with capacity support. The Champions of Change were able to sensitize and influence other traditional and religious leaders. In line with their action plans, Champions of Change in 2019 lobbied the regional house of chiefs to consider child marriage in the district assembly bye laws. Others reached out to school heads, parents and other traditional leaders in their constituencies to promote effective implementation of the child and family welfare policy and other relevant stipulations, including the policy on girls' re-entry into school that was launched by the Ghana Education Service. They also achieved that a number of paramount chiefs at the national level publicly condemned child marriage and instituted gender transformative bye laws.

Not all reported changes are however positive. In Nepal for instance, community members opposed actions against child marriages. A member of an adolescent girls network received death threats after stopping a child marriage. This shows the persistence of Harmful Practices and the challenges of changing social norms and practices.

3.1.3. Civil Society (Organizations) and Youth Advocates

The number of changes identified at the level of CSOs has considerably increased in comparison to previous years. Lessons learnt from previous years have contributed to greater effectiveness in influencing other CSOs. The shift to likeminded CSOs and a greater focus on linking and networking – initiated after the MTR in 2018 – seems to have contributed to greater uptake of advocacy messages by CSOs. This is supported by the fact that many signs indicate increased collaboration between CSOs, and greater effectiveness of targeted networks' joint advocacy efforts. The majority of changes at the level of CSOs relates to practice changes (53%) at local and district/province level.

GAA organizations and partners used a range of influencing strategies to strengthen civil society's role as critical watchdog for the implementation of policies and legislation for the protection and empowerment of girls and young women. In addition to lobby and advocacy (including awareness raising) as main strategies, linking and networking (19% of CSO signs), mobilization and activism (17%) and capacity development (16%) have been actively applied to influence CSOs.

In Uganda for example, advocacy and support by GAA organizations and partners contributed to the development and submission to the National NGO Board of the first constitution of the Coalition Against Trafficking in Person Uganda (CATIP-U) by its 40 constituent CSOs. At district level, GAA support to the Bugiri Child Labor Working Committee contributed to more effective collaboration of CSOs within the Working Committee and between de Working Committee and the District Local Government, and to concrete outcomes of its advocacy actions. The Working Committee for example successfully pushed for the approval of a child labor ordinance by the District Government, and effectively advocated for the development of a data tracking tool that was provided to Bugiri CSOs involved in collection of data on child labor.

CSO collaboration also led to results at national and international levels. GAA organizations in Sierra Leone, in collaboration with human rights CSOs, successfully advocated for pregnant girls' and teenage mothers' access to school. They organized planning meetings, press conferences, data collection from affected girls, engaged the media on the case and brought the case to the ECOWAS court. In December 2019, the ECOWAS court ordered the Sierra Leonean government to lift the ban on pregnant girls attending school.² In Kenya, advocacy by CSO network Stop the Traffic Kenya resulted in the tabling of questions by MPs in Parliament on the implementation of guidelines on Human Trafficking. And in Liberia, the Child Protection Network (CPN) and National GBV Taskforce, with the support of GAA, successfully advocated for the appointment of more female Women And Child Protection (WACP) officials at the Liberia National Police and female public defenders. Also, in Liberia, GAA supported the Child Rights NGO Coalition to compile, present and submit an alternative CSO national UPR report on child marriage, violence against girls and young women, and access to education.

Youth Advocates

In most program countries, GAA organizations continued in 2019 to train and support youth advocates, many of whom have initiated collective action on GAA topics. In Ethiopia for instance, 487 youth advocates have been involved in GAA advocacy activities through girls' clubs in schools and youth associations. More than 40 girls' clubs and youth associations have been supported to develop action plans on issues that affect their lives. Girls' clubs for instance organized awareness sessions and dialogues on girls' rights, GBV, CSEC and HTPs, and engaged in the promotion and preparation of sanitary pads. They moreover identified suspected cases of child marriages, collected information and reported these to schools.

² On the 30th of March 2020, the Ministry of Basic and Senior Education announced that the 2010 decision of the government of Sierra Leone preventing pregnant girls from attending school is overturned.

The alliance also supported youth advocates to access and participate at international and regional influencing fora. With the support of GAA, youth advocates from Ghana, Sierra Leone and the Philippines presented at the UN High Level Political Forum in July 2019 in New York. In Kenya, 42 Youth Advocates representing 300 girls from Kwale, actively engaged in the UPR process, with one of them delivering jointly developed recommendations to the UN Committee in Geneva. GAA supported two youth advocates to participate in debates in Geneva for the 30st anniversary of the Committee on the Right of the Child (CRC), and two youth advocates to participate in the UN Working Group on Discrimination Against Women and Girls in Addis Ababa. In September 2019, 20 youth advocates from all ten program countries were supported to join a week-long exchange meeting in The Netherlands. During this Global Youth Meet Up (GYMU), youth advocates exchanged experiences, visited several organizations and companies, attended training sessions and workshops, and presented their advocacy asks to the Dutch Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (also see section 3.4. Inclusiveness).

Efforts were undertaken to embed youth initiatives into more sustainable structures. The GAA Youth Network of Myagdi district in Nepal has been reformed as the Myagdi Youth Council. As such, it will be a sustainable and government supported platform for youth to meet and raise issues of GBV and HTPs, even after the end of the GAA program. Five girls and young women's groups in Uganda have formed associations that have now developed into Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) and that are being used to access government programs.

3.1.4. The Private sector

Like in previous years and in line with the program's focus, a relatively modest number of reported changes in 2019 (181 out of 1.520) is related to the private sector. Most of these changes (63%) were seen in small and medium sized enterprises. In many program countries, GAA organizations and partners successfully engaged with local companies to discuss GBV and women's economic empowerment, and more specifically the position of (young) women in their businesses and the role of the private sector in addressing risks and abuses. GAA organizations moreover linked local enterprises with vulnerable youth and supported them to create jobs for these target groups.

Continuous engagement and follow up on earlier actions with targeted private sector actors showed good results. In Uganda, GAA organizations followed up on contacts with bars, hotels and entertainment venues, which helped to ensure the actual implementation of codes of conduct that were jointly developed in previous years. Likewise, hotel and restaurant Security Officers in Lapu-lapu City, Philippines implemented a 'warning protocol' to alert each other about suspected traffickers. In Nepal, continuous lobby and advocacy has resulted in the endorsement of gender, child protection, ethical hiring and decent workplace policies by Trekking Agency Association Nepal (TAAN). In Kenya, informal sector companies have actively adopted codes of conduct, policies and practices against GBV and economic exploitation of girls and young women. And the Internet Service Providers Association in Bangladesh (ISPAB) has developed and introduced a code of conduct against online sexual exploitation of children.

Linking and networking as well proved useful strategies to get private sector actors on board. It helped GAA organizations in the Philippines to convince companies in various sectors to set up work placements for vulnerable youth, and to improve working conditions for young women in their enterprises. And in Ethiopia, in addition to improving salary conditions for young women employers, targeted factories undertook a joint participatory review of their implementation of the descent work code of conduct and assigned a focal person for GBV and decent work.

These and other examples do underline however that engaging and actually influencing private sector actors to make real changes for the benefit of girls and young women is a long-time affair and requires specific networks and expertise. At the regional level in Asia, GAA organizations developed a set of business cases for the RMG and Hotel and Tourism sectors, which have led to explorations for further collaboration with several international corporates, private sector networks and other relevant players such as ILO Better Work. In Bangladesh, ongoing engagements with RMG factories and branch organisations resulted in 2019 in the formation of

Sexual Harassment Committees in three factories. In Nepal, GAA organizations invested in the development of business cases on the return of investment of hiring women employees in the Hospitality and Tourism sector. These cases form the backbone of evidence-based advocacy that is expected to contribute to concrete results in the future. Also, in Nepal, policies on gender equality, child protection, ethical hiring and decent work had been drafted in previous years for the Hotel Association of Nepal (HAN) and the Trekking Agency Association Nepal (TAAN). In 2019, these policies were endorsed by TAAN but not yet by HAN. The establishment of oversight mechanisms by these associations to ensure policy compliance is a next step that will take more time yet.

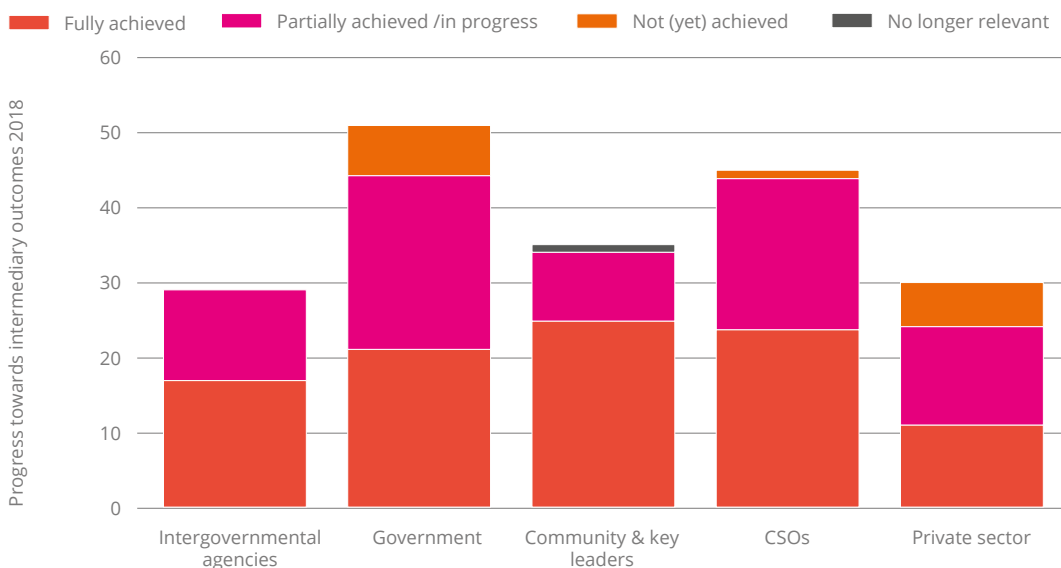
The lobby efforts towards the private sector, especially in tourism (Nepal) and garment (Bangladesh) have been amplified by GAA in the Netherlands. As mentioned above, GAA organizations used the findings of a business case study in Dhaka to demonstrate the positive effects of women's economic empowerment and decent work to Dutch textile brands. The three GAA organizations also strengthened their engagement with stakeholders in the Dutch tourism sector (like ANVR, individual tour operators and ECEAT). Through blogs and presentations at tourism seminars, the GAA program has shown the risks for tourism companies of not addressing gender discrimination and violence in their supply chain.

3.1.5. Progress towards intermediate outcomes of Lobby and Advocacy

The Alliance Program Teams report that over half of their expected outcomes for 2019 (52%; 98 out of 190 expected outcomes) has been achieved. Another 41% of the expected outcomes has been partially achieved. Fourteen percent of the expected outcomes has not yet been (fully) achieved as planned, with in the majority of cases at least one sign of change that could be linked to the expected outcome, indicating that some positive changes were happening.

Below figure shows the realization of expected intermediary outcomes for 2019 per actor category.

Realization of intermediary expected outcomes 2019



Pathways

The program teams have been especially successful in realizing their expected outcomes for 2019 at the level of communities and key leaders (71%), followed by progress at (inter) government level and with CSOs (59% and 53% respectively). Efforts aimed at influencing national governments and the private sector were slightly less effective, with some 40% of

expected outcomes achieved. This supports the conclusions from the section above that GAA organizations have strong ties and track records at local levels, and that influencing the private sector has remained challenging in many countries, although notable results are being achieved as well, including in Nepal, Uganda, Bangladesh and the Philippines. The relatively lower percentage of achieved expected outcomes at the level of (national) governments may reflect high ambitions in a complex field: in absolute numbers, by far most expected outcomes relate to influencing national governments. And even though the percentage of these outcomes that has been achieved is comparatively low, the absolute number of expected outcomes achieved at the level of (national) governments almost equals that for community & key leaders and CSOs. Lower levels of outcome achievement at the level of (national) governments may also reflect a shift in approach by GAA organisations. Many of them have moved from targeting (mainly) local governments towards (also) influencing national governments – an area of work with greater challenges and uncertainties.

Countries and contexts

Four countries were able to achieve more than two thirds of their expected outcomes for 2019: Bangladesh, Philippines, Kenya and Uganda. It must be noted however, that most other countries noted good progress towards achievement of expected outcomes that had not yet been fully realized during the reporting period. Only in Ghana, Ethiopia and Nepal did teams indicate little or no progress towards one or more outcomes – in most cases this was related to changes at the level of the national government or the private sector.

Differences in progress towards expected intermediary outcomes per country or program components do not seem to relate strongly to developments in the external environment or to the spaces for civil society lobby and advocacy. Countries with closed or oppressed civic spaces (Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Uganda and Liberia) do not report significantly lower progress towards the expected outcomes of their advocacy work than countries with more open civic spaces. This seems in line with the observation that GAA partners are capable of adapting their advocacy strategies and messages, and probably also their advocacy ambitions, to the (im)possibilities of their context. Moreover, the GAA organizations usually work on themes and topics that align with government priorities and that are not especially politically sensitive.

3.2. OUTPUTS OF LOBBY AND ADVOCACY

The rate of output delivery by GAA organizations and their partners continued to increase steadily in 2019. Progress of implementation differed somewhat per county/program component, with all countries except Liberia and Bangladesh (nearly) exhausting or slightly overspending their budgets for 2019. Budgets for 2020 reflect minor reallocations in response to these differences. Although no major shifts in budgets between and within budget lines and program components are expected, output delivery will be affected by the Covid-19 crisis in 2020.

The reports by the Alliance Program Teams confirm that GAA organizations and their partners are comfortable with ‘insider’ advocacy tactics, directly engaging with advocacy targets and building on collaborative relationships. As in 2018, they invested in 2019 in the linking of actors in platforms and collaborative networks, and the strengthening and supporting of these networks, varying from policy networks with line ministries and technical experts, advocacy networks of local CSOs and regional networks of traditional leaders, to youth groups, private sector networks and multi-disciplinary networks of community-based committees, local government agencies and service providers. GAA partners often play a key role in bringing stakeholders together and facilitating collaboration and exchange of knowledge and information.

This approach is complemented by a variety of tactics that indicate that GAA partners also opt for more indirect ‘outsider’ approaches to influence advocacy targets, including coalition and network building, community mobilization, awareness raising campaigns, media campaigns and direct influencing of individual key decision-makers at various levels.

3.3. OUTCOMES OF CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Capacity Development in the context of the GAA Theory of Change refers to the strengthening of organizational capacities for lobby and advocacy of direct CSO partners of the alliance, who are formally contracted for the implementation of the program. An annual participatory assessment of the capabilities is conducted, using a Capacity Assessment Tool (CAT) based on the 5 Core Capabilities framework developed by the European Centre for Development Policy Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM)³. In line with this framework, the GAA distinguishes five core capabilities: (1) Capacity to Commit and Act; (2) Capacity to Deliver on development objectives; (3) Capacity to Adapt and Renew; (4) Capacity to Relate to External Stakeholders and (5) Capacity to Achieve Coherence. The GAA adapted the CAT by using specific indicators (pointers) for the lobby & advocacy competencies related to each core capability.

The pool of CSO partner organisations of the GAA has undergone some changes: 47 CSOs participated in the initial baseline capacity assessment in 2016; the number of CSOs in the 2019 capacity assessment was 45 (out of 53 CSOs contracted in the context of the implementation of the program in 2019). Out of these, 5 were only contracted in 2019, hence the scores of 40 CSOs could be tracked for consecutive years. The changes are primarily an indication of the adaptive nature of the GAA program, reflecting e.g. shifts from traditional partners to organisations with expertise, experience and networks more specifically tailored to GAA strategies and approaches (lobby and advocacy, networking, private sector engagement). In 2019, in some countries, direct contracts were moreover concluded with partner organisations previously engaged through network organisations.

As a consequence, aggregated capacity scores per year are difficult to compare. Developments in capacity assessments per individual organisation give more meaningful information. This also corresponds with GAAs approach to capacity development, in which primary ownership of capacity development processes lies with the CSO partner organisation and the contracting Alliance organisation, and analysis of CAT scores is mainly at the level of individual partner organisations and CSO networks. Nonetheless, some trends can be identified, and general conclusions drawn at the aggregated level, when looking at the 2019 results.

Summary of Capacity Development outcomes

The annual reports and the annual capacity assessments confirmed that the capacity development support provided through the GAA program to CSO partner organisations was essential for enhancement of their lobby and advocacy outcomes. In Ghana for example, social media training helped partner CSOs to expand the reach of their lobby & advocacy by applying more diverse, online, strategies (including petitions, regular posts). It also helped them to establish ties with other organisations and networks, including UNFPA and UNICEF. Several countries focused on strengthening partner CSOs' skills to work with Youth Advocates, resulting in a successful mission of Youth Advocates from GAA countries to the Netherlands and other powerful contributions of youth advocates to local, national and international fora for advocacy and influencing. Other topics addressed in the context of capacity support include the development, implementation and evaluation of gender and protection and safeguarding policies, and the further strengthening of PME&L for lobby & advocacy. Other partners were supported to develop fundraising strategies; resource mobilization was flagged in 2018 as a recommendation for capacity support and as such followed up in 2019. Sixteen partner organisations report that capacity support in resource mobilization helped them to enhance their financial sustainability, strengthening their organizations' capacity to deliver on development objectives (C2). In India, training in budget analysis helped partners to negotiate with government departments on budget allocations for GAA issues. Partners in several countries moreover benefitted from online training and support to prepare submissions to the High-Level Political Forum of the UN and other international accountability mechanisms.

3 See: ecdpm.org/publications/5cs-framework-plan-monitor-evaluate-capacity-development-processes/

AVERAGE 5C SCORES OF ALL PARTNER CSOs	2016	2017	2018	2019
C1. Capacity to commit and act	2,8	2,9	3,2	3,2
C2. Capacity to deliver on development objectives	2,7	2,8	3,0	3,2
C3. Capacity to adapt and self-renew	2,8	2,8	3,0	3,2
C4. Capacity to attract & relate to external stakeholders	3,2	3,3	3,4	3,5
C5. Capacity to balance diversity and consistency	2,9	3,0	3,1	3,3

Looking at CAT scores for 2019 per organization as compared to 2018, 32 out of 40 partner CSOs (80%) show an increase in total score, reflecting increases in all or several organizational capabilities and related competencies for lobby and advocacy. Six organisations noted a very minor decrease in overall CAT score; two have remained equal – reflecting decreases in one or more capabilities. The majority of COS partners also progressed towards the targets set for 2020. In some countries, several targets have already been achieved. In Ethiopia, Uganda, Sierra Leone, India and the Philippines, targets for all Core Capabilities have been achieved or exceeded. In Liberia, Ghana, Nepal and Bangladesh, overall scores increased towards targets set for 2020. In Kenya, as the only exception, scores decreased slightly due to staff changes resulting in a loss of capacity.

At the aggregated level in 2019, as in 2016, 2017 and 2018, the CSO partners of the GAA identified the Capability to Relate to External Stakeholders as their strongest organizational capability, suggesting that GAA partners are well able to identify, develop and maintain relationships with constituencies, relevant advocacy targets and other CSOs and CSO networks. All capacities except the capacity to commit and act (C1) have increased compared to 2018.

It must be noted that whereas the GAA mostly measures the effects of capacity building of its partner CSOs, several activities reach a broader spectrum of CSOs, and capacity development results hence also can be observed beyond contracted partner CSOs. In 2019, an estimated 2.540 CSOs including youth organizations, grassroots organizations, faith-based organizations and NGOs participated in activities initiated and funded through the GAA.

3.4. INCLUSIVENESS

Girls' and young women's experiences, views and opinions inform strategies and programmatic choices of the GAA in various ways. During the GAA baseline study in 2016, focus group discussions, individual interviews and consultations with girls, boys, youth and young women were convened. In 2017, 2018 and 2019, program teams in various countries conducted studies, surveys or focus group discussions in which girls' and young women's experiences, views and opinions were captured. The outcomes of these researches informed programmatic choices, including advocacy messages.

Girls and young women were also involved in program implementation in various ways. Following up on the youth advocacy trainings facilitated by the GAA International team in 2018, GAA teams in all program countries worked with groups of girls and youth to articulate and amplify their voices at various local, district, national and international fora, ranging from meetings with traditional leaders and school boards, to national youth parliaments, regional youth summits and the UN Committee of the Rights of the Child. In many cases, the GAA was actively involved in creating or shaping these spaces for youth involvement.

In September 2019, 20 youth advocates from all ten GAA program countries were supported to join for a week of networking, exchange and workshops in the Netherlands during the GAA Global Youth Meet Up (GYMU). As part of their program, the youth advocates met with the Dutch Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, where they

made a strong case for international support for youth activists for gender equality. Other highlights in their week-long program included meetings with MFA youth ambassador Tijmen Rooseboom, UN youth representatives Hajar Yagkoubi and other Dutch youth advocates, training on Human Rights Mechanisms, social media, communications, and workshops with Accenture. Highly valuable for all participants was their acquaintance and exchange with peers from other countries. Contacts established during the 2019 GAA GYMU continue to inspire and connect youth advocates across countries until this day.

3.5. CONTRIBUTION TO THE CORE INDICATORS FOR DIALOGUE & DISSENT

In line with the additional guidance on reporting on Dialogue & Dissent (D&D) programs provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in November 2017, the GAA sees its contribution to the D&D core indicators in 2019 as indicated in the table below. These indicators will also be included in the GAA IATI update of 31 July 2020.

D&D KEY INDICATOR		GAA CONTRIBUTION	
DD1	# of laws, policies and norms, implemented for sustainable and inclusive development	961	# of cases of practice change by government, private sector and key leaders to which the GAA program contributed in 2019. Practice change is understood as improved implementation of laws, policies and norms for sustainable and inclusive development - as a result of the GAA program.
DD2	# of laws, policies and norms/attitudes, blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development	304	# of cases of policy change by government, private sector and key leaders to which the GAA program contributed in 2019. Policy change is understood as a positive change (improvement, adoption, amendment, blocking or rejection) in laws, policies and norms/attitudes that affect sustainable and inclusive development - as a result of the GAA program.
DD3	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or creating space to engage	255	# of times that CSOs and CSO networks succeed in 2019 in creating space for CSO demands and positions through agenda setting , influencing the debate and/or creating space to engage - as a result of the GAA program.
DD5	# of CSOs with increased L&A capacities	32	# of contracted CSOs involved in the implementation of the GAA program in 2019 and supported with capacity strengthening for L&A, with CAT scores that indicate an increase in organizational capacities for L&A.
		53	# of contracted CSOs involved in the implementation of the GAA program in 2019 (not including the Dutch alliance organisations and their local offices and/or branches) and supported with capacity strengthening for L&A.
		2.540	# of non-contracted CSOs, involved in the GAA program in 2019, including but not limited to CBOs, CSO networks, youth groups and girls' clubs.
DD6	# of CSOs included in SPs programmes	53	# of contracted CSOs involved in the implementation of the GAA program in 2019 (not including the Dutch alliance organisations and their local offices and/or branches) and supported with capacity strengthening for L&A.
		2.540	# of non-contracted CSOs, involved in the GAA program in 2019, including but not limited to CBOs, CSO networks, youth groups and girls' clubs.

GIRLS
ADVOCACY
ALLIANCE



4. THEORY OF CHANGE

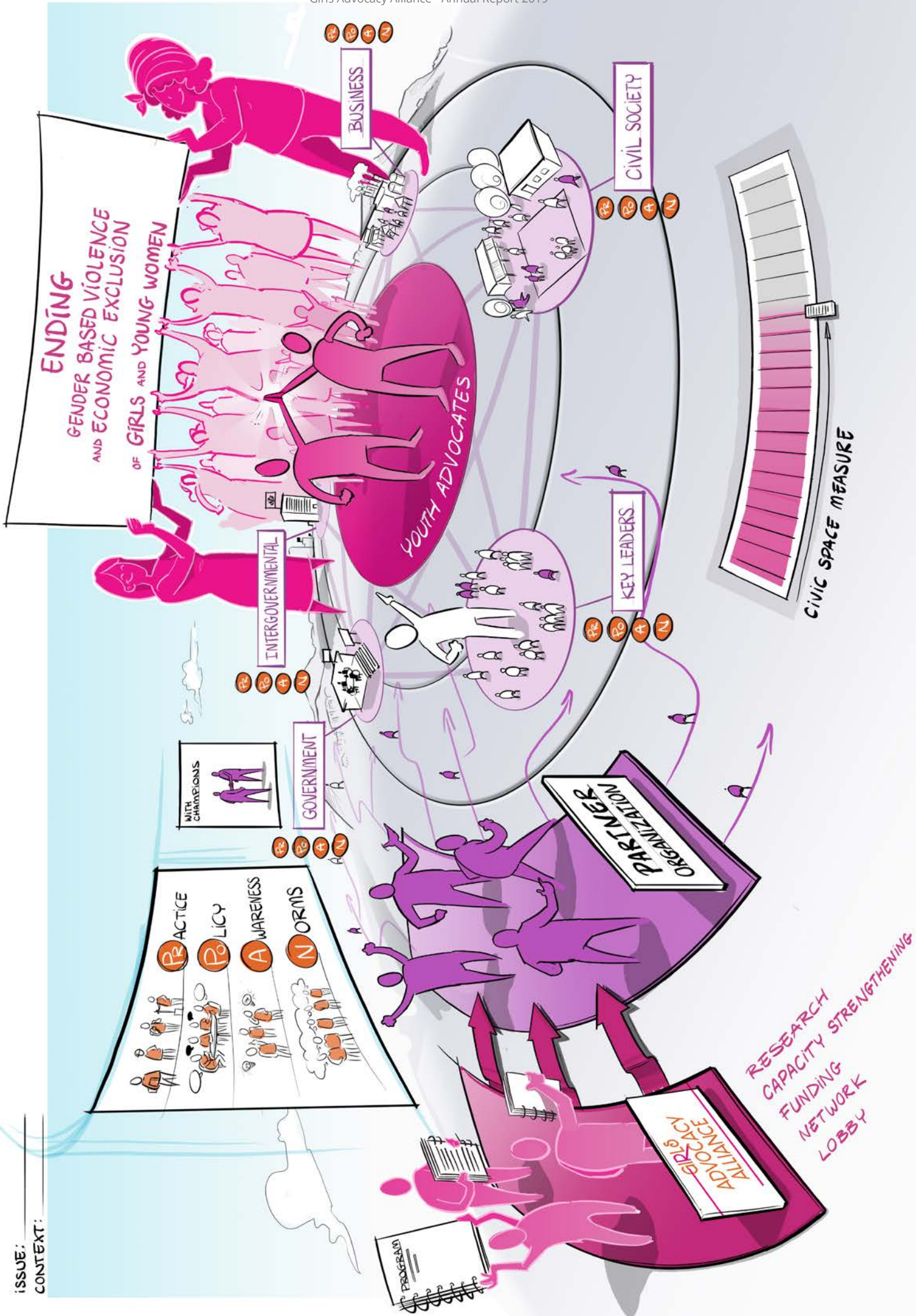
As part of their annual planning process, GAA teams regularly assess the validity and relevance of the assumptions and the pathways of change of their contextualized Theories of Change. As an outcome of these assessments, most teams fine-tuned one or more of the assumptions of their ToCs and/or made adjustments to the pathways of change. Overall, as confirmed by the Mid Term Review, most assumptions remain valid and relevant. The outcomes of the program moreover do not provide arguments to change the order and nature of changes as outlined in the overall Theory of Change of the GAA. The past years of program implementation did however yield new insights and critical reflections on the Theory of Change. These were presented in the Annual Plan for 2020 of the alliance, which was submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in October 2019.

The key lessons learned on how change works in policy and decision-making processes around GAA issues of gender-based violence and economic empowerment summarize as follows:

- Policy change in practice in GAA program countries does not evolve in a linear manner, as suggested by the agenda setting – policy change – practice change trichotomy.
- Local level government agencies and traditional and religious leaders play an important role in bridging the ‘implementation gap’ that exists in GAA program countries between formal policies and actual implementation and practices; especially if girls and young women are brought into local policy-making spaces.
- The shape and pace of processes of (policy) change also depend on context-specific configurations of political power (e.g. the presence of parliamentary opposition or dominant ruling coalitions) and the extent to which the issues at stake are rooted in cultural and religious beliefs and norms.
- Resistance from conservative and opposing forces (state and non-state) has been stronger than anticipated at the time of ToC development.
- In most GAA program countries, social norms change encompasses interplay between customary law and formal law, or in other words, between traditional and religious leaders and (local) political actors. The exact nature of these interactions is context specific.
- Risks for negative publicity, image damage and loss of profit and/or productivity seem stronger motivators for larger corporates than business cases that outline the gains (in profit, HR retention and/or productivity) that can be made by realizing decent work principles of fair income, equal opportunities and safe workplaces for women.
- The role of youth advocates, notably in the case of GAA girls and young women, has remained underexposed in the GAA ToC.

The original Theory of Change still serves its main purposes for the current program as a suitable internal and external communication tool and overall umbrella supporting the steering of the alliance at the overall level. Rather than an entirely new Theory of Change therefore, the alliance developed a ‘discussion piece’ that integrates the outcomes of the review process, notably the influence of context and the role of youth advocates – two elements that were found to be missing in the original visual. The visualization of the reflection process of the Theory of Change is presented below.

ISSUE:
CONTEXT:



5. COLLABORATION, HARMONIZATION AND LEARNING

5.1. COLLABORATION AND HARMONIZATION

Regular contacts and exchange between GAA organizations (and their partners) and Dutch Embassies in program countries continued in 2019, building on positive contacts established in previous years. Embassy representatives participated in monitoring, planning and review meetings of Alliance Program Teams (APTs), including assessment of external contexts. Embassies also actively participated in several events and presentations (co-)organized by the alliance, such as the National Economic Dialogue for Girls and Young Women in Uganda, the launch of the GAA Private Sector Study Report in Kenya and the African Girls and the Law Report in Addis Ababa, the workshop with traditional and religious leaders (champions of change) in Ghana, the Gender Mainstreaming Symposium in the Philippines and the RMG Business Case in Bangladesh. On many of these occasions, the Embassy explicitly and publicly spoke out for girls' and young women's causes in support of GAA advocacy.

GAA organisations also participated in exchange meetings and linking and learning sessions organized by Dutch embassies in the context of the Dialogue & Dissent framework and/or broader civil society engagement, such as the African Union dialogue and framework for civic space at the AU in Ethiopia. As a result of these interactions, meaningful exchange of information and contacts between the GAA and Dutch embassies took place in Uganda, Philippines, Kenya, Ethiopia, Ghana, Bangladesh and Bangkok (through the GAA Asia team).

Direct collaboration beyond information exchange has proved challenging due to varying strategic priorities, limited capacity for more intensive collaboration at the side of Embassies and lack of a clear vision on collaboration at the side of local GAA organizations. Positive developments were reported in 2019 however:

- The director of the Social Development Directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during her visit to Uganda met and interacted with youth advocates supported by the GAA.
- A delegation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Dutch Embassy visited the GAA program in Kibra-Nairobi, Kenya.
- In Ghana, the Dutch Embassy has been instrumental in facilitating linkages with the National House of Chiefs and with Queen Mothers.
- In the Philippines, the Dutch Embassy and the GAA collaborated on a mapping of opportunities in Business Process Outsourcing in Travel and Tourism Industries. The Embassy moreover endorsed the alliance to the Dutch Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines.

Active engagement was also noted with the Permanent missions in Geneva and New York on side events during the 30th anniversary of the CRC in Geneva and the HLPF in New York, and with the Dutch Ambassador on Work and Youth, Tijmen Rooseboom. In the Netherlands, GAA has shared its action plans and updates about ongoing advocacy actions with contact persons at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In the regular policy dialogues with the Ministry, possibilities for greater alignment (including on the new initiative of Win Win Strategies) have been discussed. Many of the advocacy initiatives implemented by GAA parties are also coordinated with other CSO platforms such as WO=MEN and at the Economic and Social Council (SER). The Ministry is involved in these platforms.

In 2020, the alliance will continue to build on abovementioned linkages for further alignment and collaboration in program countries as well as at the level of international fora and the Netherlands.

5.2. CHALLENGES

Following up on recommendations by the Mid Term Review in 2018, efforts were made in 2019 to limit the number of policy areas per program component, and to further align advocacy

initiatives of the various organizations. Although this contributed to stronger focus in countries like Uganda, actual adaptive programming proved time consuming due to (financial) compliance requirements at different levels. Weak integration between national level advocacy and efforts aimed at international accountability mechanisms was also signaled as a challenge by the MRT. In 2019, increased integration was observed, notably the UPR and VNR processes and the UN CRC, as a result of deliberate and well-targeted activities by the International APT to engage, support and facilitate national APTs in HRM processes. This did not only lead to articulated and participatory contributions on girls' and young women's issues to various reports to international accountability processes, but also to the inclusion of these observations and calls in final conclusions and reports. APTs moreover actively used these statements to further their advocacy towards national governments. An example in case is the ECOWAS court ruling on the ban on education for pregnant girls and teenage mothers, that was brought forward to the ECOWAS court by Sierra Leonean CSOs and eventually used by these CSOs in their continued advocacy towards their national Ministry of Education.

Investments in further strengthening of the quality of outcome data, including the development of an interactive data visualization tool (Power BI) paid off, and are expected to contribute positively to the effectiveness of the Final Term Evaluation process.

The alliance also recognized room for improvement in cross-country linking, learning and exchange. Steps were made in 2018 to address this challenge, notably the production of a learning booklet and three brief documentaries in the context of the Mid Term Review, based on advocacy cases from the program. In addition, in January and February 2019, regional Learning Meetings were convened in Addis Ababa and Bangkok where GAA organizations shared lessons learned and experiences.

5.3. LEARNING

The GAA has a structured learning agenda linked to the key assumptions of the GAA Theory of Change and centered around three main learning topics with related underlying learning questions. In 2019 learning took place by APTs on each of these three topics and underlying learning questions through a wide variety of learning activities, such as country learning and exchange sessions, community reflection meetings, development of case studies, cross-country exchange visits, research and evaluation studies. Through the decentralized structure of the learning agenda, APTs have specified their learning activities based on the specific learning needs per APT.

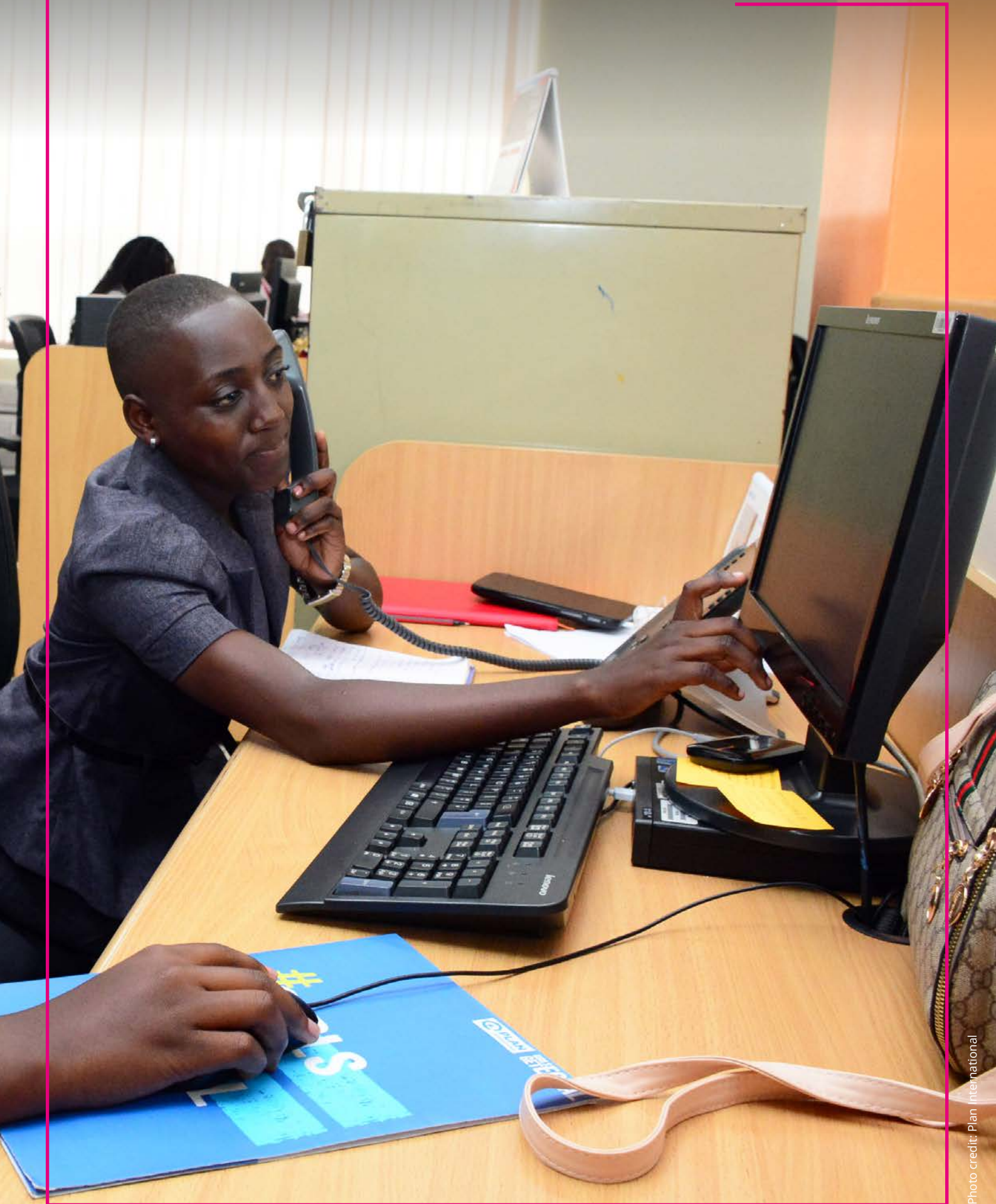
Next to new findings by the APTs on the three main topics (role of social norms change, the role of civil society in advocating for gender equality and the interconnectedness of GBV and EE), experience in working with youth advocates has also given more insights for various APTs in the possibilities and importance of this aspect for achieving change. The GAA team in Kenya for instance reported that girl-led forums were found to be effective to address negative social norms and the Ethiopia team expressed that the use of theatre (drama) by youth is a stronger advocacy approach than any other means to teach the community. The GAA Regional Africa team monitored and documented best practices in youth engagement and how to create and sustain space for youth activism particularly in addressing gender issues and self-safeguarding.

Other important learning relates to working in networks and collaboration with like-minded CSOs. Several APTs reported positive experiences with this approach in 2019. Nepal for instance confirmed that raising issues collectively through a CSO network was very powerful and that local governments are more receptive for cases of human rights violations, HTP and child marriage when these are brought forward by a network, rather than by a single organisation or a group of individuals. When networks speak with a common voice and represent a large number of community members, they are able to increase pressure on the government for policy implementation. The team from Bangladesh as well, reported based on their experience that the "collective voice is stronger than a single voice".

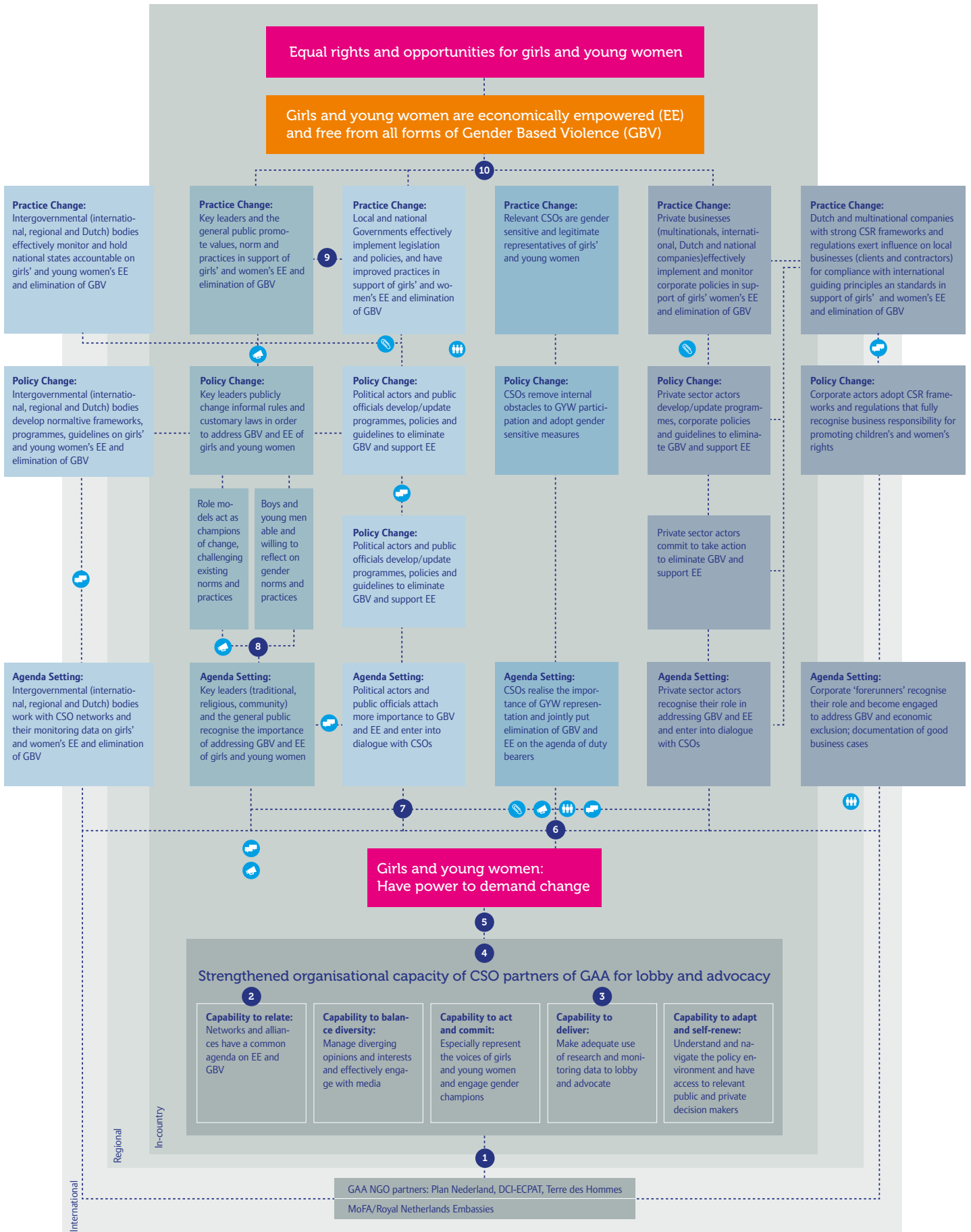
In addition, engagement with the Private Sector yielded important lessons learned. It was

observed that change here doesn't always follow the usual sequence of agenda-setting, policy change, practice change. Factories, engaged in the development of the RMG business case, were keen on taking actions and implementing some "good practices" before making changes in their corporate policies. Another lesson learned from working with the RMG sector was that business cases alone aren't enough for businesses to introduce changes in the workplace. More than that, factories need support with follow-up activities, such as capacity building for staff members, expertise in revising corporate policies, etc.

Next to learning activities at APT level, additional activities were also organized at international level. In 2019 the GAA Desk has brought together all research reports and other inputs on the GAA learning questions so far and made these available for sharing across countries and teams. Two regional learning meetings were organized in February and March (Addis Ababa and Bangkok), where Alliance Program Teams from all program countries shared lessons learned and exchanged experiences across countries. Webinars were organized on the GAA Learning Agenda and the PME system in which many APTs participated. This positive experience confirmed the added value and potential of webinars as learning and exchange tool within the alliance.



Annexe I: 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.

Annexe II. Key learning questions of the Girls Advocacy Alliance

ISSUE	LEARNING QUESTION	SPECIFIC LEARNING QUESTIONS (PROPOSED)
Social norms	How do gender discriminatory social norms change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which specific social norms are mostly influencing individual attitudes and behaviour towards the specific GAA issues (such as, child marriage, FGM, sexual violence, access to post-primary education and TVET, decent work and entrepreneurship) • What is the influence of (new and traditional) media on processes of social norms change? • What is the influence of boys and men on processes of social norms change? • How do traditional and religious leaders become motivated to act as champions of change for social norms of gender equality?
Role of civil society	How do broad and effective civil society coalitions advocating for gender equality develop?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which civil society actors are most willing and able to act as 'convener' of broader civil society coalitions? • Which kind of inter-organizational structures and arrangements characterize effective civil society coalitions? • How to involve non-traditional civil society actors (such as, religious groups) in a civil society coalition based upon a clear agenda for gender equality? • What are the most effective responses of civil society coalitions to restrictive measures undertaken by government reducing the operating space for civil society?
GBV and economic exclusion	How can governments and private sector actors effectively integrate anti-GBV measures in economic policies and programs and vice versa?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What examples of effective economic policies and programmes which have in-built anti-GBV measures do we know of? • What are the incentives for political leaders and decision-makers to integrate anti-GBV and economic empowerment measures into single laws, policies and programmes? • What kind of economic policies and programmes offer the best opportunities for including anti-GBV issues? • What kind of protection policies and programmes offer the best opportunities for including economic empowerment issues?

GIRLS ADVOCACY ALLIANCE

www.girlsadvocacyalliance.org



Girls first

Plan International Nederland
Stadhouderskade 60
1072 AC Amsterdam

Tel: +31 (0)20-5495555
www.plannederland.nl

**DEFENCE for
CHILDREN**



Defence for Children – ECPAT
Hooglandse Kerkgracht 17G
2312 HS Leiden

Tel: +31 (0)71-516 09 80
www.defenceforchildren.nl

terre des hommes 
stopt kindermisbruik

Terre des Hommes
Zoutmanstraat 42 -44
2518 GS Den Haag

Tel: +31 (0)70-310 5000
www.terredeshommes.nl



Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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