

**NORWEGIAN CHURCH AID
STRATEGY TO SUPPORT
PARTNERS IN EASTERN CONGO
TO REDUCE GENDER BASED
VIOLENCE**

2010 -2015

**Women's rights are human rights –when women's, girls',
men and boys' human rights are promoted, respected
and protected, gender equality is achieved.**

IASC gender handbook in Humanitarian action (2007)ACRONOMYS

ACT: Action by Churches Together; a network of individual churches and organizations affiliated with the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation. ACT coordinates development work, emergency preparedness and assistance globally.

CNDP: National Congress for the Defense of the People; a political armed militia in the Democratic Republic of Congo

DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo

DHS: Demographic and Health Surveys

DNH: Do No Harm; a tool for improving humanitarian effectiveness by ensuring that aid is given in a way that avoids feeding into local conflict dynamics

EU: European Union

FARDC: Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo

FBOs: Faith Based Organizations

FDLR: Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda; a Rwandan rebel group fighting in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo

IDPs: Internally Displaced People

MONUC: United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Congo

NCA: Norwegian Church Aid

NCA GL: Norwegian Church Aid, Great Lakes office

NCA HQ: Norwegian Church Aid, Head Office

PARECO: The Coalition of Congolese Patriotic Resistance; a movement claiming to unite non-Rwandophone peoples as well as some Rwandophone Hutu of North Kivu

RDF: Rwandan Defense Forces

UN: United Nations

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Introduction

This five year strategy sets out the main commitment and expected results NCA wants to achieve in collaboration with its partners in North and South Kivu by 2015 on gender based violence (GBV). It is firmly based in ongoing work and achievements, NCA's mandate and Global Strategic Plan for 2010-2015¹. The epidemic of GBV in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is well documented. Dedicated efforts over the past years from the government, international partners, local and national organizations have gone into understanding the phenomena, preventing further violence and providing healing and support to survivors.

NCA seeks to promote a just world through empowering rights-holders and challenging duty-bearers to take responsibility to guarantee human rights, promote justice and ensure the dignity of all people. It is NCA's belief that all human beings are created in God's image and are equals with the same basic rights and obligations. Mandated by the churches in Norway, NCA is a faith based organization and in the framework of professional development standards and practices, performs specific tasks related to diaconal work and development.

NCA works through partners in long-term development interventions, emergency assistance and speaking out against social injustice through advocacy, campaigns and communication to uphold human dignity and justice. In its work NCA is committed to a rights based approach and seeks to ensure that environmental sustainability and "Do No Harm" principles are integrated into all aspects of its work.

Achievements and Lessons learnt from NCA engagement in DRC on Gender Based Violence

Since 1994, NCA has worked with civil society and faith-based networks in the Great Lakes region of Africa to empower rights-holders through civic education and women's literacy programs, income-generating projects, gender and rights-awareness programming. As well, NCA has provided humanitarian assistance such as water and sanitation and provided psycho-social, medical and socio-economic reintegration services to GBV survivors.

NCA's work on GBV in Eastern Congo has been anchored in the Global Strategy for 2005-2009² and in the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, 'Women, Peace and Security' and its articles that call for protection of vulnerable populations and medical, psycho-social and reintegration services for survivors.

Through local NGOs, faith-based groups and local women's' organizations, NCA has supported the provision of services for survivors of GBV, including group counseling and socio-economic reintegration with skills-training, literacy and rights awareness and civic education, and medical care and assistance. NCA has supported a model for transition

¹ This strategy is also based on the wider framework of conventions and documents that make up the national and international standards in regards to gender equality, women's empowerment and commitment to ending gender based violence. These include the Congolese Constitution, the 2006 DRC penal code revision, the emerging DRC National 1325 Action plan and the emerging Gender Parity law, CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action, Millennium Declaration, Millennium Development Goals (3 and 5) and UN SCRs 1325, 1820, 1888, 1612.

² Global Strategic Plan 2005-2009, Chapter 5.4

housing for survivors, providing essential medical and psycho-social follow-up in Bukavu. A transition house has been opened in Goma. NCA has also challenged duty-bearers, such as police, military and local religious and traditional leaders by training in gender equality and the articles and application of UNSCR 1325.

However, some challenges exist for NCA's engagement with its partners in Eastern Congo. The main three are sustainability, coordination and a deepening of the use of a right-based approach. These three aspects will be addressed in this strategy by strengthening the programming done to provide services for survivors (psycho-social and socio-economic reintegration) and by prevention efforts (training on 'Women, Peace and Security' issues or gender equality issues). These efforts will be enhanced and made coherent by building links to institutional and state-run services and in that way contribute to a strengthening of the state run systems. Improved coordination between NCA's operations in Bukavu and Goma will be sought in addition to more coordination and coherence between NCA and its partners, so as to avoid duplication of efforts or stand alone initiatives. And lastly, through a strengthened rights-based programming, NCA must address more strongly fundamental human and women's rights guaranteed by the DRC constitution and by other international and national legal instruments.

NCA's niche and potential: faith based, network connections and legitimacy

NCA's legitimacy and added value as an actor in Eastern Congo comes from the identity as a faith based organization and its legitimacy when working with faith based actors, as well as its ability to link up to and facilitate relationships between faith based networks

NCA has well-established partnerships with the far-reaching and potentially powerful faith based organization (FBO) networks of millions of people throughout the Eastern Congo, including some of the hardest to reach geographical areas and within powerful political and economic institutions. These links also extend to other potential key strategic partners, such as the Islamic and Catholic communities and the women's movement. NCA will continue to support strong opinion and knowledge-based organizations in both faith communities and in women's, human rights and media associations that have the capacity to further support, empower, and connect with vulnerable and rural poor populations.

NCA has a regional presence in the Great Lakes region, as well as in Eastern Africa, which together with its partners, it uses to link resource and knowledge rich organizations to faith based networks, to forge knowledge and constituency, promoting transformative messages of empowerment and justice, supporting the development of active citizenship in women and men

Facilitating and encouraging alliance building, knowledge sharing and joint action is a role NCA has started to play and will develop on. Great potential lie in encouraging and supporting duty-bearers to partner with rights-holders to address the root causes of conflict and sexual violence³ as well as to work together to combat impunity and ensure women's rights at the local level.

³ A 2007 evaluation of the NCA Great Lakes program found that NCA had not fully explored the potentials with its integrated approach and that especially in regards to working with *alleviating the effects of the sexual violations against women it had not been able to link the knowledge and resources on the ground to higher levels of policy influencing and campaigning against these crimes.*

Religion plays an important part in the lives on the Congolese. Ninety percent associate with a formal organized religion, 50 percentage Catholic, 20 percentage Protestant, 10% Muslim and 10% Kimbanguist⁴. Religious preaching often centers on spirituals salvation of people, peace and prosperity rather than justice, rights and equality. Pastors and Imams often focus on the need to obey traditional Christian and Islamic practices such as abstinence, refraining from drinking and criminal activity. Rarely are the messages sources of empowerment and liberation for both men and women. Neither are own structures and practices examined in the light of a message of equal value of women and men. To date religion and faith based actors have not had an overall positive impact on promoting women's rights nor in addressing GBV, including domestic violence to a sufficient degree. Faith institutions have to a small degree started to examine their own teachings, preaching and counseling and its effects on gender inequality and GBV. NCA's niche here is to challenge and support faith based organizations in moving towards a world view which is based on ideas of empowerment, liberation, justice and equality whilst remaining important institutions of healing and hope. This is a enormous challenge as faith institutions and its leaders are part of a wider society, which is deeply embedded in corrupt systems and dealings.

Context analysis: an overview of the situation of gender based violence in the Eastern Congo

DRC has experienced thirteen years of war and upheaval through the involvement of a complex set of national and international actors. Although some hope for an end to the conflict was born in 2006 and 2007 due to general elections and the creation of a new government, involving many former rebel leaders, the Eastern Congo has in the past two years seen an acute escalation in the conflict. North and South Kivu are engulfed in a severe humanitarian crisis, one which is increasingly well known to the world.

The DRC is the third largest state in Africa with the fourth largest population, currently estimated at sixty-six million⁵. Its vast natural resources are coveted by international trading and industrial markets⁶. Together with its rich agricultural and untapped hydroelectric power potential, this attracts internal as well as external economic and political interests, which to a large extent drives the conflict. The DRC is afflicted by not only the "acute" crisis in the east, but also by "chronic" problems associated with a brutal colonial legacy, a failed state, impunity, unresolved land issues, the absence of rule of law and, for the majority of the population, no access to basic social services or infrastructure. Most women and girls, as well as men and boys, live daily throughout the DRC in a context of massive and widespread denials of their human rights.

Gender based violence: Women and Men, Girls and Boys

⁴ The Kimbanguist Church is a church indigenous to DR Congo, founded by Simon Kimbangu in the 1920s. Its followers eschew politics and embraces a puritan ethic, rejecting the use of violence, polygamy, magic and witchcraft, alcohol, tobacco, and dancing. Its members are widely engaged in social services, agriculture, education and healing. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/317916/Kimbanguist-Church>

⁵ Human Development Report 2009, UNDP

⁶ Such as copper, cobalt, cassiterite, diamonds, gold, and uranium.

Over the past years, the nature of the conflict in Eastern Congo has come to the world's attention. In addition to the very high levels of violence, looting and killings of civilians, the wide spread use of sexual violence and torture as a near risk free and effective intimidation and control tool has become well known. It is estimated that over 5,000,000 have died due to the direct and indirect effects of the war.⁷

Driving the epidemic of GBV against women and men are a number of factors. Underlying factors are traditional and deeply-held beliefs and value systems in regards to the devaluation of women and girls leading to highly unequal gender. In addition are factors such as a culture of impunity, the nature of the conflict itself with an extremely difficult geographical and logistical context. This have prevented the Congolese state, international and national actors from providing security and protection for civilians, particularly for the thousands upon thousands of women and girls who have been raped and experiences other forms of sexual torture throughout war in the DRC. Some reports have estimated that almost 50% of GBV survivors in the DRC are girls under the age of 18⁸. In the first quarter of 2009 a higher number of rapes were reported by UNFPA in both North and South Kivu than in all of 2008, mainly due to the joint military actions of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (FARDC), Rwandan Defence Forces (RDF) and the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP).

Although women represent the overwhelming number of affected by GBV, men and boys are also deeply affected. There is a growing acknowledgement that men and boys are also sexually violated and tortured by all the different sides in the conflict, to humiliate, pacify, disempower and shame to the largest extent.

The widespread use of GBV as a weapon of war is beginning to demonstrate a "spill over" effect into the civilian population, as the percentage of rapes and violations done by civilians increase. Returned child soldiers and other combats including other disempowered youths and men, are part of a growing culture of violence where the atrocities continuously find new and horrifying methods. The social fabric of the society is quickly unraveling.

In an environment where conflict has led to the dissolution of the state and widespread culture of impunity and corruption, there is also no accountability or application of laws and penal codes aimed at fighting sexual violence against women and men. No high-level generals have been prosecuted and access to justice for victims in near unobtainable, due to corruption and inaccessibility. Many women and men do not seek out assistance through the justice system as well due to lack of knowledge, expense and shame.

One of the worst results of the dissolution of the state and its services is the fistula and obstetric trauma epidemic in North and South Kivu and the high rate of maternal deaths. The mortality rate rose from 870 per 100,000 births in 1995 to 1,289 per 100,000 in 2001.⁹ In areas where the conflict has been the most intense, the eastern provinces,

7 Lancet, UN (2006-2009)

8 Ending Mass Rape in the Democratic Republic of Congo: The Role of the International Community, SCIAF, 2008 http://www.congoweeek.org/pdf/ending_mass_rape.pdf

9 Humanitarian Action Report 2007, UNICEF, http://www.unicef.org/har07/index_37592.htm

rates as high as 3000 deaths per 100,000 births have been recorded.¹⁰ While it is true that there are a disquietingly large number of female victims of rape, traumatic birth events also increase the incidence of fistula and severe chronic gynecological destruction. The number one cause of fistula and related socio-economic problems for women is due to the inability of society to meet their basic reproductive health needs.¹¹

Both raped and women with fistula face social stigmatization and ostracization from their communities and their families. Children born out of rapes are often unwanted and grow up in a social and cultural vacuum.

Church communities, particularly the Catholic and Protestant communities are the largest providers of health and education services in the DRC. Although there is a lingering altruistic aim in the provision of these services, they still must be bought and very often fall under the same corrupt structures as in the rest of society. As much as 75% of the medical clinics or hospitals in South Kivu do not have the fully trained personnel capable of providing a holistic and complete quality response to a GBV survivor. The government and its partners are limited by the lack of resources to ensure coverage, provide training and provide materials exasperated by the constantly shifting focus of the conflict and difficult logistics

Although the fact that GBV in the DRC is an epidemic and that it has become an epidemic because of the continued conflict and the nature of the conflict, sexual violence against women will not end with the end of the conflict as the sexual violence against women is already rampant in the civilian population. Corruption and the weak position of women in economic, political and religious life will enable GBV to continue.

Outlook for peace?

It is not clear what the status of conflict and destabilization will be in the next one to five years. The situation in eastern Congo seems to be constantly and rapidly evolving with the recent events of 2008 and 2009 having significantly reshaped the political and military landscape in the Kivus. An optimistic scenario is that with growing international pressure to seek a regional solution the larger scale conflict will end. However, although widespread and larger-scale military actions end, the huge presence of small-arms, currently armed militia and the presence of "former" soldiers who have gone through weak demobilization and reintegration processes will continue to engage in smaller and more isolated fighting throughout a post-conflict reconstruction phase.

A less optimistic scenario would entail that all current peace efforts fail and the currently armed groups that have recently been dispersed regroup and begin efforts to retake previously held areas. It is clear that as long as the war continues, violence and the lack of stability in communities and the government will contribute to the continued dominance of impunity and the continued marginalization of women socially and economically.

Charting direction: NCA's responds

¹⁰ Women for Women quoting Oxfam, 2006

¹¹ Sexual violence-related fistulas in the Democratic Republic of Congo, International Journal of Gynecology and Obstetrics, 2008

The goals of this strategy NCA are:

Facilitate and provide an adequate holistic assistance and support to women, girls, boys and men, survivors or in other ways affected by Gender Based Violence due to the conflict in North and South Kivu.

Promote equity between men and women and contribute to address and eliminate gender based violence in South and North Kivu

Our main specific objectives are:

Survivors of GBV have access to medical and psychosocial assistance and are safely reintegrated into their society

Faith based institutions and ACT partners address GBV in their own constituencies and build up gender sensitive structures for reintegration of survivors

Faith based organizations and other institutions in the local communities advocate for the right to justice.

Operations: where and how will we do it?

To reach the goals and objectives articulated in this strategy, NCA will focus on the following two strategies or frames developed through a consultative process with partners, government officials, UN agencies, sister organizations and survivors of GBV and through established and new partners in North and South Kivu. These are:

Geographic focus and target beneficiaries

Cooperating partners, defined as Churches and faith based organizations, core and resource partners and media and advocacy partners.

1. Geographic focus and right holders and duty bearers:

The geographic focus on this strategy is mainly in the eastern provinces of the DRC, particularly in South and North Kivu.

The main right holders are women, girls, boys and men who have survived or experienced gender based violence, Irrespective of them being rural or urban community members, IDP's, sex slaves or child soldiers

The main duty bearers are faith based institutions and communities, religious leaders, local and provincial level authorities, ACT partners, other national and international actors and the UN system.

2. NCA's cooperating partners:

Based upon NCA's mandate and way of working, NCA will focus on supporting, strengthening and engaging partners in order to promote sustainability and local ownership. However in the initial phase of this strategy NCA will be partly

operational, especially in Goma. Existing program partners in the area of Gender Based violence will be integrated into this overall strategy in order to present a holistic and flexible NCA intervention. The partners NCA has identified are:

Churches, faith based organizations and ACT members:

NCA will facilitate and support faith and community-based organizations in carrying-out quality programs and initiatives aimed at addressing the root causes of gender based violence within their own institutions as well as in communities and build up gender sensitive structures for reintegration of survivors.

Core and Resource Partners:

NCA will ensure care, support and rehabilitation for survivors and promote reintegration in local communities. In addition support rooted advocacy on issues of GBV.

Media and Advocacy partners:

NCA will work with newspapers, theater groups, women groups who through their ways of communication can promote awareness, influence attitudes and convey messages related to the situation as well as promoting hope and trust in the ability to change. NCA has a special task to hold duty-bearers accountable based upon information from: research and analysis, advocacy, communications, coordination and international, regional, national and local networking.

What will we do? Our main objectives are:

1. Survivors of GBV have access to medical and psychosocial assistance and are safely reintegrated into their society

Survivors of sexual violence need safe referral, medical attention including surgery in addition to safe spaces for recovery. An important basis for a safe return is the acquirement of skills that promotes return with dignity back to their communities. NCA is already working with partners on providing medical assistance, psychosocial help, skills training and protection through several projects and transit houses like Dorca's House in Bukavu and Lydia's House in Goma. There is a difference in stages between the existing programs in Bukavu (The Panzi hospital and Dorcas' house) and the program in Goma. NCA will link the experiences and partners in Bukavu in order to assist the building up of structures and interventions in Goma in a cooperative manner, using the best practices from Bukavu and at the same time greatly expand the capacity to assist more women and men.

These houses are today a source for learning and strategizing and will be used not only as shelters for women, but also to train and capacitate those working with the psychosocial assistance for survivors. At this stage, these houses are only for women. In the long term, NCA will see how one can build up similar adequate centers for men.

The capacity of first and second line of assistance needs to be expanded and strengthened. This includes the strengthening of capacity of partners to deliver these services as well as planning for long term and sustainable skills training programs for

the women. It further needs a strengthening of the community aspect of this work and to ensure a safe return when possible. Structures and standards will be built up in accordance with the requirements of the UN systems and clusters. Along this main line of intervention, NCA will seek to build programs of prevention in relation to the police and the military. NCA has already structures in the communities of Bukavu and Goma to continue and expand on this work.

In order for survivors to safely access medical and psychosocial assistance an encompassing capacity development of the different actors and institutions will be initiated. This is a work that has already started in Bukavu and where NCA can assist and facilitate and use the experiences and training programs that are developed in Bukavu to be adapted to the Goma situation. The training will build upon the available material from different actors, as well as government strategies or UN guidelines where existing. We will seek to include men in the training in order to be able to accommodate the needs and rights of both women and men.

NCA will also support the local authorities and UN clusters, where gaps have been identified, to addressing through its partners, the gaps in the state-led multi-sectored response for survivors and reproductive rights. This can involve capacity development of personnel including health personnel

Indicative Activities and interventions:

- Expanding of facilities for medical care, psychosocial interventions and capacity building
- Expand literacy and micro-enterprise training
- Ensuring integration of assistance to boys and men suffering from GBV in the planning
- Building up of a safe "return with dignity program"
- Strengthen the activities at Dorcas's house in Bukavu and strengthen and expand Lydia's house in Goma and other facilities to be used for medical and psychosocial rehabilitation
- Train police and military to address and engage on protection and prevention of SGBV and other forms of GBV
- Develop and support the existing training programs and promote safe areas for complaints SGBV and professional interviewing and handling of cases brought to the police.
- Support the training of medical personnel from rural clinics and hospitals to ensure coverage and quality care in coordination with government authorities and the UN.
- Coordinate and advocate with medical coordinators and state officials to promote a sustainable community-based model of first-responders (centralized at Health Centers)
- Integrate improved maternal health care in the training and capacity building as well as in the interventions and promote the use of trained midwives.

2. Faith based institutions and ACT partners address GBV in their own constituencies and build up gender sensitive structures for reintegration of survivors

Faith based organizations have a wide network of contacts in both rural and urban areas. It is the main institutions for many to supply medical services, schooling and spiritual guidance in a very demanding environment. NCA will facilitate and support the faith based institutions in addressing the root causes of gender based violence within their own structures and in integration of measures to promote equity between women and men within their own constituencies as well as protection strategies of survivors of GBV. This as a strategy to re-address deeply held opinions of the value of women and men, where women, historically and today, are systematically marginalized and devalued.

A second pier of interventions will be to develop the capacity and support the ACT national forum to address GBV and promote active use of the different UN Security Council resolutions that frame the 'Women, Peace and Security' issues (UN SCR 1325,1820,1888,1889),especially the active participation of women and women networks in peace building and conflict resolution as well as in protection measures.

Indicative activities and interventions:

- Support and facilitate a community based implementation of holistic approach to gender inequality and gender discrimination within the partnering faith based organization, including gender analysis and audits.
- Support partnering faith based organization in the implementation of strategies and programs that promote gender equity and address gender based violence.
- Facilitate and develop partnerships between knowledge-based organizations and NCA's traditional partners as well as other networks
- Promote specialized support structures from the faith based partnering organizations that promote care and assistance for women, girls, boys and men who are victims of violence or traumatized by violence.
- Support and promote successful models of reintegration and reconciliation for survivors including the introduction and use of positive rituals via churches and other local institutions
- Support strategies and interventions to fight stigma and discrimination of female survivors of GBV.
- Support dialogue and seminars that include masculinity and/or parenting support
- Promote and support community-level dialogue and consciousness raising discussion and where applicable promote reconciliation between men and women, survivors and their families and communities. (This is a sensitive issue to address and will not be promoted by NCA until further investigations and work is done in order to avoid violating the rights of the survivors.)
- Promote human and women's rights-awareness and realization, as well as political participation.
- Use the Tamar Campaign as one instrument of intervention in South and North Kivu and the region.
- Capacitate and assist faith based institutions to implement a 'code of conduct' within their own constituencies.

3. Faith based organizations and other institutions in the local communities advocate for the right to justice.

There is a general deficiency in the Eastern Congo of human rights and the conditions that promote human dignity. This does not mean that there are not laws in place and frameworks that can be used to address these gaps and promote human rights and women's rights more specifically, but due to a general atmosphere of impunity, these are hard to access and use as instruments of justice.

NCA will support and facilitate alliances between faith based organizations and more specialized resources partners to through rooted advocacy, extend the application of existing rights frameworks and laws that protect and promote women's rights. Linking strong urban networks with the wide, mostly rural networks of the faith based organizations NCA will support and facilitate knowledge and experience exchange to nurture opportunities for synergies and issue based advocacy. Specialized partner organizations with advocacy and communication skills will be selected and communication strategies like newspapers, rural radio and theatre will be used.

Indicative activities and interventions:

- Support successful women's anti-violence advocacy campaigns and movements in North and South Kivu
- Support national and regional faith-based networks and other women's rights associations with a specialty in communication and advocacy
- Support and facilitate development a comprehensive communications and media strategy to raise awareness and promote behavior and attitude change through alliances of faith based organizations and women's organizations.
- Support and promote community dialogue and debates via street theatre productions, print media and rural radio to address long standing issues of land ownership, access and control over natural resources, application of existing legal framework, churches' responsibilities in regards to GBV and address impunity structures and women's participation in peace processes.

How will we work?

Norwegian Church Aid is using a Rights based approach as a basis for its interventions and will promote 'Do No Harm' (DNH) training and as a tool for avoiding escalation of a conflict. Our experience is that DNH is a valuable tool when it is used in a gender sensitive way. This is important in order to avoid that DNH is used as a tool to "Do nothing" to avoid conflicts defined especially by men. If issues are not equally identified by women DNH might be used as a hindrance for equity and equality between women and men.

A separate capacity development plan will be developed in cooperation with the different actors, e.g. faith based institutions, government institutions and relevant UN organizations. This capacity development plan will consist of both theory and praxis in order to be able to measure the results of capacity development. Necessary new partnership for capacity development support will be sought, i.e. strong functioning

knowledge-based organizations such as women's organizations in urban areas of Goma, Bukavu and regional areas (Kigali/Bujumbura)

Norwegian Church Aid use three working methods:

Long term strategies: There are several of the proposed activities in this document that will be following a long term strategy of implementation, addressing long standing development challenges.

Emergency interventions: Our first special objective in this strategy can be characterized as emergency interventions and we will start developing plans and programs immediately.

Advocacy: In most cases, NCA emphasizes rooted advocacy. In the program in the South and North Kivu this will be the basis for advocacy interventions. This means that we will put weight upon addressing advocacy issues that come from our work at the grass root level. We will therefore support advocacy strategies and programs that address faith institutions internally as well as the broad society actors as such.

Other actor and alliances:

To address its specific objectives in this strategy, NCA will extend its efforts in prevention of GBV and protection of women and girls' rights to wider programming in good governance and accountability, peace building and reconciliation, particularly as concerns faith institutions and their gender equal structures and interventions, rights issues like women's access to land and resources and women's and girl's equal right to education

As the state-led national and provincial protection, judicial and security reform efforts inch-forward, there will be a continued need to support the provision of psycho-social and medical care, socio-economic reintegration and assistance for GBV survivors. NCA and its partners will also strengthen linkages to existing civil society and state care models to ensure efficiency, coverage and quality in survivor support.

In its effort to ensure essential services, NCA will coordinate closely with other service providers through the UN and state coordinating bodies to ensure that coverage is achieved in areas of high rates of GBV.

Key linkages and additional programming, will be made at the Great Lakes regional level (Burundi and Rwanda (and possibly Uganda and Tanzania) as well at the national level in DR Congo. The aim with a widened focus of programming and linkages is to improve the long-term impact of programming, build on existing regional or other African initiatives and to have greater influence on national and provincial-level policies. Numerous women's organizations, other civil society organizations and faith-based groups have already begun to operate at the regional-level and are seeking to engage more regularly with their partners and sister organizations through the region.

This is a five years strategy that sets out what NCA wants to achieve in this period based on how NCA reads the situation and its mandate as faith based organization and taking

into account its added value in cooperation with faith based institutions. At the end of this period, in 2015, it is expected that NCA has moved its programming in such a way that allows for adequate and full responses to the very demanding environment which constitutes North and South Kivu. A mid term evaluation will be done after 2 ½ years in addition to close monitoring alone or together with partners. We do not foresee that NCA will exit this area by 2015 and we will therefore in the 5th year do a thorough evaluation of what we have achieved and the premises of continued engagement and presence in the region

Institutional Arrangements

In order for NCA to achieve these objectives over the next five years, appropriate institutional arrangements must be in place.

Ensuring Results

To consolidate the gains of the existing efforts and to achieve the projected outcomes of this strategy NCA GL will have to adapt its institutional framework.

In order to be able to stay accountable to our partners, beneficiaries and donors, NCA is committed to openness and transparency in relation to accounting, contracting, hiring and other internal business procedures. The routines and guidelines laid down in NCA 'Routine and Guidelines for International Cooperation' will be followed. NCA is aware that Great Lakes and North and South Kivu have a demanding environment when it comes to transparency and accountability and corruption. Openness is therefore a prerogative for us in this work. NCA also follows a policy of zero tolerance of corruption.

The programmes operationalizing the strategy will be monitored through the standards of reporting as set out in the Routine and Guidelines. In addition, to sustain visibility and commitment to this area of work, an oversight mechanism, headed by the resident representative and constituting both NCA staff and partners, will meet quarterly to report on specific indicators and discuss progress. The outcome of these meetings will be reported to Head of Section and the International Department on bi-annual basis.

Mechanisms will also be developed to keep staff involved and accountable. Performance appraisal systems with incentives and different forms of recognitions can be part of such an accountability system.

Communication and Advocacy:

NCA will develop a communications and advocacy plan to amplify already achieved results and to maximize the understanding of the work to core and resource partners, ACT partners, international agencies and donors and the NCA as a whole.

This will contribute not only to improved substantive performance, but also expanded funding for gender based violence interventions from internal sources, based on greater

understanding of their development potential. Growing internal commitment will in turn leverage additional funding, setting up a virtuous cycle of result and resource, based upon sound information flows.

As with knowledge management, both communication (sharing of information) and advocacy (promoting and issue) have distinctive elements when used in connection with gender equality and women's rights programming. The terms "gender", "equality" and "human rights" occupy politically contested ground within the development arena and there are many factors that constrain full compliance, and there are many different views on the terminology and methodologies used. The communication and advocacy plan therefore will play a central role in enhanced NCA results by addressing the on-going need for dialogue to build consensus, both internally (primarily for capacity development and organizational change) and externally (primarily for national capacity development, partnership development and resource mobilization).

The plan will comprise key messages (branding), key partnerships, identification of strategic internal and external processes to influence, and how best to do this, with time-lines and indicative resource allocations.

Risk Analysis and Management

Due to the ongoing instable and volatile environment in North and South Kivu working there is connected with demanding security issues and risks. NCA is doing a continuous risk and security analysis on a regular basis, in cooperation with the UN. This will be continued by qualified staff. NCA has a clear definition of roles and responsibilities related to management of risks and security issues.

Human Resources

In order to scale up the work of NCA GL as set out in this strategy, existing human resource capacities must be addressed and expanded. In all these efforts NCA is committed to reaching gender parity and also to advocate for this in its partners.

The strategy will lead to an increased programme activity on GBV and depending on funding; the current staff will be strengthened with gender specialists and program officers both in Bukavu and Goma, in addition to a program coordinator. Extensive capacity development will be part of the first years, so as to develop local capacity to take over and continue the operations in due time. A specialist on advocacy, partnerships and resource mobilization will also be sought, to strengthen these parts of the programme.

Financial Resources

Numerous studies from Eastern Congo over the past years as well as other reports emphasises the need for well funded interventions for gender equality goals. It requires trained staff, detailed performance monitoring, disaggregated statistics and senior gender specialists in the field.

NCA GL will draw on expertise from the NCA HQ to develop a resource mobilization plan to clearly identify who and how NCA will target for funding, both from traditional donors such as the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but also to new sources of funding, such as the EU and various UN funds. A resource mobilization plan will be put in place, featuring: a) Realistic costing of all activities, b) extensive internal resource analysis, c) external resource analysis and d) strong relationships with donors, based on rich flow of information and feedback.

NCA will work carefully with a range of partners to develop high levels of impact, avoiding as much as possible the short-term horizons that will not deliver results. Joint Programmes with ACT partners is a modality that will be explored.

Tracking resources and expenditures

NCA GL will strive to track the resources used under this strategy to fully make visible what has been spent and for what. Ongoing updates and improvements in the NCA financial expenditure system, Maconomy, will contribute to this.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

In order to effectively account for our efforts and show result, monitoring, reporting and evaluations will form the backbone of this strategy.

A base-line study will be conducted under all the objectives for the strategy to establish our point of departure. Similar base-line studies will be done mid-way and at the end of the strategy time. NCA will strive for that this data is sex and age disaggregated where possible.

Reporting on projects will follow the standards of NCA Routine and Guidelines and in accordance to the donor specific requirements.

A mid-term evaluation will be conducted to establish progress and facilitate possible adjustment to the strategy. A final evaluation will be done at the end of the five year period, which will inform NCA type and level of engagement in Eastern Congo after 2015.

Annex A: Methodology for Consultations

The strategy was developed over a period of two months through a process that involved a desk study, phone interviews, beneficiary and survivor interviews, and interviews with NCA staff and their partners' staff. The work was carried out in Kigali and eastern Congo. The Consultant and an NCA team comprised of the NCA/Great Lakes (NCA/GL) Gender Focal Point, the NCA/DRC Program Coordinator and NCA's Gender and GBV Advisor in Oslo and the Good Governance Advisor travelled to South Kivu and North Kivu in the eastern Congo for two weeks. Along with meeting with local staff and one-on-one meetings with key partners, three important formal consultation processes took place:

1. A one-day consultation with other Norwegian NGOs and their key local partners
2. A one-day consultation with religious leaders from South Kivu who represented several protestant congregations and the protestant coordination organization, the *Eglise de Christ du Congo* (ECC), the Islamic community and the Catholic Church.
3. A one-day consultation with NCA's current local partners who represent local NGOs and other community-based organizations (CBOs), particularly women's associations.

Additionally, the team undertook site visits to villages around South Kivu and met with survivors, women's associations involved in literacy and income-generating programs and other rural partners. The team also met with a number of national and international organizations and government officials in both Bukavu and Goma. Finally, the team travelled to Goma and met with NCA staff involved in emergency response water and sanitation program as well as local NCA partners. In Goma, the team also met with survivors and other displaced people in the area.

Annex B: Definitions

Gender– “Refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/ time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a women or a man in a given context. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context. Other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis include class, race, poverty level, ethnic group and age” *“Gender Mainstreaming: Strategy for Promoting Gender Equality Document” - August 2001 – Office of Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, UN.*

Gender Based Violence (GBV) - “any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and that is based on *socially associated differences* between males and females’. As such violence is based on socially ascribed differences, gender-based violence includes, but it is not limited to sexual violence. While women and girls of all ages make up the majority of the victims, men and boys are also both direct and indirect victims. It is clear that the effects of such violence are both physical and psychological, and have long term detrimental consequences for both the survivors and their communities” *ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment 2006. “Addressing Gender-based violence in Humanitarian Emergencies” “Gender –based violence and the role of the UN and its Member States” www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2006/docs/Presentation%20Mr.%20Michel.pdf*

Gender Discrimination:

The act of exclusion, restriction or distinction on the basis of gender identity and gender which has the effect of nullifying or impeding equal treatment or equal access to and control of opportunities and resources.

Gender Equality: “Refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women’s and men’s rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration – recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a “women’s issue” but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men are seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development” *“Gender Mainstreaming: Strategy for Promoting Gender Equality Document” - August 2001 – Office of Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, UN.*

Gender Parity – refers to having equal numbers of women and men, boys and girls in education, health access, political representations, private sector and other sectors of life.

Human rights- are basic rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled and enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other Un Conventions and

Protocols. Examples of rights and freedoms which have come to be commonly thought of as human rights include civil and political rights, such as the right to life and liberty, freedom of expression, and equality before the law; and economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to participate in culture, the right to be treated with respect and dignity, the right to food, the right to work, and the right to education in some countries

RBA: Rights Based Approach; in a rights based approach, human rights determine the relationship between individuals and groups with valid claims (rights holders) and state and non-state actors with correlative obligations (duty bearers). It identifies rights holders and their entitlements and corresponding duty bearers and their obligations, and works towards strengthening the capacities of rights holders to make their claims, and of duty bearers to meet their obligations.

Sexual Violence: "any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work."

Sexual violence can take place in different circumstances and settings. These include coerced sex in marriage and dating relationships, rape by strangers, systematic rape during armed conflict, sexual harassment, sexual abuse of children, sexual abuse of people with mental and physical disabilities, forced prostitution and sexual trafficking, child marriage, denial of the right to use contraception, forced abortion and violent acts against the sexual integrity of women, including female genital cutting and obligatory inspections for virginity. *World report on violence and health, WHO Geneva, 2002*

Women Empowerment: - "Women's empowerment has five components: Women's sense of self-worth; their right to have and to determine choices; their right to have access to opportunities and resources; their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home; and their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally" *Guidelines on Women's Empowerment". Document prepared by the Secretariat of the United Nations. Inter-agency task force on the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. <http://www.un.org/popin/unfpa/taskforce/guide/iatfwemp.gdl.html>*

Women's Rights: The human rights of women and of the girl-child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. The full and equal participation of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life, at the national, regional and international levels, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination on grounds of sex are priority objectives of the international community." *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 12 July 1993. A/CONF.157/23. Paragraph 17* [http://www.unhcr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/\(Symbol\)/A.CONF.157.23.En](http://www.unhcr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/(Symbol)/A.CONF.157.23.En)

Annex C: Map of North and South Kivu

