

# MAnU 2.0 programme: Annual Report 2021



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# 1. INTRODUCTION & SUMMARY

The MAnU2.0 consortium, consisting of Mensen met een Missie (lead organisation), CARE Nederland and SPR, and the partner organisations in Burundi (CEJP, CDJP/Bubanza, GROFERVE, CARE Burundi) and the DRC (4 CDJP branches, SMM, DIOFAP, PADRE, CARE DRC), is collectively implementing a five-year programme intending to ensure that women and girls in the DRC and Burundi are able to meaningfully participate in conflict prevention, resolution, mediation, peacebuilding, and protection within the framework of the Netherlands National Action Plan for the effective implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. The present programme is itself a continuation of the first phase of the MAnU 2016-2020 programme implemented in the DRC.

Combining 3 complementary and cross-cutting strategies (*awareness and reflection; capacity strengthening; lobby & advocacy*), targeting three key groups that can help drive change forward (*women and girls (leaders); men, boys, religious leaders and community leaders (informal power holders); local, provincial and national authorities (formal power holders)*), the MAnU2.0 programme contributes to equal leverage (*meaningful participation of women and girls in decision making & peacebuilding*); transformation of harmful norms; and enhanced protection.

The present report covers the first year of implementation of the 5-year programme.

Considering context and risk updates in the DRC, a significant event was the declaration of the state of emergency in North Kivu.

In Burundi, the risk of reprisals in cases of GBV denunciations materialized with a medium impact.

Regarding climate related risks, 2021 saw a volcano eruption in DRC and inundations in Burundi. Furthermore, some Covid-19 related restrictions influenced activity planning.

Notwithstanding these challenges and safety related issues, there were no major changes in programme implementation and strategies.

Progress towards the objectives is evident in the activities at the consortium level, including the kickoff meetings and programme launch meetings, the baseline study, the participatory development of the advocacy strategy and learning agenda, reflections on the governance structure, capacity building activities, and programme innovations.

The Advocacy Strategy's action plan for 2022 identifies several priorities in the area of changing norms, revising and/or proposing laws and policies to increase women's participation and ensure their protection in the 3 programme regions (Burundi, North and South Kivu).

A learning agenda with an action plan has been developed comprising 4 key learning topics:

1. Mobilisation of female leaders and role models;
2. Women's rights organisations are effectively representing grassroots with "one voice";
3. Informal leaders as advocates for women's rights;
4. Role of formal leaders in increasing women's participation in accordance with SCR1325.

Furthermore, local governance and accountability structures have been set up. The initial reviews confirm that the new governance structure is facilitating participation in decision-making and the dissemination of opinions of grassroots stakeholders and partners. One aspect that requires improvement is communication across the entire chain of governance.

Progress towards the objectives is also evident in partner activities including awareness raising and reflection activities which account for about 69% of all reported activities in 2021, capacity building activities and lobbying and advocacy activities, which account for approximately 39% of achievements. The reported achievements indicate that 1,991 community leaders, 740 local and community authorities, 513 community mediators and paralegals (including Women Rights Activists), and 452 women CSO leaders were reached by the programme activities in 2021. In total, 30,163 people were directly reached by programme activities.

With regards to the progress towards our 3 programme objectives (equal leverage; transformation of harmful norms; enhanced protection), some highlights are:

Women are gradually improving their mediation skills and resolving an increasing number of conflicts, e.g., reporting cases to authorities, mediating household and community-level disputes, actively advising local authorities on security issues. A number of women have also come together to form community-level advocacy networks.

Concerning transforming harmful norms, we have seen initial changes, mainly in those communities where we can build upon previous experiences under MAnU1. In 2021, 98 cases of gender-based violence were documented in North Kivu by informal power holders, and community and religious leaders developed 4 action plans to address gender-based violence. The transformation of harmful social norms is a long-term process, and it takes time to achieve results so there is still a need for further sensitization of the target groups.

Although the level of knowledge about women's rights in all target groups is relatively high, they still only take limited action to promote them. One way to improve this is to focus on forming alliances and other advocacy synergies. However, the focus should not only

be on grassroots level advocacy efforts, but also on higher level advocacy initiatives. The new Strategic Lobby & Advocacy plan will be used for this purpose.

In the DRC, a total of 34 advocacy initiatives in relation to SCS4 were undertaken by CSOs, women's networks and partner organisations, which resulted in:

- Territory administrators inviting women leaders to security assemblies, appointing women to decision-making bodies and village chiefs and to other leadership positions
- Local authorities are now involved and committed to the fight against underage marriages and are opening a civil registry office for the regularisation of marriages
- 1325 Committees have been set up or put into operation
- Consultation frameworks have been established to bring together women's associations, local authorities, traditional chiefs and local leaders on issues related to women's rights, compliance with NAP 1325, and combating SGBV.

In Burundi, 3 advocacy initiatives have been undertaken, including advocacy measures to improve the 2016 law on GBV.

From 2022 onwards, the advocacy strategy and learning agenda will allow us to learn about strategies and hypotheses of our Theory of Change and allow for joint programming on lobby and advocacy, while adding more strategic joint actions to individual local level advocacy initiatives. The focus of the 2022-2023 action plan will be on conducting the Community Scorecard at the community level and advocacy alliances at the provincial and national levels.

## 2. CONTEXT UPDATE

### IN THE REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI

The situation and general landscape of 2021 was dominated by the formation of institutions founded in the aftermath of the 2020 elections. Women have benefited from the empowerment that the elections brought about with the opportunity to hold positions in decision-making bodies by virtue of being elected. Such development also increased their level of political representation in general. Significant advances in female representation is evident across the majority of decision-making bodies at the legislative, senatorial and municipal levels whilst the most significant obstacle to overcome remains female representation within the hill authority where the rate of representation remains very low (8%)<sup>1</sup>.

The new R1325 National Action Plan 2022-2027 was established in October 2021 and is thought to address a large number of issues including SGBV. Ensuring female participation in elections and positioning women within decision-making bodies, will require gender-based norms to be challenged and for positive masculinity to be further developed.

The majority of the first half of 2021 was marred by the aftermath of the floods surrounding Lake Tanganyika. The flooding displaced large numbers of people living in Gatumba, Kajaga and Kibenga Rural and forced them leave behind their flooded property and move to downtown Bujumbura. The economic consequences of this cannot be easily disregarded. The population density in Bujumbura has increased dramatically with a significant rise in the price of rent and foodstuffs.

In terms of health and welfare, the Covid-19 situation increased food shortages due to general food scarcity at local markets. As health restrictions imposed by the government to combat the spread of the disease began to ease in December 2021, the number of patients have increased and the Government continues to ask the population to protect themselves and continue to carry out voluntary testing.

During the second half of 2021 the Gatumba (Burundi) and Uvira border in the DRC was officially re-opened.

The socio-political and economic context surrounding Burundi remains fragile and is characterised by overwhelming masculinity which limits women's access to decision-making, power and economic resources. Unreported economic violence continues to degrade women on a daily basis: in Bubanza and Gihanga, it has been observed that once the crops are ready for harvest some women are prevented from having access to the fields, whilst others watch as men sell all the produce from the field and in other cases men will accompany their wives to the sale of the produce at a market before collecting the money for the produce and at the end of the day, either drive the woman out of the home, or abandon them and take other wives elsewhere. Peace cannot exist whilst it is

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<sup>1</sup> This is principally attributed to the fact that the constitution is silent on the representation of women at this level

possible for men to earn an income from such markets at the expense of women. Hence the prevalent slogan: “a new marriage with each new rice harvest in Gihanga and Bubanza”.

The reopening of the Burundian border at Kavimvira-Gatumba has not brought the relief many expected for female traders as the vast majority of female cross-border traders are unable to afford the fee charged for Covid-19 tests in Burundi despite attempts by various advocacy initiatives to reduce the price of Covid-19 tests in Burundi; the price of test kits has fallen by 50% (from 30 dollars to 15 dollars) but this is not enough.

Notwithstanding the challenges identified at a national level the MAnU 2.0 programme was not adversely affected. All activities planned as part of MAnU 2.0 have been carried out with programme participants and were not prevented from taking place due to the context of COVID-19, or otherwise disrupted by flooding or safety related issues.

In general terms, the situational and environmental changes noted in this report did not have a major impact on the implementation of the activities undertaken as part of this programme.

### IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO, DRC

The areas of intervention of the programme within the DR Congo is difficult. The area is highly volatile and for the most part the region is a stronghold for many armed groups, both foreign and national, who continue to commit innumerable acts of abuse against both civilian and military population.

On 3 May 2021, the President of the DRC declared the two eastern provinces of North Kivu and Ituri to be under martial law due to the gravity of the safety concerns raised in these provinces. By taking such action the President effectively restricted fundamental rights and freedoms of the population in those provinces and transferred enhanced civil powers and control measures to the military stationed there. He also concluded an agreement with Uganda that would see the two countries unite against the armed groups which threaten to destabilise the whole region. In addition to the political steps outlined, the Congolese National Police, PNC also signed agreements that would allow the Rwandan police to collaborate and exchange knowledge and experience with the Congolese police. Unfortunately, this agreement angered several Congolese nationals and led to violent demonstrations.

With the short-term imposition of a military administration a number of advocacy measures were impaired to a point that it was difficult to make any genuine progress, however overall activities under the programme were not greatly affected by this situation.

The volcanic eruption in Goma in North Kivu in May 2021 also triggered significant and widespread humanitarian concern as the population were displaced and the humanitarian plight worsened.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the related prevention measures have seriously affected businesses and Congolese households alike. At an economic level, the sharp rise in food prices and the cost of basic necessities underline the negative impact that COVID-19 has had on the country overall. The pandemic also triggered a decline in cross-border trade that adversely affected many of the women who had previously traded successfully.

The participation of women in community leadership roles continues to be a significant challenge. For example, the chief of Luvungi, an elected provincial deputy of South Kivu, had intended to vacate the position in favour of his eldest daughter. However, when he died whilst in office, the leadership at a community level was again entrusted to his son in accordance with customary societal practices, instead of appointing his daughter to the position as she was already acting for her father prior to his death.

For the most part, both in Burundi and in the DRC, the programme has not experienced any significant disruption despite the recent changes we have outlined. It should be noted that the adjustments that were required were not significant. However, it should be recognised that some regional activities did not take place physically but were delivered in an online format following a small delay.

### 3. RISK UPDATE

Given the relatively high substantive expectations of those involved it was anticipated that conflicts could arise between direct and non-direct target groups of the programme which could lead to an overarching disengagement should the programme fail to deliver on the objectives outlined. Contrary to our previous assumptions on this issue, the programme has received such strong support that the testimonials from those involved is overwhelming conclusive and positive.

Women and girl survivors of GBV in the areas targeted by the programme are encouraged to report the perpetrators but may be at risk of reprisals (evidence from the mid-term review of MAnU 1, and information received from the Ministry).

This risk has materialised in Burundi, with a moderate impact, despite the mitigation measures implemented. As a consequence many women in the DRC still choose to remain silent. Although the risk has not materialised in the DRC, it remains a risk that should be monitored consistently and in relation to (other) SEAH risks.

**IN THE DRC**, the difficulties of working in unsafe areas and those related to health restrictions have manifested. Contacts were established with the security coordinators within the partner organisations and at a community level whilst all programme partners and personnel adhere to the principle of independence and neutrality.

It is also worth noting the difficulties inherent in collaborating in advocacy actions during periods when a military administration is introduced to the region to maintain martial law. Such restrictions can limit certain advocacy actions that cannot be directed towards military authorities. The evidence collected so far suggests that this could extend to next year due to the ongoing martial law. As such activities to fight against GBV and advance R1325 could be seen as a lower priority than the military objectives outlined during periods of martial law.

**The programme overall** has encountered clear and apparent risks especially those associated with the current Covid-19 health situation; the curtailment of movements whenever the programme was required to take such steps has had a negative impact on the intended implementation. Furthermore, consortium members based in the Netherlands may be unable to travel, which in turn affects the quality of the programs delivered as workshops/learning events cannot be undertaken face-to-face, which then reduces effectiveness overall. Also this limited the possibility of monitoring/follow-up with MAnU 2.0 partner organisations in the DRC and Burundi and risk of “losing touch” with realities on the ground. Among the mitigation measures, we noted that the use of Zoom meetings proved an adequate mechanism for the sharing of information and the training of partners in the use of alternative means of communication.

As far as possible, we encourage colleagues to meet together on site where it is necessary to facilitate discussions and we often have organised group work, either online or through local coordination team meetings.

**New risks** have been identified in particular relating to the resignation of personnel assigned to the programme whilst they are the only person with the knowledge required to deliver the knowledge. It is recommended that consortium members:

- Ensure good working conditions for all personnel and organise capacity strengthening sessions (mobilisation of funds, advocacy etc.) as part of personnel retention solutions. The foregoing will be part of the programme’s systematic efforts to mitigate this risk in the future.
- Provide swift (flexible) recruitment plans for personnel in the event of a resignation
- Institutionalise knowledge, i.e. when a member of personnel resigns all important information should be documented to avoid the knowledge becoming “lost”.
- Periodic exchanges (one to one) between consortium members and partner organisations with relevant personnel and assess their commitment to the programme schedule;

The volcanic eruption in North Kivu with lava flows that travelled as far as the city of Goma in May 2021 caused a significant amount of population displacement which impacted MAnU2.0 activities and meant that the personnel attached to the programme had to move for various days. It should be noted, however, that this is an ever-present risk that the programme will continue to face as long as the problem is inherent in natural calamities and disasters that are repeated over time.

In general, we shall continue with the same measures and/or mitigation strategies. But it is important to continue to monitor the risks in the field closely. For example, during the coordination meetings in the Burundi programme region, security incidents as well as any applicable mitigation measures are regularly discussed.

For more information, please refer to the risk matrix in annex 1.



## 4. REFLECTING ON PROGRESS TOWARDS OBJECTIVES

### 4.1. Consortium level activities

#### I. MAnU2.0 programme start-up activities

##### a. Kick off meetings

This stage, which brought together all the partners at MAnU2.0 during the first half of 2021 was notable for the realisation of a limited number of activities and a series of meetings during which:

The partners who were initially all involved in the development of the ToC became more familiar with the latter (notably the new personnel) as a model for the appropriation of content and the changes expected to be achieved by the programme, including the key stakeholders, objectives and cross-cutting strategies.

These meetings helped to develop the different monitoring and evaluation tools and further advance a common understanding amongst participants by developing contextualised indicators and the MEAL framework including verification methods. The meetings also helped establish a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all levels involved.

The kick off meetings were used as information exchanges on the different approaches to be used within the programme, in particular: Villages Without Violence, the Community Scorecard, the Peacebuilding Experience.

A meeting between programme financiers” took place to clarify management issues with local partners and ensure compliance with financial tools.

##### b. Programme launch across the programme regions

A total of 5 kick off meetings were held; 2 in South Kivu, 2 in North Kivu and a national meeting in Burundi serving as a national and regional meeting with the objective of:

- ✓ Informing local authorities and other sectoral partners about the MAnU2.0 programme and advocate/negotiate for support (assistance, engagement) of each other for the meaningful participation of women in decision-making bodies so that they may contribute their opinions to the peacebuilding and recovery process (in the spirit of R1325);
- ✓ Launch an advocacy platform with the Congolese and Burundian authorities to ensure the realisation of the “Women, Peace and Security” agenda as well as the NAP and RAP1325;
- ✓ Identify opportunities for synergistic partnerships with other stakeholders to ensure a consistent approach to Resolution 1325 and the promotion of gender equality;

The North Kivu launch took place in Butembo and Goma while the South Kivu launch took place in Uvira and Idjwi. This ensured that decision-makers were able to participate in the process of identifying solutions and strategies that ensure the participation of women in the reconstruction of their communities and encourage ownership of the programme by stakeholders (including local political and administrative authorities, community authorities, civil society organisations).

Following the launch activities, the following feedback was collected:

#### 1. For North Kivu

##### In Goma

The authorities reaffirmed their commitment to support activities outlined as part of the MAnU 2.0 programme as they had under MAnU 1. They were grateful for all partner contributions undertaken as part of the MAnU programme and noted how the rights of women and girls were being promoted, the fight against gender-based violence and the realisation of the National Action Plan R1325 were also being advanced.

The provincial governor's delegate recommended that the MAnU2.0 programme partners:

- Actively participate in the meetings and activities organised by the Gender Theme Groups (GTG) within the province which were introduced in an effort to implement Resolution 1325 in the province of North Kivu. They stressed that as the policy framework drawn up and approved by this group remains the only guidelines governing measures any action undertaken without consideration of the policy document risked undermining the will of the Government in the area and the advancement of women's rights. "
- Strengthen synergistic partnerships with other stakeholders working towards the same goal: "Women, Peace and Security" to ensure the promotion of women's rights.

### **In Butembo**

- The military administrator for the Lubero territory had promised at the launch that they would engage directly with the programme in order to help find a solution to the problems raised by the MAnU programme. This was followed up by an audience with the MAnU programme team a month later in which he announced that he had given instructions to the security services (PNC, FARDC, ANR) represented at the security assembly, to place a greater emphasis on the fight against domestic violence which has increased in recent times, according to a monitoring report on the number of SGBV cases published by the CDJP Butembo. At the same time, he stressed that he will soon instruct the local chiefs and burgomasters across the Lubero territory to give women the opportunity to apply for positions amongst the administrative staff and those related to development projects.
- This approach resulted in the selection of 3 women to participate in the expanded security assembly for the first time and the military administrator affirms that this female representation in this space will continue.

## **2. For South Kivu**

### **In the territory of Idjwi,**

During the exchanges, a number of local authorities expressed their appreciation with the level of visible progress already achieved in their communities, as well as the positive change in the overall mentality within the community. This gradual change has been induced thanks to the MAnU programme and the initial achievements during the first phase (2017-2020) aimed at promoting women's rights. The local and community authorities as well as the majority of the population express thanks that a positive change has overtaken the community and that certain harmful social norms are beginning to decline with the appointment of 4 females as village chiefs. The authorities re-iterated that women already participate in security assemblies at all levels, and did not hide their joy that their chieftdom is currently under the leadership of a woman.

### **In the territory of Uvira,**

The interim administrator and village chief of Sange welcomed the arrival of the MAnU2.0 programme and hoped to see it contribute to the reduction of gender-based violence and violence against women and girls in the territory of Uvira and expressed their availability to collaborate and support the programme if necessary in the fight against violence against women and in the promotion of women's participation in decision-making bodies. They invited the stakeholders in MAnU2.0 to work closely with local authorities and create a protective and trusting environment in order to allow women to participate in the decision-making process in their communities.

### **3. In Burundi**

The official launch (activity postponed to March 2022) saw the participation of Congolese and Burundian authorities, CSOs, members of the government, the Dutch Embassy of the Netherlands in the Congo and Burundi, the MoFA, the AU, the ICGLR, members of the consortium, the project partners and an advocacy note was presented and submitted by the MAnU2.0 project team which represented the three axes (Burundi, North & South Kivu) of the programme.

## **II. Baseline Study**

As 2021 is the first year of the MAnU 2.0 programme, we commissioned a baseline study in the DRC (North and South Kivu) and Burundi, to assess the pre-programme conditions and determine baseline values for our indicators for to determine the results achieved by the programme framework. The baseline study was conducted by independent consultants operating in DRC and Burundi who provided recommendations based on their findings.

The study focused on the programme's three pathways of change (as described in the theory of change), which focus on (i) Equal leverage for women to participate in decision-making; (ii) Transformation of harmful norms and practices; (iii) Enhancing protection through implementation of laws and policies.

Under the first pathway, that relating to equal leverage, the study found that women and girls have relatively high confidence in influencing decision-making (67%) but were participating in community decision-making as much. As a result, it would seem appropriate to focus MAnU 2.0 capacity building efforts on the rights of women at the community level and their ability to hold authorities accountable.

Under the second pathway, the transformation of harmful norms, the study found that men, boys, religious and community leaders seem to value women's participation (~56%) but are not yet taking active steps to support women. Men and boys are important gatekeepers of harmful norms and practices, and with their support, public participation of women and their role in society can be enhanced.

Under the third pathway relating to enhanced protection, local authorities and formal power holders demonstrated limited knowledge of laws and codes concerning women's rights, although they appeared to value women's participation in the decision-making process. However, their knowledge of the applicable laws and policies must be improved so that they can take active steps to support and protect women.

It should be noted that the conclusions and recommendations of the study were also validated by the local committees in each of the three regions. As the baseline study was finalised in November 2021, the recommendations of the study will be implemented by the consortium from 2022.

The following are some of the key recommendations:

- ✓ Lobby and advocacy for the representation of women at the lowest levels of decision-making in Burundi, and to respect gender parity in the DRC.

- ✓ Sensitisation and capacity strengthening of men and boys in order to improve their support for women and girls.
- ✓ In partnership with local authorities, the dissemination of legal and political documents that clearly protect the rights of women including those which prevent and prosecute GBV.
- ✓ In the DRC, the monitoring of meaningful participation of women in local bodies for the purpose of conflict prevention, management and resolution beyond mere representation.
- ✓ In Burundi, advocacy for the implementation of a law governing inheritance, gifts and matrimonial property regimes that combat the abuse of women who do not currently receive any inherited land.

As part of our follow-up to the baseline study, we took into account the recommendations relating to the MEAL framework. The baseline study was a “pilot” study for our indicators. Following the conclusion of the baseline study, we revised some of our indicators and refined them to increase accuracy. In addition to this, we also confirmed the means of verification required for certain indicators and defined their measurement frequency.

### **III. Development of the Advocacy Strategy Process**

The programme partners, each represented by 2 people per organisation, have collectively strengthened their capacities relating to advocacy techniques following attendance at a training course focused on understanding the following concepts and fundamental elements of advocacy: analysis of the problem in relation to the objectives of the programme, analysis of the external and internal context, and prioritisation of problems. This training marked the beginning of a process which culminated in a workshop during which the SAP strategy for the next 5 years was approved after several virtual sessions and a final face-to-face workshop made it possible to identify the following:

- The priority intervention areas including the revision and drafting of an updated mapping of key stakeholders at different levels,
- a reference framework of key advocacy messages,
- an action plan that includes measures, results, resources, costs, responsibilities, at each of the different levels and for a number of defined periods.

The strategy was approved during the programme partner workshop in March 2022 and the programme now has guidelines for advocacy interventions at local, provincial, national and regional levels.

The following priorities have been identified for Burundi: in the area of protection of women it has been noted that the current GBV law is not comprehensive enough; in the field of participation of women: The electoral code does not include any quota requirements for the hill authority elections, the priorities of women are not taken into account in the planning or development of the communes, and the fact that the 1325 committees are not re-established at a communal or provincial level. In terms of norms: the priority is that men continue to rely on cultural norms and consider women to be housewives, which limits their participation in decision-making. Also, the issue of female inheritance is a great concern and should be the focus of improving the rights of women.

In the DRC, particularly in North Kivu the protection of women is being advanced by the MANU programme by addressing the inadequate enforcement of laws including the prosecution of SGBV offenders and legal proceedings in cases involving sexual violence.

In terms of participation, in North-Kivu as in South-Kivu, the inadequate implementation of the strategy and the parity policy continues to undermine the participation of women at different levels and appears to affect different sectors and services. It is also noted that no local elections were organised and this could have facilitated the participation of women in the management of public affairs from a community level. These are considered as priorities in order to increase the participation of women.

On the other hand, in terms of norms and practices the priority in North Kivu should be to address the weak commitment shown by community and religious authorities in the transformation of harmful norms and beliefs, whilst the local media also offer less space to women, and limit the space provided to articles related to female leaders. Another priority is the high levels of domestic violence reported in un-registered marriages.

In South-Kivu, the following priorities were identified in terms of the protection of women; the absence of a specific edict condemning domestic violence, the lengthy delays in pronouncing judicial sentences in SGBV cases.

In terms of the participation of women in South Kivu, in addition to the priorities mirrored by North Kivu, the priority remains the need to re-establish the 1325 steering committees at the territorial level, and at the provincial level.

In terms of norms and practices, the first priority is to focus on the high levels of domestic violence following non-registration of marriages, the other priority is to directly address the religious and community authorities who continue to justify discriminatory doctrines and obstruct the promotion of human rights.

At the regional level, the priorities identified include the weakness in the support network to advance the MAnU movement, and the weakness, or even the non-existence of a monitoring system capable of investigating and reporting on the implementation of the R1325 action plan.

At the international level, the priority is to lobby on the issues of women, peace and security in the [DRC and Burundi](#).

Annex 2 contains the SAP advocacy strategy and action plan

#### **IV. Developing our learning agenda**

The objective of the learning agenda is first of all to implement a high quality program, from managing knowledge appropriately to capitalising on lessons learned and taking steps to integrate them into the programme cycle. By continuously learning, we will be able to determine where we can and should improve or if necessary, adapt our interventions and take opportunities to innovate.

The learning agenda has been developed in a participatory way with the involvement of all partner organisations and Consortium members during 2021. Our starting point was to consider which underlying assumptions of the Theory of Change should be prioritised as the foundation for our learning agenda. For each of the assumptions we conducted a preliminary analysis of the literature and programme documentation to determine existing issues and what if any knowledge gaps exist that contribute to the issues. Following this, we proceeded to select 5 assumptions, formulated the initial learning questions and developed the learning activities necessary to answer the questions selected.

The key learning topics identified include:

1. Mobilisation of female leaders and role models
2. Women's rights organisations are effectively representing grassroots with "one voice"
3. Informal leaders as advocates for women's rights (assumptions 3 and 4 combined)
4. Role of formal leaders in increasing women's participation in accordance with SCR1325.

For more details see the 2022 learning agenda and action plan in annex 3.

#### **V. Reflecting on the partnership/governance structure**

The governance structure is intended to implement decentralised decision-making for participatory and inclusive management in programme partnerships.

The structure comprises of three key entities, in particular:

- 1) The Board where the 3 consortium members at the management level participate in decision-making,
- 2) The Regional Management Board which consists of consortium members and the 3 co-ordinators and
- 3) The local co-ordination teams which represent each of the 3 areas within the programme's scope of application, including North Kivu, South Kivu and Burundi.

An initial assessment of the new governance structure was conducted in the Bujumbura workshop in March 2022; a dialogue to discuss individual comments will also be scheduled in an upcoming workshop. Also, it is only fair to discuss the elements that have not been discussed at the workshop.

In general terms, the initial comments confirm that the new governance structure is working well and works to facilitate participation in decision-making and the dissemination of opinions of grassroots stakeholders, in particular those of partners.

Communication is also positively valued, however, one of the aspects that requires improvement is communication across the entire chain of governance, either accountability or reporting to the "ECL" Local Coordination Teams after each Regional Management Committee meeting. At the same time, there is a low level of participation by the target groups.

The co-ordinators at the area level (the 3 regions of South Kivu, North Kivu and Burundi) provided details on the composition and functioning of the structures at each level as well as the challenges they face at an operational level. Amongst the challenges, the following were reported:

- a) The unavailability of partners due to lack of time or due to illness, each area should be able to see when the best time to organise these meetings would be so that there are more participants available
- b) Difficulties relating to the support provided to programme participants in co-ordination meetings at the local level due to a lack of resources
- c) Lack of means of communication for programme participants who live in remote areas where there is no internet access
- d) The co-ordinators are overstretched, although a reorganisation of the system and the line of communication could streamline their contribution to feedback.
- e) Limited engagement of local groups, target groups not yet well integrated into the structure
- f) Instability of the programme team both in terms of implementation and leadership: this means that continual adjustment and delays impede action following communications
- g) According to the ToR of the "ECL" Local Coordination Teams, it is up to each ECL to determine whether the small office workforce, including the coordinator, should be rotated (each year) or hold permanent positions. For the ECLs who elect to rotate personnel each year, it was recommended that they clearly specify the start and end date for each role and organise corresponding elections in good time.

There is therefore an urgent need to improve communication along the entire chain of governance, including feedback from the Regional Management Board, and to strengthen the involvement of target groups in the decision-making process, even if it is only indirect involvement. During 2022, the programme will conduct an internal review which will include a more thorough dialogue and recommendations regarding the new governance structure.

## **VI. Capacity strengthening**

In terms of capacity strengthening during the reporting period, a training session on advocacy coupled with another on CSC (community score card) was carried out in July 2021 (see paragraph on innovations). At the end of this training, the process to determine the program's advocacy strategy was launched and culminated in the creation of an implementation plan.

Also, the CSC approach was piloted after training as one of the innovative approaches that was approved by all partners. The meeting of the partners was utilised as a means to share MAnU2.0 experiences under this approach. During 2021, three partners, notably PARDE, SMM and CDJP Goma, experimented with the CSC approach.

During the partners' workshop which did not take place in 2021 but rather in 2022, a number of topics were raised as priorities in terms of capacity strengthening, including the interfaith peacebuilding experience, the SAA approach (social analysis and action) and the use of vignettes.

## VII. Innovations

Among the innovations embodied in the proposed Action Plan 2021, we note:

- **The MAnU 2.0 programme governance structure** introduced a novel element with the introduction of a regional committee that meets 3 times a year and the Local Coordination Teams whose members meet quarterly with the aim of decentralising decision-making.
- **Adapted Community Scorecard "CSC"**: training of all partners had taken place in July 2021 and the approach is undergoing a pilot phase to help effectively improve the participation of women and girls in public decision-making spaces/processes on matters relating to peace and security. CSC works on 2 aspects simultaneously: by including an intermediary meeting between power holders and community members that allows for **immediate feedback**, the process is both a **powerful tool for empowerment/advocacy & influence** with the following characteristics:
  - **Removal of barriers** to participation and identification of the best spaces/processes to implement CCS.
  - Strengthening of data collection mechanisms for the purpose of generating evidence to be used in advocacy.
  - **Concrete and action-orientated perspective**: that leads to a pragmatic and specific discussion that does not address the community, but the service provided.
  - **Long-term perspective**: In addition, this is not an isolated event and is therefore the start of a trajectory which provides the local authority with the opportunity to implement improvements.
  - Enables **community-driven ownership of the process**: via local facilitators who monitor the implementation of action plans.

The CSC approach was first piloted in the Rutshuru territory (in North Kivu) by SMM with support from CARE international DRC and PARDE in which CDJP/Goma also participated. The implementation platforms for piloting the CSC approach were the CLPC (Local Committee for Peace and Conciliation of the Commune) and the NPD (Hub for Peace and Development).

The following issue was selected for the CSC pilot: "How to overcome obstacles relating to the effective participation of women and girls in community dialogues and conflict mediation processes through the CLPC and the NPD"

This pilot achieved the following results:

- 12 local facilitators (6M and 6F) have now been trained on how to utilise the CSC approach and are able to utilise the community scorecard approach in their communities
- An action plan (joint matrix) between authorities and the community has been developed to improve the participation of women and girls in community dialogues and conflict mediation processes through the CLPC and the NPD
- A committee to monitor the implementation of the plan has been established.

It should be noted that the Burundi area has not yet piloted the adapted CSC within the framework of MAnU2.0. In the DRC, in South Kivu, the current schedule is for SPR to proceed with the first pilot during the April 2022, with the other partners still pending at this time.

- **Social Analysis and Action (SAA)**, SAA is no longer strictly speaking an “innovation” in terms of the proposal as it was previously used in MAnU 1, however it remains very important as a basis for our work on the transformation of social norms and ask that new partners such as those in Burundi take note of it whilst for Congolese partners, it will be a new feature for some and for others simply a refresher/update. As a community-based approach, SAA is a facilitated process through which individuals and communities explore and challenge the social norms and practices that shape their lives and well-being.

Within the framework of the MAnU 2.0 programme; our aim is to explore and challenge social norms and practices that limit the participation of women and girls in decision-making bodies, particularly those relating to peacebuilding and security processes; the approach refers to the enjoyment of community-based rights and facilitates discussion with the community on the most sensitive issues at a transformative level (transformation of individuals into facilitators). The approach will enable the programme to operate on a transformative level that goes beyond the sensitisation level in order to transform harmful norms that represent barriers to women’s participation (working at grassroots level). Training is planned to take place during the first half of 2022 which will cover:

Integration of SAA with other programme strategies and approaches for all partners and thus standardise interventions on norms

- ✓ Exploration and identification of harmful norms that represent barriers to women’s participation in order to take action to transform said norms
- ✓ Contextualisation of norms within the programme framework by limiting them to women’s participation in decision-making bodies and on issues relating to peace and security.

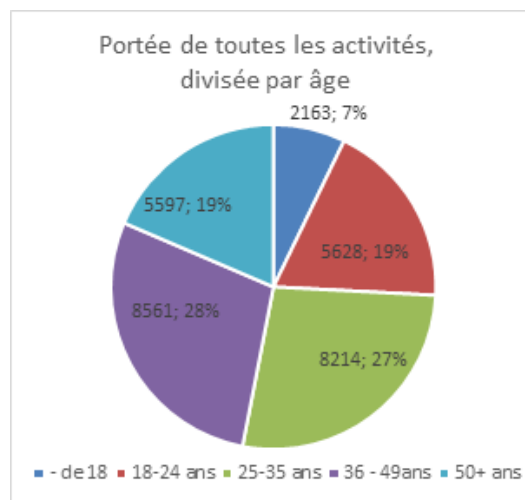
- **Peacebuilding experience:** The pilot was announced in 2021 and focuses on gender inequalities as well as religious differences and will be developed and tested during 2022. The programme will engage with the whole community by demonstrating to stakeholders that they are effective mediators.  
The peacebuilding experience is intended to integrate personal reflection and awareness into the practice of faith-based peacebuilding.  
The method allows individuals to understand the underlying motivations, perspectives and the reasons that drive others to action.
- **Villages Without Violence “VWV”** is an approach that aims to improve social cohesion and collective action. In the context of the MAnU framework, measures to enhance or increase the early warning/awareness and conflict management mechanisms related to SGBV represent added value. In addition, social networks provide opportunities to provide the community with a single message. The pilot in the DRC utilises this to share a toll-free number to alert others of cases. The implementation of this innovation will improve social cohesion, collective action and inclusive development to the extent that women may also participate in the decision-making process. This innovation, which has already been announced, will be tested effectively during 2023.



## 4.2. ACHIEVEMENTS BY PARTNER ORGANISATIONS IN THE FIELD

### I. Overview of activities

MANU 2.0 relies upon three approaches for the activities – (i) Raising awareness and reflection, (ii) Capacity strengthening, and (iii) Lobby and advocacy. These three approaches to our activities contribute to the changes predicted in the three pathways in the Theory of Change.



A total of 907 activities were reported in 2021 as part of the programme implementation; raising awareness and reflection activities represented approximately 69% of all activities carried out.

30,163 people were directly reached by programme activities. 4,885 participants were reached as part of capacity strengthening and 24,267 participants were reached by awareness and reflection activities. A further 1,011 people were reached through advocacy and other related activities. Boys represent 10.2% of participants (2.7% under 18), whilst girls represent 15.8% (including 4.5% under 18). As for adults, men represent 29% whilst women represent 45%.

The targeted communities have been sensitised and/or strengthened in their capacities on the following aspects: on women's rights; on gender-based violence; on conflict resolution and mediation; on women's participation in decision-making bodies; on the legal instruments that promote women's rights; on R1325; on discriminatory norms and practices against women and girls; on leadership; and on women, peace and security.

The achievements reported show that 1,991 community leaders, 740 local and community authorities, 513 community mediators and paralegals (including Women Rights Activists WRA) and 452 women's CSO leaders were directly impacted by programme activities in 2021. Among the power holders (both formal and informal) community and religious leaders have been most affected by the sensitisations, awareness raising and advocacy campaigns, followed by training and community meetings and discussion/reflection.

### Youth engagement and gender issues in the programme

In general terms, in the established partner profile base, young people are the key focus of the programme due to the issues surrounding representation, the same is also true for men.

Through the combined effect of the Men Engage and the youth engage (young people on behalf of young people and young person to young person) approaches, the latter become engaged in the prevention and fight against GBV and have begun to address the issues to transform the discriminatory gender norms and practices against women and girls.

150 young people, including 90 girls who are members of youth clubs have attended training on the peaceful resolution of conflicts and effective communication techniques. These girls now organise

various events and presentations to promote peace and the peaceful resolution of conflicts within their respective communities.

Approximately 350 boys who are members of school and out-of-school clubs now organise community awareness sessions to promote gender equality in their respective communities.

12 women's and women-led organisations, two of which are led by young women are in a position to influence change in their communities. As part of the MANU 2.0 project, these organisations have collaborated with female hill authority leaders and the municipal administration to provide coaching support so that the population can engage with large-scale community activities.

## **II. Achievements of activities and results per pathway of change**

The MANU 2.0 theory of change has three inter-related pathways of change which together can achieve the specific objective: 1) equal opportunities for women and girls to participate in decision-making, 2) transformation of harmful social norms and 2) enhanced protection. The first year of MANU 2.0 in the DRC was in reality the continuation of MANU 1.0 activities, whilst in Burundi, new activities and areas of intervention were defined. As such, the results obtained during the first year also reflect this difference between the two countries.

Below is an overview of some of the key results achieved through the change, as well as the main activities carried out during the first year.

### **I - EFFECT OF EQUAL LEVERAGE**

This first pathway of change aims to ensure that all necessary preconditions are satisfied to enable women and girls to have equal opportunities (as men and boys) in decision-making bodies in terms of peace and security. MANU 2.0 achieves this by focusing on increasing women's knowledge of their rights, their self-confidence in conflict mediation and their ability to undertake advocacy actions.

Thanks to ManU's capacity-strengthening and awareness-raising efforts, women and girl mediators and paralegals have improved their knowledge of national and international legal instruments that protect women. They are now more aware of their role in promoting peaceful conflict resolution and mediation. For example, women in North Kivu continued to report cases of violence directly to the police and other law enforcement authorities. In addition, in South Kivu women have also continued to mediate border disputes and actively advise local authorities on security issues.

For the most part, women are gradually improving their mediation skills and resolving an increasing number of conflicts. Their increased knowledge of legal texts has been essential in advising and guiding the parties in conflict towards a solution.

Similarly, a number of women have also come together to form community-level advocacy networks with the support of the ManU 2.0 programme; for example, in Ruzizi, women came together to form a community-level advocacy network and resolved more than a dozen household and community-level disputes. Whilst the women are trained and sensitised together, they do not seem to have enough conflict mediation skills on an individual basis, so they come together to form well-organised structures, which further encourages them to carry out collaborative activities. For example, in Lubero, a number of women have come together to discuss observed conflicts and consult each other before deciding who is best equipped to resolve the conflict and how this can be achieved.

These women's collectives have also undertaken numerous advocacy actions with local authorities in their communities. It is significant to note here that these initiatives are often community-driven and that the advocacy often does not target district or provincial authorities. In the DRC, a total of 34 advocacy initiatives were undertaken by MANU CSOs, women's networks and partner organisations with a further 3 advocacy initiatives being undertaken in Burundi, and one initiative in the Great Lakes region. These advocacy actions are largely focused on improving women's participation in various decision-making bodies and implementing other laws and policies that protect women; for

example, inheritance law in the DRC and Burundi, and reducing the cost of registering marriages in the DRC.

Some of the advocacy has produced some results, across the Rutshuru territory, for example: the invitation (although still occasional) of certain women leaders to small security assemblies at the territory level by the administrator of the Rutshuru territory; the consideration of their opinions and the appointment of certain women to decision-making bodies as heads of 10 houses, chiefs (capita) of villages, chiefs of communities, heads of certain services in Rutshuru territory and in the rural commune of Rutshuru.

Since ManU 1 was already operating in the DRC, most of the partners have established relationships with different stakeholders and have already drawn attention to ManU's priorities. This also makes it easier to capitalise on the efforts of ManU 1 and achieve results during the current advocacy initiatives; for example: in Lubero, the administrator has issued a decree that takes into account gender in all actions undertaken by bodies within Lubero; and a consultation framework was set up in Lubero in the province of North Kivu to bring together the various women's associations, local authorities, community chiefs and local leaders on issues relating to women's rights, NAP 1325 and the fight against gender-based violence.

More details on the advocacy initiatives can be found in the following section on the link of ManU2.0 with MoFA basket indicators, and more details on the results achieved can be found in annex 4.

## II - TRANSFORMATION OF HARMFUL NORMS

The second pathway of change in the MANU 2.0 programme focuses on transforming harmful social norms, especially those that prevent women and girls from participating fully and effectively in decision-making processes/bodies in matters of peace and security. Informal power holders (particularly men and boys, as well as community and religious leaders) are crucial gatekeepers of gender norms. This trajectory aims to increase the knowledge and awareness of informal power holders of women's rights and harmful social norms, and then lead them through a process of change towards adopting attitudes and behaviours that promote gender equality; in particular the promotion of women's rights and women's participation in the decision-making process from the community level to the regional level

The transformation of harmful social norms is a long-term process and it will take time to achieve meaningful results. As a result, the number of tangible results is quite low for 2021.

ManU 1 also worked on transforming harmful social norms, as well as the promotion of positive masculinities through the Men Engage approach. As a consequence, ManU 2.0 has now seen modest results in 2021, following on from the efforts produced by ManU 1. In 2021, 98 cases of gender-based violence were documented in North Kivu by informal power holders (Rutshuru), and community and religious leaders developed 4 action plans to address gender-based violence.

Furthermore, in Burundi, following training on positive masculinity, men who previously violated women's rights now claim to have a better understanding of women's rights. They share the burden of domestic tasks and have become role models in an environment where helping wives was previously considered witchcraft.

Once men understand that they are perpetuating harmful social norms, they may be able to make informed decisions to better support women in their families and wider communities. In addition to the above, the Men Engage approach has also helped men reach out to other men. For example, in Idjwi, South Kivu, when a man started helping his wife with her household responsibilities, it was initially frowned upon by the community. However, over time they began to respect his decision, and such men who defy social norms have become well known in their communities.

Consequently, in order to encourage women to assume more prominent decision-making roles it is essential that men, as informal power holders are also seen to support them. As this is the first year

of ManU 2.0, there are still not many tangible results recorded for the transformation of harmful norms. However, such issues will be monitored and documented in the forthcoming years. The SAA approach and vignettes will closely monitor changes in social norms.

### III - ENHANCED PROTECTION

Strengthening the protection of women and girls is at the heart of the third trajectory of change. The focus of MAnU 2.0 is to improve the implementation of certain laws and policies relating to gender-based violence and the implementation of resolution 1325, as well as to ensure that official power holders and authorities appreciate the need to improve women's participation in decision-making (as provided for in laws and policies) as well as the need to encourage power holders to create space for women and their perspectives.

Last year, MAnU 2.0 supported three R1325 committee meetings in North Kivu (1 steering committee in Rutshuru, 1 territorial committee and 1 provincial committee) in recognition of the 21st anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. Some of these activities have enabled official power holders to better understand the value of women's participation in decision-making processes and to effectively implement laws and policies relating to increasing women's participation across all levels.

Changes within authorities and those achieved through lobbying and advocacy is a gradual process; nevertheless, MAnU 2.0 has achieved some success. In South Kivu, thanks to the long-term efforts of MAnU 1, local authorities are familiar with the programme and have over time developed their knowledge of the legal and international rights of women. Several partners have noted that local authorities in their communities now recognise the value of women's participation and are more vocal in their support for women.

A steering committee has been set up in Lubero for R1325 and has been operational since November 2021 despite the implementation of martial law. In Uvira, following successful advocacy campaign, Rusabagi district is now led by a woman, and 3 other women have been appointed local regional chiefs in Kiliba and Runingu. In Kawizi, the chief has mandated that all bodies within his jurisdiction must appoint women to certain positions to ensure that women are represented at all levels.

In Burundi, following some sensitisation on women's rights, the territorial administrator decreed that all leaders in the area were to be monogamous, and those who could not be would be removed from their position. While this may appear to support the registration of marriages, it also negatively affects women in polygamous marriages or unregistered marriages, which could lead to women being driven from their homes which is counter-productive. As such, it is critical for ManU to focus on reducing the marriage registration fees first whilst promoting caution in the future to avoid any further unintended results.

In Kinshasa in the DRC, the draft law on the legal fee exemption for victims of gender-based violence has been submitted to the National Assembly and is supported by a national representative. In addition to the above, the draft law on the prevention and prosecution of Gender Based Violence offences has been submitted to the Office of the Presidential Advisor on SGBV and is supported by the South Kivu/DRC Strategic Advocacy Alliance of which the SPR is a member. More details on the women's advocacy initiatives and targeted laws and policies can be found in the following sections on the relationship between ManU and the MoFA basket indicators.

Please find more details in annex 4a.

### III. Relationship between MAnU and SCS and WRGE basket indicators of MoFA

Alongside the MoFA basket indicators for strengthening of civil society policy frameworks and women's rights and gender equality (WRGE) frameworks, MAnU 2.0 will contribute to the following indicators (and their disaggregation):

- WRGE 1.1 # of relevant laws, policies and strategies are blocked, adopted or improved to eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private life
- WRGE 4.1 - # Laws, policies adopted or improved to promote women’s meaningful participation and leadership in conflict prevention, resolution, mediation, peacebuilding and protection
- WRGE 5.2.1 - # women’s organisations and networks with increased L&A capacities
- SCS 4: # advocacy initiatives carried out by women/girls in their communities or for their members/constituencies

As this is the first year of the programme, MAnU 2.0 has not undertaken any significant efforts to measure progress towards the outcome indicators – WRGE 1.1, WRGE 4.1 and SCS 4. However, WRGE 5.2.1 has been documented over the course of the last year. Progress towards the outcome indicators is described below.

### **WRGE 1.1 – Laws and policies to eradicate gender-based violence**

In 2021, at a national level, an advocacy alliance including MAnU 2.0 partners submitted a draft law on the legal fee exemption for victims of gender-based violence to the National Assembly in Kinshasa, DRC. This draft law is supported by a national representative.

In addition to the above, a draft law on the prevention and prosecution of GBV offences has been submitted to the Office of the Presidential Advisor on SGBV and is supported by the South Kivu/DRC Strategic Advocacy Alliance of which SPR is a member.

In Burundi, advocacy measures have been taken to improve the 2016 law on GBV which has been recognised as ineffective and inadequate.

### **WRGE 4.1 – Laws to promote women’s meaningful participation and leadership in conflict prevention and resolution**

In 2021, the adoption or improvement of laws and policies to promote the meaningful participation of women was not a direct priority. However, the R1325 Steering Committee was established in Lubero, DRC to lobby for better implementation of R1325. In addition to this, many advocacy actions in all three areas are focused on increasing women’s participation in the decision-making processes.

### **SCS4: advocacy initiatives**

Building on the recommendations of MAnU 1.0, MAnU 2.0 has now developed a strategic advocacy plan that enables all partners to work together on lobbying and advocacy. As a result, in the first year, there were more advocacy initiatives at a community level than at a national or sub-national level.

In Burundi, 2 advocacy initiatives were undertaken at a national level. In the DRC, a total of 34 advocacy initiatives were undertaken by MAnU CSOs and women’s organisations with which MAnU 2.0 works. This is a significantly higher number than the target of 2 sub-national initiatives set as a baseline. We attribute this to the fact that these 2 sub-national initiatives are part of the consortium’s strategic advocacy plan which involves the consortium working together to advocate for change at higher levels. Notwithstanding these efforts, a large number of advocacy actions have also taken place at a local level below the collaboration between the CSOs and women’s organisations.

## **DRC**

### **South Kivu:**

In the districts of Muhungu, Kagando, Runingu and Kamanyola in South Kivu, community rights groups conducted a survey of vacant positions in their villages. The survey identified available skills and defined an appropriate advocacy strategy. A number of members of these groups have

prepared advocacy documents which they have presented to various authorities, advocating for the participation of women in these bodies.

Another advocacy initiative was undertaken with the community and administrative chiefs of Muhungu, Kagando, Runingo and Kamanyola, where the local authorities targeted by these actions pledged to implement the recommendations stated in the reports produced by the community groups.

In the Ruvivi plan, the women of Kiliba successfully lobbied the administrator of Uvira to appoint a female district chief and the Rusabagi district is now led by a woman. In addition to the above, three other women have been appointed as chiefs of Kiliba and Runingu. Furthermore, in Kawizi, the new chief has mandated that all bodies within his jurisdiction must appoint women to certain positions.

In Bukavu, 8 advocacy initiatives have been carried out with local authorities and religious leaders under the direction of female lawyers. These advocacy initiatives covered the following aspects: alcohol abuse, mob justice, child abduction and murder, application of inheritance law, reduction in the cost of marriage registration, effective control of religiously motivated violent conflicts, the fight against child labour in the fishing industry on Lake Kivu and increasing the number of women in decision-making processes.

3 advocacy meetings were organised for the nomination and declaration of women in positions of responsibility in gender equality departments, and an advocacy meeting was organised with the urban youth committee for the implementation of a local security plan in Uvira.

#### **North Kivu:**

In North Kivu, 17 advocacy actions were undertaken at local and provincial levels by WRA leaders, women-led CSOs and youth clubs. These advocacy actions focused on the participation/appointment of women to decision-making positions, the implementation of R1325, alcohol abuse, women as advisers to village chiefs, the education of girls, marriage registration and the rights of survivors of gender-based violence. A number of these initiatives have been successful with the administrator inviting women to security assemblies, appointing women to decision-making bodies or village chiefs and to other leadership positions within Rutshuru. In addition to the above, the local authorities are now also committed to the fight against under-age marriages and are opening a civil registry office in Rubare.

In Lubero, partners of the MAnU networks have commenced advocacy action together with other women's bodies to advocate for participation of women in governance and for the development of the territory. The administrator of Lubero signed a decree mandating that gender should be considered in all actions undertaken by bodies operating in Lubero.

Furthermore, a R1325 steering committee has been established in Lubero to oversee the implementation of R1325, which includes the administrator, delegates from the Gender, Family and Children Department, the Congolese National Police, the National Intelligence Agency, women's associations, INGOs, religious leaders and women's coalition groups.

A consultation framework has also been put in place to bring together women's associations, local authorities, community leaders and local officials on issues relating to women's rights, compliance with NAP 1325 and the fight against gender-based violence.

#### **Burundi**

However, only 2 L&A advocacy actions were undertaken in Burundi in Bubanza and Bugendana. The local authorities are committed to implementing the recommendations presented by women's organisations.

In order to improve GBV legislation, an advocacy document was compiled that identified the shortcomings of the 2016 law, which was then presented during a roundtable on the revision of the GBV law to members of the Strategic Advocacy Alliance, the Ministry for Gender, the Ministry of Justice and female elected officials.

### Regional level:

A sub-regional virtual exchange meeting on UNSCR 1325 organised by COCAFEM/GL in Burundi brought together female leaders from member organisations of the strategic alliance. These women were put in contact with their counterparts in Kigali and representatives from the Ministry for Gender of the two respective countries. The objective of this meeting was to exchange experiences on the implementation of R1325 and the involvement of women in peacekeeping processes.

### WRGE 5.2.1 – # organisations and women’s groups with strengthened L&A capacities

**Burundi:** 12 women’s organisations are led by women, two of which are led by young women who are in a position to influence change. As part of the MANU 2.0 project, these organisations have collaborated with female hill authority leaders and the municipal administration to provide coaching support so that the population can engage with large-scale community activities. These female leaders thus contribute to the development of their community and their country.

**DRC:** In addition to the above, MANU 2.0 partners have trained other CSOs, women’s rights activist groups and CSO networks on lobbying and advocacy. This training consisted of identifying advocacy priorities, key areas of conflict, defining advocacy actions and how to combat gender-based violence.

**Burundi and DRC:** All programme partners, each represented by 2 people per organisation, have collectively strengthened their capacities relating to advocacy techniques following attendance at a training course focused on understanding the concepts of advocacy, analysis of the external and internal context and prioritisation of problems. This training took place prior to the development of the strategic advocacy plan, which focuses on the implementation of a framework to deliver key advocacy messages and included an action plan that incorporates results, resources, costs, etc. for a number of defined periods.

An overview of MANU 2.0’s contributions to the basket indicators can be found in annex 4b.

## 5. BUDGET-RELATED DEVIATIONS FROM THE PLAN

The MANU 2.0 program had a budget of € 1.164,447 for 2021, out of this € 1.030,373 has been utilised. Resulting in a balance of € 134,074.00. The audited annual financial report over 2021 accompanied by the auditor’s factual findings are attached to this report (annexes 5a and 5b).

The main reasons for the underexpenditure are:

- The actual program implementation didn’t start in January, as originally budgeted, but a few months later since the final approval was received in December.  
For example, the consortium coordinator was appointed 2 months later than budgeted. Hence staff costs were lower than planned.
- The same applies to activities implemented, although much ground was covered, not all planned activities were finalized within the year. Some activities only were initiated after the cycle of kick-off meetings; some activities had to be postponed due to Covid-19 restrictions. This has resulted in a balance of € 49,885.00 for activity costs by consortium partners.
- Program costs - consortium activities, which includes e.g. capacity building, the learning agenda and the lobby and advocacy agenda at consortium level, was underutilised by € 17,659.00.

- Because of Covid-19, travel costs and presential meetings have been reduced significantly, resulting in a balance of € 23,003.00 for activity related travel costs.

Most of the underexpenditure is expected to be used in the coming years on the original budget lines. For activities at consortium level (II Other direct programme costs / B Consortium activities), we propose a shift in usage of these funds. This to follow the conclusions from the baseline and lessons learned that we need to invest more in the lobby agenda. For details please see annex 5c.

## 6. SUSTAINABILITY

The programme has incorporated the notion of sustainability from the outset. Sustainability has been taken into account at several different levels. Firstly, in the selection of partner organisations that work to promote women, peace and security agendas. Our selection was based on their experience in carrying out similar missions, particularly within the framework of NAP 1325 in the DRC and Burundi, on their effective presence in the project area, and on their ability to supervise the target groups following conclusion of the project.

The capacity strengthening strategies, the methodologies and the approaches implemented combine to ensure that we contribute to the sustainability of the processes which we support. This also applies to the consolidation of bodies representing women and men, such as advocacy groups and the processes implemented to include women in peacebuilding and the formation of engagement groups for men.

The establishment of peacebuilding committees, paralegals, training of local MAnU2.0 facilitators and other bodies will contribute to the sustainability of MAnU2.0 activities both in the DRC and in Burundi.

It should be noted in general terms that the activities and achievements of the programme are community-driven through action groups. These groups are established within communities of engaged men, in youth clubs, in civil society organisations, particularly those led by women who have been elected to engage with community and religious leaders, the media, local authorities, community advocacy groups and other stakeholders who are involved in different program activities. WRA: Women Rights Activists are co-operative groups set up by the programme (CARE DRC and SMM) that engage in advocacy and operate as “independent” groups that can function even after the end of the programme.

It should be noted that currently certain action groups, CSOs, leaders, the media, given that they have been strengthened in capacity by the MAnU programme, are carrying out certain activities at their level without expecting any support from the programme, as is already the case with certain action groups established under MAnU1, in particular certain groups of engaged men, youth club groups and WARAs which have perpetuated the actions without direct support from the programme. In the meantime, the programme will assess the importance and timing of developing an exit strategy to properly ensure the sustainability of the interventions undertaken.



## 7. ACCOUNTABILITY

The MANU2.0 programme has put in place accountability mechanisms that reinforce the governance chain and increase the interaction between all stakeholders. This promotes a swift, fluid and transparent communication process that ensures concerns and issues are met with quick responses and the implementation of activities across different levels especially between target groups (community members) of the programme and the programme teams is not impeded. To this end,

- a complaint review and feedback management mechanism was implemented for the entire MANU 2.0 intervention programme;
- 4 complaints and feedback management committees have been set up in Rutshuru. It should be noted here that the members of these committees have been trained on the feedback and complaint management mechanisms;
- Several suggestion boxes are planned to be installed by April 2022
- Implementation of an SMS platform which operates using a toll-free number with a dedicated contact person who manages complaints within the monitoring team.
- 22 complaints and feedback management committees have been set up in the 22 hill authorities of Bugendana (Burundi).

Although efforts have been made to put in place an accountability system, there is still more work to be done to establish an effective accountability system for the programme.

## 8. CONTRIBUTION/RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CONGOLESE, BURUNDIAN AND DUTCH NAP 1325

Thanks to the collaborative programme advocacy with other stakeholders:

- A provincial secretariat for R1325 has been officially appointed in the city of Goma by provincial decree (signed on 1 March 2021) and has an annual work programme that is supported by international organisations, specific agencies within the United Nations and a number of national organisations. This advocacy continues to ensure that the government budget includes funds sufficient to support the provincial assembly, the secretariats and the R1325 committee.
- The R1325 steering committees are operational in the Rutshuru, Uvira and Idjwi territories and receive regular guidance and support from the MAnU programme.
- The MAnU2.0 programme was involved with the undertaking of gender analysis of the local development programme for 145 territories that the Congolese government launched in December 2021 to ensure greater inclusion of women in all development processes within this programme in North and South Kivu.
- The regional programme co-ordinators established contact with the national secretariat for R1325 for the purpose of sharing/sending information and reporting to ensure that data acquired from MAnU2.0 services can be utilised at different levels of advocacy and in other communications. In this way, the various decisions and policies undertaken by the government will be guided by evidence collected within the programme and utilised accordingly across the various regional and international processes to which the national secretariat for R1325 will have access to further advance the programme.
- However, we wish to highlight that in South Kivu, the provincial R1325 committee must be re-established with new processes so that the committee can operate within a suitable framework for the exchange of information and collaboration of R1325 partners.
- Burundi has just adopted a new NAPR1325 (2022-2027). MAnU2.0 has influenced this process by participating in the development committees which underpin this plan and in the organisation of

the related focus groups. COCAFEM/GL who are the lead for the strategic advocacy alliance that works with the MAnU2.0 programme and CARE participated in the development of the NAP1325 as well as in the steering committee.

- In the Netherlands, CARE NL and Mensen met een Missie participate in the NAP1325 signatory community, including the exchange of knowledge and learning based on local experiences from the MAnU2.0 programme. Each NAP1325 signatory has entered into commitments at the equivalent level of the Netherlands and/or other countries in which they intervene as part of their programmes. The relationship with the Dutch NAP and Dutch policies can also be found in the paragraph on the basket indicators.

## 9. ALLIANCES AND PARTNERSHIPS

In Kinshasa, the SPR contact, through the Women’s Coalition for Peace and Development “CFPD”, presented the MAnU2.0 programme at the R1325 Regional Forum. This activity brought together 25 leaders of women’s organisations, including 19 women and 6 men. It should be noted that the SPR is one of the organisations that initiated the draft law on the “legal fee exemption for survivors of SGBV” currently endorsed by a national representative at the national assembly and participates in the ad hoc advocacy through their representative in Kinshasa.

In addition to the above, the South Kivu/DRC Strategic Advocacy Alliance, of which the SPR is a member submitted a draft law on the prevention and prosecution of GBV offences to the Office of the Presidential Advisor on SGBV.

In Burundi, the SPR, through their partner GROFERVE participated in a meeting to develop the Annual Investment Plan for 2021-2022 with other partners operating in the Bugendana Commune, with regard to the CCDP (Commune Development Plan). And on 6 December 2021 at the invitation of the Communal Administrator, GROFERVE participated in a meeting to assess the success of partner activities across the entire Bugendana Commune with the objective of pooling activity resources and to better understand the challenges and achievements to date by comparison to the programme expectations. And in 2022, they will be pooling activity resources and undertaking a review of the mapping related to the Commune development plan.

As part of a strategic collaboration, in 2021, the MAnU programme collaborated with the Femme au Fone project, a project centred on R1325 and carried out through a consortium of 3 organisations including the SPR with the financial support of InterNews in their project “Early warning of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence through the Femme au Fone system and the SoS Relief Solution for prevention and intervention”, funded by the Swedish Government. Operating with the same focus as the MAnU programme this collaboration took place in certain areas covered by the MAnU programme. These included: Kamanyola, Sange and the city of Uvira.

Through a virtual exchange meeting on R1325 at a sub-regional level, the female leaders of the member organisations of the strategic advocacy alliance led by COCAFEM/GL, representatives of the Ministry for Gender, the female leaders of the Strategic Advocacy Alliance of the DRC and Rwanda came together to discuss the role of women in the maintenance of peace and security. The objective was to exchange experiences relating to the implementation of R1325 as well as the involvement of women in the peacekeeping process. We should also note that the meeting also determined the extent to which the gender policy has been implemented and participated in a working session on the development of NAP1325.

Let us not forget that COCAFEM, although not a conventional partner in the MAnU2.0 programme, works with the organisation CARE International Burundi in advocacy activities delivered through the MAnU2.0 programme

In order to strengthen collaboration between partners working with the Dutch government in the DRC, the MAnU co-ordinators attended 2 separate meetings at the request of the Embassy to exchange information relating to current activities and to discuss opportunities for strategic collaboration with the other members of Kinshasa Strategic Partnerships. This allowed those involved in the programme to understand the role of other stakeholders, their focus and their scope of implementation and should move the programme closer to organizations and programmes that have the potential for mutual reinforcement and collaboration.

Collaborative efforts in advocacy were initiated between the MAnU 2.0 programme and Mawe Tatu II, a programme supported by the Regional programme of the Grand Lac Embassies. These measures were implemented by a Consortium led by CARE Nederland, CARE DRC, ADJ, COMEN and GEL which aims to improve the socio-economic status of women and young people and their relative influence on decisions within the home and at a community level. This collaboration should be strengthened during 2022 with the establishment of priorities for joint and collaborative actions now that the advocacy strategy for MAnU has been developed alongside the action plan for 2022.

## 10. REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS RELATING TO THE THEORY OF CHANGE

Given that this was the first year for the MAnU 2.0 programme, the baseline study was not completed until November 2021, and the implementation of the learning agenda action plan will start in 2022, which addresses the Theory of Change assumptions. There was no in-depth reflection process on the progress achieved by the Theory of Change during year 1. This will be achieved on a systematic basis throughout 2022 thanks to enhanced monitoring tools that will enable the collection and analysis of a wealth of data including the knowledge generated through the implemented learning agenda. The shared lessons learnt in principle can be drawn from the activity included in the learning agenda action plan, in which priority will be given during 2022 to the learning question 1: *“What are the factors that motivate female leaders to mobilise women from the bottom up?”*.

### I. Good practices and lessons learnt identified during the reporting phase

Although there was no in-depth reflection on lessons learnt and best practices during the first year of the programme, at an individual partner level some lessons and good practices have been identified, for example:

In addition to the human rights, peace advocacy and other activities carried out by female leaders within the framework of the MAnU programme, a number of partners have integrated an economic component into the activities to include “AVEC” (Association Villageoise d'Epargne et de Crédit). Women are no longer prevented by their husbands from participating in meetings as previously they felt that their wives were wasting time in meetings as a result of the perception of volunteer work. It is advisable that a small budget be allocated to capacity strengthening of partners and beneficiaries in terms of entrepreneurial enterprise and the management of income-generating activities to ensure greater levels of cohesion and sustainability is part of the programme's achievements. It should not be underestimated that members will remain in close relationships for a prolonged length of time in order to address issues relating to peace, human rights but at the same time they require money to ensure the survival of their individual households.

The baseline study also offers us useful lessons and recommendations, for example:

The baseline study demonstrated that the women's awareness raising and participation is already very important in a number of areas. This is not surprising, given the efforts of MANU during the period 2016-2020 as well as other programmes that have been implemented in the same areas. Since awareness-raising and increased participation have been achieved to a large extent, the focus of MANU 2.0 can shift towards ensuring that women's participation is meaningful participation and that they have genuine influence in the decision-making process whilst promoting change.

The baseline study also highlighted to us that it is very important to introduce capacity strengthening sessions on conflict resolution and the Do No Harm approach into our existing activities. Reflection on these topics is therefore included in the activities, so for example some partners in 2022 will participate in a training workshop on conflict awareness and risk management.

Through capacity strengthening activities, **female leaders**, who know their rights can assert their rights in accordance with legislation and statutes whilst the **authorities** (both formal and informal) and other local leaders, act with full knowledge of the law as they understand the tools that protect women's rights.

Whenever men are trained as part of the MEN Engage approach, they make the decision to positively change and become **engaged men**, true awareness-raisers. And this process starts in his home, then amongst his friends, in the community and finally in the respective institutions where these men participate.

What is most interesting is that if they are convinced by the approach they become supporters of women in the fight against gender-based violence. They become community role models and are asked by other couples to mediate family conflicts. In other words, the other members of their communities recognise a capacity in them to act as family counsellors and conflict mediators. A recommendation at this level is that these engaged men should also be trained in conflict transformation and mediation systematically.

The forum and discussion activities that bring local authorities face to face with their constituents have created a genuine space for accountability. Several issues relating to governance, peace and human rights have been discussed in such forums. However, it should be emphasised that working in synergy and combining efforts between the different women's bodies has been a great strength and has influenced the decisions of local authorities.

## II. Comments on the Theory of Change

Comments relating to the Theory of Change are brief at this time and focus predominantly on the core process including reflection on the progress achieved under MAnU 1. MAnU 1 only operated in the DRC whilst Burundi is new to MANU 2.0. As a result, there are also marked differences in the achievements of each country. In the DRC, the stakeholders in the communities concerned are already aware of MAnU 1 with the added benefit that previous activities contribute to the results achieved by MAnU 2. However, in Burundi, very few results have been reported so far, as the programme is new to the country.

During the baseline study, the results and recommendations of the baseline study were validated by all partners in North Kivu, South Kivu and Burundi. The baseline study revealed that knowledge and awareness of women's rights across all target groups was relatively high but they do not take action to promote women's rights. This has been evident over the past year with women coming together collectively to garner trust and support from one another and participate in decision-making processes. This is key to the MAnU 2.0 approach, where women come together for collective advocacy initiatives and the MAnU 2.0 consortium also comes together for various advocacy initiatives as part of the strategic advocacy plan.

Securing the support of informal power holders and working with men continues to be essential to the programme as MAnU 2.0 has demonstrated the capacity to transform harmful social norms in

men and boys. However, the transformation of negative norms is a gradual process and is particularly difficult to measure each year. The SAA and vignettes will be used more systematically to measure changes in norms.

The knowledge of legal texts amongst formal power holders, seems to increase gradually and they value women's participation. Consortium-wide activities focused on awareness-raising and educational activities will also help increase the knowledge of formal power holders. However, they need to be encouraged further to support women more publicly.

Finally, advocacy initiatives should target authorities at both lower and higher levels. CSOs and partners within MAnU 2.0 appear to be able to engage with lower level authorities with some indication of change and general support for women. However, MAnU 2.0 as a consortium should also focus on advocacy initiatives at a higher level. The new SAP plan will be instrumental in achieving this.

## **ANNEXES**

- 1 Risk matrix
- 2 SAP Lobby and advocacy (a) strategy and (b) action plan 2022
- 3 Learning agenda (a) and (b) action plan 2022
- 4a MEAL - overview of all outcomes
- 4b MEAL - basket indicators
- 5a Financial progress report
- 5b Audit report
- 5c Proposal redistribution consortium budget