

## **EXPERIENCE AND RELEVANCE**

Three leading Women's Rights Organisations under the leadership of the Lesotho Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (LCN) have collaborated in this action to put forward a strong programme of action for prevention of VAWG and post violence care through: Creation or utilization of safe spaces for women on prevention of VAWG and sensitization of their rights, sharing of experiences, discussing issues and providing support to victims of GBV; Promotion of community dialogues on VAWG, including norms, attitudes and practices that instigate and perpetuate VAWG and; Support for public action and advocacy by women and girls that help reduce acceptance of and break the silence around VAWG. These organisations are; Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA), Federation of Women Lawyers - Lesotho (FIDA) and Gender Links Lesotho (GLL) as main applicants. Each Applicant has an affiliate organisation(s) that will be part of the project implementation.

**1. FIDA** is a member-based organisation of lawyers and community members trained to provide basic legal services at the community level. For the past 30 years, FIDA has a proven track record in the promotion and protection of human rights, particularly those of women and children through our three strand mandate of advocacy for law reform; legal education through translation and simplification of laws and face to face education programmes with community members through FIDA Paralegals and member lawyers; and empowerment through legal action. In this action FIDA will be implementing with Young Christian Student in Lesotho-YCS, Centre for Empowerment and Social Analysis-CESA and Maseru Women Senior Citizens (MWSC). Young Christian Students of Lesotho is an Organisation targeting youth, males and females with empowerment programmes including other emerging issues which affect young people such as early marriages, gender based violence, economic empowerment and assertion of rights. They also capacitate young people to work on life skills programmes so that they can be economically sustainable. Centre for Empowerment and Social Analysis is an organization dealing with training and empowerment of disabled persons. The organization further provides social assistance and care to disabled persons. MWSC deals with victims of dementia, which is one of the disease that is found in the elderly people that causes stigma and discrimination in the selected communities of the project areas

**2. Gender Links Lesotho (GLL)** is a branch of Gender Links (GL), a Southern African Women's Rights Organisation based in Johannesburg, with offices in eight countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). GL is committed to an inclusive, equal and just society in the public and private space in accordance with the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. GL achieves this vision through a people-centred approach that is aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals, Beijing Plus

Twenty and Africa Union Agenda 2063. GL integrates the targets of the Protocol into its four core programmes governance, media, alliance and justice.

The Governance and Media programmes have adopted an approach that develops gender centres of excellence in local government and the media. The programme includes capacity building through reviewing and changing institutional practice to integrate gender, thematic training, initiating specific gender projects, monitoring and evaluation and mainstreaming gender into all programmes.

The justice programme focuses on contributing to knowledge on gender based violence. The programme focuses on intensifying strategic communications training to building sustainable campaigns and providing technical assistance to develop National Action Plans to end gender based violence. Through the programme GL piloted a comprehensive research to measure violence against women.

The Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance is a regional “network of networks” that championed the adoption of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development (2008). The Alliance network is made up of 15 country networks. The Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance therefore advocates for gender transformation, social justice, women empowerment and safety, poverty eradication, gender equity and equality only to mention a few among many other advocated issues. GL will partner with Crime prevention, Rehabilitation, and Re-integration of ex-prisoners Association [CRROA]. CRROA is a registered non-governmental organization in Lesotho, registered in 2010 (registration number 2010/215), to bridge the rift that exists between the victims of crime and their offenders. CRROA further strives to restore kinship among prisoners, ex-convicts, families, and communities. The Association works towards a crime free society through extensive rehabilitation of victims, inmates, and ex-inmates.

CRROA runs three main programs which are informed by its works in Lesotho correctional facilities, namely: Crime Prevention, Rehabilitation and Livelihood Support for ex-offenders.

Since its inception, the organization has been working with other NGOs and government ministries in critical areas of concern in society. This organization has been working in the ten districts of Lesotho for the past eight years advocating for behavioral change in prisons to the inmates, the high schools, community members, church leaders, as well as addressing gangsterism amongst the youth. Donating clothing and food packages to the needy and victims of crime has been one of our duties. As a member of the Lesotho Council of NGOs (LCN), CRROA actively participates in two Commissions – Human Rights and Democracy and Women and Children’s Commissions – the latter’s objective is to ensure the protection of women and children’s rights and to protect against discrimination and violation.

CRROA is a strategic partner of the Ministry of Gender and also part of Men Engage Lesotho Chapter – a local network of like-minded organizations that engage men to fight gender-based violence. Men Engage works in twenty-six (26) African countries.

**3. WLSA's** experience is to contribute to the socio-economic political and legal advancement of women and children in Lesotho. The Trust is an NGO pursuing women's human rights in a legal context. Since 1989, WLSA has been the anchor and lead organisation in Lesotho on issues of women's rights, empowerment of women and gender equality and has also played a key role in mentoring and providing backstopping for other women's groups in the country as well as government departments. WLSA works in the space between the academia and activist organizations, it tries to 'bridge the divide' by making theory accessible, re-interpreting and advancing it, as well as contributing to the gender and human rights discourse in the region. Through the work of WLSA in Lesotho, women are changing the meaning of citizenship through an engagement with the state and by demanding entitlements related to rights.

WLSA will be partnering with three civil society organisations namely; Migrants Workers Association of Lesotho, **Tsepong Counselling Centre, Lesotho Pre School and Day-care Centre**: These groups will facilitate outreach programmes through community mobilization, awareness raising, advocacy, and public dialogues and conversation on VAWG to target groups and beneficiaries where the project is being implemented.