

She LEADS

Mid-term Review Report



Ministry of Foreign Affairs

ABBREVIATIONS

AU	African Union
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CRC/UNCRC	Committee on Rights of the Child
CSW	Commission on Status of Women
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GAA	Girls Advocacy Alliance
GBV	Gender-based violence
GYW	Girls and Young Women
GGYWB	Global Girls and Young Women's Board
HRC	Human Rights Council
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
INGO	International non- Governmental Organisation
KII	Key Informant Interview
KLI	Knowledge, Learning, and Innovation
L&A	Lobby and Advocacy
LGBTQI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex
PMEL	Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MIYP	Meaningful and Inclusive Youth Participation
MTR	Mid Term Review
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Rights
TOC	Theory of Change
UN	United Nations
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
WG	Working Group



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The Global Girls and Young Women Advisory Board – ©Bete van Meeuwen

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the evaluation period, the context in which She Leads is implemented, has drastically changed. Two countries (Mali and Ethiopia) experienced armed conflict, leading to high levels of insecurity and political instability. Lebanon has also been torn apart by internal conflict and instability and its multiple crises are exacerbated by the recent war between Israel and Hamas. Other countries (Kenya and Sierra Leone) have gone through periods of political tension and violent protest after contested national elections.

The effects of the current 'polycrisis' seem to harden existing gender discriminatory norms and social expectations around GYW role in decision-making processes. The political conflict and economic crisis exacerbate gender inequality and lead to a surge in gender-based violence. As a consequence, GYW's access to education, technology, and decision-making are being jeopardized. Gender-based violence also manifests itself in online spaces wherein cyberbullying, hate speech and misinformation are generating a toxic online environment for GYW. In many countries, governments keep raising barriers to citizen participation and activism, both online and offline. In almost all She Leads countries civic space has shrunk during the past two years. A virulent anti-gender ideology has shaped new restrictive laws targeting feminists and LGBTQI+ communities and actors (Uganda, Ghana). As civic space contracted, the position of young female activists and human rights defenders is under threat in all She Leads countries. The work of She Leads is therefore more needed than ever.

Amplifying GYW voices: the She Leads journey so far.

The She Leads program has made substantial progress in first result area **transforming social gender norms, focusing on the acceptance of positive norms** that support the participation of girls and young women in decision-making. Key strategies have included **engaging influential traditional and religious leaders to denounce discriminatory norms, involving boys and young men as agents of change, and collaborating with the media to disseminate new narratives.** Community engagement, mobilization, and role modeling have been effective in challenging harmful norms and promoting girls' participation in decision-making. Leaders, religious figures, and young men have played crucial roles in advocating for gender equality. Country networks in Ghana, Uganda, Kenya, Sierra Leone, and Liberia have been able to demonstrate significant progress in promoting girls' participation in decision-making, mobilization, and engagement of boys and young men. Jordan, Lebanon, the Middle East regional network, and Mali have invested in awareness creation and capacity strengthening to pave the way towards engaging communities. The She Leads Global Advocacy Network and regional partnerships have expanded the reach and impact of the program, connecting advocates with international decision-making spaces and amplifying their voices.

The second result area of the She Leads program is prioritizes meaningful GYW-led participation in decision-making processes and supports GYW organizing efforts to claim their

rights. **In several She Leads country programs (Sierra Leone, Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda), GYW-led organizations are directly engaged as implementing partners (tier 2) benefiting from She Leads' funding, capacity support, and networks.** Most of these partners are smaller, less 'established' civil society organizations that for the first time participate as equal partners in a consortium with international NGOs. They are fully integrated into the She Leads country networks, in which their contributions and perspectives as GYW-led actors are highly valued.

Through its GYW-led and other CSO partners, She Leads also reaches out to informal, incipient grassroots groups of girls and young women. By resourcing GYW-led groups, providing capacity strengthening, and fostering networking, She Leads aims to strengthen these GYW-led groups and support their own advocacy for full socio-political participation and inclusion in decision-making. Notably, the availability of funding opportunities has allowed groups like Ghana's Girls Advocacy Network to strengthen internal processes, expand activities, and secure new grants. However, GYW-led groups face challenges, including high turnover rates and dilemmas related to formal registration. To address these issues, the She Leads consortium must allocate more resources to GYW-led organizations, offer tailored support to meet specific needs and broaden its focus to include comprehensive organizational development. By doing so, the program can empower GYW-led groups to drive impactful advocacy efforts, as demonstrated by the successful integration of GYW groups into various technical working groups in Kenya and the creation of a platform for inter-generational dialogue in Ethiopia.

She Leads has made significant progress in its third result area with a long-term objective to **enable the meaningful participation of GYW in political institutions and processes.** Despite the domination of older individuals in political systems, the rise of youth activism in many countries has empowered GYW to protest, mobilize at the local level, and engage with local authorities and leaders. She Leads has played a pivotal role in fostering collective action, lobbying governmental institutions, and building a coalition of change agents among GYW at local and regional levels. The creation of spaces for GYWs to express their views and influence decision-making has been particularly successful at the subnational level. Multiple examples, including those from Sierra Leone, Kenya, Uganda, and Ghana, highlight how GYWs have gained access to planning and budgeting processes, consultations, and meetings, influencing important decisions.

Through its advocacy efforts at the national level, She Leads has effectively influenced political will in various countries. Examples from Sierra Leone, Ghana, and Liberia demonstrate the impact of collective advocacy in the passing of significant legislation and policies, fostering greater gender equality. The program's work has initiated critical institutional changes, such as the passing of the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) Act in Sierra Leone, the Child Rights Act in Liberia, and the UN's adoption of a resolution on girls activism. These examples showcase the transformative potential of GYW advocacy efforts. A common enabling factor in most significant changes observed is the continuation of advocacy efforts and GYW groups engaged since the Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA), the predecessor of She Leads.

She Leads has extended its reach to international and regional fora, with GYW actively participating and contributing to significant events. Engagement with the African Union, and the United Nations, as well as participation in processes such as the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), has demonstrated the program's ability to influence recommendations and outcomes.

In summary, the She Leads program has made significant headway in empowering GYW to influence decision-making processes and promote gender equality, both at the national and international levels. As it moves forward, it aims to enhance collaboration and coordination among country networks to ensure a more sustained and impactful presence in the realm of political institutions and processes.

Overall, the Theories of Change and underlying assumptions largely remain valid but require nuanced adjustments to account for contextual factors, the evolving role of social media, and the complexities of youth-led organizing. While progress has been made in all three domains, the path towards transformative change remains long and subject to unpredictability. The consortium recognizes the importance of building a strong and diverse girls-led social movement in the coming years as a logical next step after individual capacity strengthening. Additionally, the influence of the women's rights movement on changing gender norms and policies is acknowledged. Still, the assumption of social movements being less vulnerable to shrinking civic spaces needs further consideration.

In the social-cultural domain, the partnership has made strides in altering attitudes and beliefs about traditional gender roles. The engagement of influential leaders, particularly religious and traditional figures, and fostering champions among boys and young men has led to progress in challenging stereotypes and promoting acceptance of GYW's participation in decision-making.

Within the civil society domain, the partnership has contributed to the political empowerment of GYW through capacity building, movement building, and networking. This approach has shown promise, particularly in the establishment of safe spaces for girls to build skills and critical awareness. However, challenges persist, as youth-led organizations are subject to various constraints, including age-related transitions and adverse economic conditions. The linkages formed between GYW groups and established women's and child rights organizations have proven essential in navigating shrinking civic spaces.

In the institutional domain, the engagement with political and international institutions has yielded increased representation and advocacy by GYW in regional and global fora. While the assumption that governments are susceptible to CSO pressure and international accountability mechanisms largely holds true, the impact varies based on the geopolitical and legal contexts of each country. The need for continued engagement and capacity support in dialogue with institutions becomes evident.

Cross-cutting indicators

She Leads identifies **inclusion, safeguarding, meaningful youth participation, and sustainability** as its key cross-cutting indicators.

For inclusion, the program strives to be inclusive of diverse GYW perspectives at local and national levels. The goal is to ensure that every GYW, regardless of their identity, has the opportunity to participate in program activities and internal decision-making processes. However, the research acknowledges that the inclusion of LGBTQI+ individuals is limited due to stigmatization and restrictive policies in some regions. The gender composition of GYW-led groups engaged in She Leads varies by network, reflecting local dynamics. Some regions, like Kenya, express the need for more male champions to get involved. Meanwhile, Lebanon's groups are exclusively female, while Jordan showcases mixed-gender participation. Even if in some contexts it may be effective to engage boys and young men, it is important to ensure that She Leads' support to the groups is directed at girls and young women as they are the focus of the program. GYWs in the program typically fall within the 18-24 age group, with variations across networks. Challenges arise when GYW struggle to balance program activities with educational commitments or work responsibilities. Flexibility and adaptability are key to accommodating these diverse situations. She Leads operates in regions with varying religious and ethnic compositions. Sensitivity to local cultural and religious norms is vital to promote open discussions and participation among GYW from minority backgrounds. The program emphasizes the inclusion of persons with disabilities. However, it is essential to ensure that activities and locations are accessible for these individuals, demonstrating a commitment to fostering an inclusive environment.

On meaningful youth participation, GYW involvement in decision-making varies across different aspects of the program. It is crucial to ensure that GYW are respected, involved, and influential in all areas, from program implementation to network-level decision-making. Currently, GYW report to be heavily engaged in decision-making at the program implementation level with an indication of the need to participate more actively at the level of network-level decision-making, which is currently largely adult-led with GYW being consulted.

The program integrates safeguarding principles to protect GYW from various risks. Measures include designated safe spaces, comprehensive safeguarding training, and clear reporting mechanisms. However, there is room for improvement in ensuring that all GYW are fully aware of safeguarding protocols and their rights.

Sustainability of She Leads relies on a multifaceted approach that includes building GYW leadership, maintaining motivation, and addressing challenges related to resources and capacity building. To ensure the long-term success of She Leads, the consortium must continue to adapt, collaborate, and focus on the specific needs of GYW while considering external opportunities and threats. By balancing these elements, She Leads can continue to drive meaningful youth-led change in the programme areas.

Partnership and collaboration

The She Leads consortium is highly valued, contributing significantly to joint goals and individual objectives. Participants feel appreciated and satisfied within the partnership, although it can be time-consuming, particularly for smaller organizations. Roles and responsibilities, especially for the Girls and Young Women Board (GYWB), need clarification. Formalizing roles at the country and regional network levels would enhance mutual accountability. Collaboration, coordination, and networking within She Leads are robust, with improved quality over time. Regular meetings, open discussions, and appreciation of diverse viewpoints foster effective collaboration. However, increased information exchange is needed to bolster transparency, mutual accountability, and synergy. This involves sharing implementation experiences, reviewing progress jointly, discussing the strengths of member organizations, and ensuring budget transparency. Flexibility is sought in processes, procedures, and mindsets to adapt to changing circumstances and emerging advocacy opportunities. Coordinators stress the importance of pooled resources and streamlined internal processes to enhance efficiency. Finally, there's a desire for more equitable decision-making and involvement notably regarding the scoping and building of partnerships at the country and regional levels..

Recommendations

Based on the MTR findings, the discussion at the Global MTR validation meeting, and the advice given by the Global GYW Board, the global steering committee has identified the following recommendations:

On She Leads governance, partnership, and safeguarding of GYW:

- 1. Consolidate and strengthen the Global GYW Board to make She Leads decision-making more inclusive.** She Leads needs to implement the steps that have been agreed upon with the Board: extend the term of the current Board, ensure greater involvement of Board members in She Leads networks, have quarterly online monitoring meetings between the Board and Steering Committee, and connect Board members with GYW from other advisory boards..
- 2. Support country networks' efforts to include more GYW in network-level decision-making.** She Leads should engage more GYW in its annual monitoring and planning meetings. She Leads partners need to build GYW's PMEL capacity and provide support with internet access and language barriers. Finally, She Leads needs to build connections between GYW groups supported by different She Leads organizations.
- 3. Improve the joint planning and monitoring process of She Leads networks and strengthen internal communication and mechanisms for the exchange of information between She Leads organisations.** The exchange of information on organizations' budgets, actions, results, and challenges will foster mutual accountability, realistic expectations, and the search for joint solutions to common challenges. The role and responsibilities of the network coordinators, key actors within each network, need to be strengthened.

4. **Ensure the effective implementation of simple and clear safeguarding protocols without infringing on GYW's right to participate in international advocacy spaces.** More alignment of safeguarding protocols used by different consortium members is needed. Clear minimum standards need to be developed, in collaboration with the Global GYW Board. These need to carefully weigh the safety risks related to GYW advocacy against the rights (and effects) of GYW advocating in international policy space, especially for young women between 18 and 24 years.

On She Leads program strategies:

5. **Support She Leads networks in Lebanon, Mali, and Ethiopia to strategically rethink She Leads approaches.** It is necessary to critically rethink and adjust program strategies given the radically changed context. The She Leads consortium members need to facilitate an open dialogue with all network members and GYW-led groups to identify the most appropriate strategies for supporting GYW-led organizations and advocacy.
6. **Promote the exchange of ideas and good practices between She Leads networks on (alternative) cost-effective actions.** All She Leads networks are struggling with increased costs of activities due to inflation and economic decline. There is an urgent need to identify efficient and effective actions that enable She Leads partners and GYW-led groups to keep as much as possible their objectives and planned reach.
7. **Improve She Leads' support to GYW-led groups by enhancing its relevance, flexibility, and effectiveness.** GYW-led groups need more support in developing their organization and in building their resource mobilization capacity. The modalities of She Leads support should be more flexible, better adapted to their specific needs and context, with fewer administrative requirements, and more geared towards transferring budget and programming responsibilities.
8. **Increase the focus during the next two years on building and strengthening a social movement led by GYW.** She Leads members to step up their collective efforts to bring GYW-led groups together, consolidate their linkages, help them to develop a strong action agenda, common identity, and branding, and facilitate their interactions with other (feminist and child/youth rights) actors and networks. Strengthening a social movement will make individual GYW-led groups more sustainable.
9. **Promote joint learning and exchange of good practices between all She Leads networks and GYW-led partners and groups on effective strategies of media advocacy.** The MTR revealed that the media strategies (new and old media) used by She Leads members and partners tend to focus too much on increasing our reach (disseminating the She Leads message) instead of targeting the groups and/or key policy actors whose values, attitudes and behaviors She Leads aims to change.
10. **Ensure better alignment between local and national advocacy plans of She Leads country networks and the regional and international advocacy opportunities.** Better coordination between network members at the country level and the regional and international networks to ensure a more effective follow-up at the national level of internationally agreed recommendations. Local and national priorities set by She Leads networks should orient the regional and international advocacy agenda of She Leads.

On joint learning and communication:

11. **Facilitate the co-creation, sharing, and use of knowledge on key strategies of She Leads.** Joint learning on the effects of She Leads strategies happens at the level of each network and at the global level. There is a need for a simple and easily accessible knowledge management system that enables the collection, analysis, dissemination, and use of relevant information, especially on the programmatic issues (strategies) highlighted in the recommendations above.
12. **Support She Leads networks to align their external communication strategies.** At the country level, She Leads members and partners tend to follow their own organizational strategies and policies. This may cause friction between She Leads organizations and lead to suboptimal results in terms of She Leads visibility. Therefore, global consortium members are recommended to support the networks in developing a joint, consistent, communication strategy.



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1 INTRODUCTION

She Leads is a five-year strategic partnership (2021–2025) between Plan International, Defence for Children – ECPAT (DCI-ECPAT), African Women’s Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), and Terre des Hommes (TdH). The programme aims to **increase the sustained influence of girls and young women (GYW) on decision-making and the transformation of gender norms in formal and informal institutions**. Ultimately, the goal is that GYW perspectives are included in gender-responsive laws and policies and societal norms and practices.

She Leads is implemented in Ethiopia, Ghana, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Liberia, Mali, Sierra Leone and Uganda. In addition, there are 2 regional programmes¹, Pan Africa Regional, Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Regional, and 1 international programme, the Global Advocacy Network (GAN). Lobby and advocacy activities also take place in the Netherlands.

To achieve its objectives, the She Leads consortium adopts various key strategies, namely: **funding and resourcing GYW-led collective action and activism; catalysing the growth and strength of social movements for girls’ rights; media influencing and advocacy; capacity strengthening support and joint-learning; and facilitating data-driven and evidence-based advocacy and research**. In doing so, She Leads unites and joins forces with child rights organisations, feminist/women’s rights organisations, and a large number of GYW-led and/or Youth-led groups.

In 2023, halfway through its implementation, the She Leads programme conducted its mid-term review. This mid-term review had the following objectives:

1. To assess the **progress** made by the programme towards its long-term objectives;
2. To evaluate the **impact and effectiveness** of the programme’s key strategies and activities and to review and reflect on what has **worked** and what can be **improved**;
3. To **reflect on partnership and collaboration** within and outside of the programme;
4. To develop **concrete, actionable recommendations** for 2024 and 2025, and;
5. To reflect on the **validity** of the programme’s **Theory of Change**.

Accordingly, the consolidated mid-term review report consists of the following components:

1. **Network-level mid-term evaluations**. Mid-term evaluations were conducted in all 12 networks of She Leads to assess the programme’s progress and challenges at the network level;
2. **Central evaluation of She Leads key strategies**. This evaluation provides insights into the success of strategies employed by She Leads actors, and their enabling and disabling factors, sustainability, and replicability in other contexts;
3. **Partnership assessment**. This component is an analysis of the She Leads strategic partnership in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, attitude, competencies, results, and quality of interaction, as well as an assessment of existing power (im)balances and leadership from the Global South.

¹ These country/regional level programmes are referred to as a ‘network’ in She Leads. In each of these networks the local offices and/or implementing partners of the consortium partners work together.

2 METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE

The structure and goals of the She Leads mid-term review were determined by the She Leads desk in late 2022 in close consultation with network members and local M&E staff. An MTR Working Group was established at the start of the She Leads MTR process in late 2022. This group also acted as a reference group for this evaluation and made sure processes were consistent across various networks and components of MTR. The Working Group met every four weeks with the She Leads desk to discuss the MTR's progress and to provide feedback and inputs, as well as to share potential concerns. Several components of this MTR were conducted externally, however, the partnership assessment and the consolidation of the final report were done internally by the She Leads desk and the steering committee.

2.1 Overview of research methods

This mid-term review adopted a mixed methods approach in which both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. The methods used included desk reviews of internal and external documentation; surveys with both closed and open-ended questions; focus group discussions; and key informant interviews. Outcome Harvesting data generated during monitoring was an important source of information for the different components of the MTR. Furthermore, feedback from network members and GYW during the validation and sense-making sessions held in July and August 2023 proved essential to build on the draft key findings of the network-level MTRs and partnership assessment. The sections below will further stipulate in detail the adopted methodology for each MTR component.

2.1.1 Network-level mid-term evaluations

A network-level mid-term evaluation was conducted in all 12 networks of She Leads. These evaluations were all led by external consultants, with the exception of the Global Advocacy Network, which was done internally by the She Leads desk. The aim of the network-level mid-term evaluations is to determine the extent to which She Leads has contributed to the change envisaged in its inception phase and how the partnership can continue to do so sustainably for the selected outcomes at the network level.

In this light, the network-level mid-term evaluations consist of the following parts:

1. Context analysis;
2. Risk analysis;
3. Analysis of outcome indicator data
4. GYW-led research on cross-cutting indicators;²
5. Review of the network-level ToC;
6. Actionable recommendations for 2024 and 2025.

² The GYW-led research was only conducted in the country networks, not in the regional networks.

The evaluation matrix in [Annex A](#) provides more details on research questions, methodologies, and tools used. Key methods used were secondary data analysis, external substantiation of harvested outcomes, FGDs, KIIs, and participatory report cards. The research on cross-cutting indicators was conducted by GYW researchers, they engaged a total of **1004 participants** across 9 country networks. More information on this can be found in section 3.7 of this report

2.1.2 Central evaluation of She Leads key strategies

The central evaluation of key strategies was conducted externally through a consultant. The focus and detailed research (sub) questions can be found in the evaluation matrix [Annex A](#).

The central evaluation of key strategies has a **threefold objective**, namely to provide insights on

1. The success of the key strategies employed by She Leads actors;
2. What are enabling factors and what needs to be adapted;
3. The sustainability of the interventions and their replicability in other contexts.

Data collection was conducted in July and August 2023, using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The data collection methods used included desk research, FGDs, KIIs, and an online survey. Thematic analysis and contribution analysis were used for the analysis along with a feminist lens. A total of **192 respondents** were engaged in data collection.

2.1.3 Partnership assessment

The partnership assessment aimed to review the partnership collaboration within She Leads. This is also a mandatory MoFA requirement for the MTR. The assessment aimed to facilitate reflection, discussion, and learning at the various levels of the partnership (country/regional networks, consortium level, strategic partnerships with the MoFA, and embassies), with the ultimate aim to further strengthen the She Leads partnership. The assessment was conducted internally by Plan International as a part of a larger partnership assessment study in all the partnerships that Plan leads.

The five **partnership dimensions** under consideration are:

1. Efficiency and effectiveness;
2. Approach;
3. Attitude and competencies;
4. Results and productivity;
5. Financial resources.

More detailed information on the partnership dimensions is stipulated in Chapter 4 of this MTR report. The methodology for the partnership assessment consisted of both quantitative and qualitative data collection. It primarily included an online survey for individuals involved in the partnership. The survey was filled out by individuals involved in the partnerships. They were selected from the (contracted) organisations at the different levels of operation of the partnership: global (consortium), international/regional, national/country, and sub-national. Of the respondents who received the survey, **a total number of 106 (54%) completed it successfully**. A descriptive analysis was done using SPSS and Stata. To assess the enabling effects of the partnership dimensions and perceived decision-making power, responses were aggregated to assign a mean score per dimension.

2.2 Limitations and methodological considerations

The entire MTR process was divided into several elements to do justice to the complexity and geographical spread of the programme. This implied engaging multiple consultants, several internal processes, and a massive consolidation process. With limited resources and the complex structure of the MTR, some of the results are not comparable.

For online surveys (partnership assessment and strategy evaluation), the limited relative (54%) and absolute size of the survey sample calls for caution in the interpretation of findings and drawing of conclusions, especially on subsets of the sample, including specific country networks. The limited sample size also made it all the more important to ensure anonymity and avoid traceability to individual persons. As a result, not all potentially relevant relationships and topics could be explored.

For network-level evaluations, the limited resources also impacted the quality of external consultants engaged and the amount of primary data collected by them. However, the common set of tools developed centrally helped to maintain consistency in the measurement of crucial outcomes. The GYW-led research on cross-cutting themes yielded excellent results and a deeper review of the relationship between the partnership and the GYW engaged in it. However, the cost, language, and logistical barriers limited the number of participants engaged in this research.



*Girls and young women of the She Leads networks participated in the first Arab Girls' Summit in Amman, Jordan
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3 FINDINGS

3.1 Relevant changes in the context

3.1.1 Security developments

The past 2,5 years countries and regions have witnessed political instability and insecurity. War erupted in Ethiopia, which involved an armed conflict between the Federal government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) that lasted for two years until November 2022. GYW are immensely impacted by a myriad of rape, harassment, and femicide, and research shows that cases of GBV risks increased in the period January 2021 and February 2022. Implementation of She Leads was impacted due to the closure of Universities based in Tigray and Amhara; halting and postponing activities with GYW. Mali also experienced an upsurge in violence in 2022 leading to a large group of displaced people in central Mali. Very recently (30 June 2023), the UN Security Council adopted a new resolution that ends the mandate of MINUSMA by ordering the withdrawal of UN forces by the end of 2023. It is expected that the security situation in Mali will deteriorate and is going to impact humanitarian programmes in the country. If the military government relies on Wagner for security, then the country can expect no commitment to Human Rights³. For nearly the entire implementation period of She Leads Lebanon has experienced a devastating multi-pronged crisis that is fuelled by the Beirut Blast and the COVID-19 pandemic. This has a devastating effect on the provision of education, health, security, and other services to GYW, including displaced GYW from Syria and Palestine. In the past years, Lebanon came into the worst financial crisis in its history, which was complemented by a political vacuum as the government was not able to elect a new president, triggering more demonstrations, turmoil, and instability. The MTR shows that implementation in these countries is affected by instability and insecurity leading to delays and postponement of activities, changes in implementation areas, and more generally, finding innovative solutions to maintain the participation of GYW and stakeholders in the programme. This includes providing simple services to GYW participants of She Leads (sanitary pads) or combining activities. In addition, the MTR reports that more attention to humanitarian response (Lebanon/Ethiopia) is given by NGOs and/or government as opposed to development programmes, and that for some countries, focus on influencing national institutions is less effective (Lebanon, Mali).

3.1.2 Political developments

Since early 2021, several elections and political developments across She Leads networks have taken place. Lebanon, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Sierra Leone held national elections in the past 2,5 years. In the run-up to these elections and post-elections, the political temperature

3 <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/7/3/what-next-for-mali-after-minusma-withdrawal>

rose resulting in tensions between ruling parties and opposition with (anticipated) demonstrations and skirmishes on the streets and disruption of the internet affecting the safety, mobility, and connectivity of GYW. Media coverage pre-, during, and post-election focused on election-related issues, yet GYW issues were not addressed by candidates during the campaigns. She Leads partners exerted some efforts in lobbying for the election candidates to include issues of GYW in their campaign (Ethiopia⁴), or did election observations on accessibility of the voter-registration process for (young) women including those with disabilities (Ethiopia⁵), and supported young women in their voter registration (Sierra Leone⁶, Liberia⁷).

3.1.3 Economic developments

Economies were recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic when a range of internal and external shocks struck in 2022 such as weather conditions across the African continent, the political vacuum in Lebanon, a devastating locust invasion in Ethiopia and Kenya, and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. These shocks worsened rapidly rising rates of inflation. Direct trade and financial linkages with Russia and Ukraine are in many She Leads countries small, yet the war-damaged economies through higher commodity, food, and fuel prices and exchange rates of many currencies lost their value the past year(s) as a result of these subsequent global and local crises⁸. Extreme poverty in West Africa rose by nearly three percent in 2022, the proportion of people living on less than \$1.90 a day jumped from 2.3 percent in 2020 to 2.9 percent in 2021, while the debt burden of countries increased amid slow economic recovery, shrinking fiscal space and weak resource mobilization⁹. The MTR reports showed that rising costs and limited availability of advocacy resources hindered the operations of groups and organisations led by GYW. The economic crisis particularly hit GYW; young women engaged in the informal sector experienced difficulties in sustaining their income and in some cases were forced to close or change their businesses to generate income.

The inflation and increased cost of living constrain the implementation of She Leads project activities in 2021 – 2023 across the programme. She Leads networks mitigated the impact of the inflation and economic crisis on their programming by reducing the scope of programmatic activities and targets, shelving some activities, and making budget amendments while trying not to compromise on its impact. The reality, however, is that implementation is delayed because of departing staff and that efforts on these crises leave fewer opportunities and resources for efforts supporting GYW's rights. The costs of flight tickets, for example, increased in the last two years making it difficult to adequately support GYW to attend events physically during the implementation of the project, this is even more the case for GYW that require additional support. The costs of the internet also increased and limited the number of GYW who could be supported to attend virtual meetings and conventions..

4 <https://ewla-et.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/English-final-Ethiopian-Women-Lawyers-Association.pdf>

5 <https://ewla-et.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/English-final-Ethiopian-Women-Lawyers-Association.pdf>

6 https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/leome_report_of_the_june_21_elections_final_final.pdf

7 <https://localvoicesliberia.com/fact-check-have-more-women-registered-to-vote-in-the-pending-2023-elections-than-men/>

8 Africa in 2023: Continuing political and economic volatility: Chatham House

9 UN report on Humanitarian Aid 20th January 2022

The effects of the economic crisis on the countries facing internal conflict(s), political instability, and war – Ethiopia, Mali, and Lebanon – have even more impact on the lives of GYW and on the programme implementation. Some networks experienced a higher turnover rate with employees searching for employment with better benefits packages, and some of these networks had to pause activities because the crisis reduced their mobility (roadblocks, fuel shortages) or participants chose alternatives.

3.1.4 Socio-cultural Developments

The start of the She Leads programme in 2021 was much affected by the COVID-19 global pandemic. The pandemic exacerbated growing gender, social, and economic inequalities, with devastating consequences for the GYW most at risk. COVID-19 measures (lockdowns, curfews, regulations on public gatherings) taken by governments were not gender-responsive and resulted in an increase in gender-based violence against girls and young women in some She Leads countries, including child marriage, early pregnancy, and sexual exploitation. Economic hardship posed a serious threat to young women's business and labor activities in particular.¹⁰ There was a frequent closure of borders between the countries, which has led to restrictions on the movement of people, especially cross-border traders who are largely women. Overall, this delayed and challenged the start-up and implementation of the programme activities in various ways in 2021 and 2022: from the mobilization of stakeholders, engaging meaningfully in decision-making processes (by GYW), and additional financial implications such as testing costs for organising physical meetings. The ease of COVID-19 restrictions, including the lift up of travel bans, has positively impacted the programme delivery of She Leads as it became easier to engage, convene and participate with GYW in the activities. While this turned out to be a relief, it also revealed a challenge: GYW faced difficulties in getting back their rights as before COVID-19.

Across She Leads countries there remain to exist cultural beliefs and stereotypes hindering GYW participation, engagement, or active engagement in decision-making processes. GYW, especially from rural communities in Pan-African countries and from refugee communities in Lebanon and Jordan, are still battling issues like patriarchy, forced and arranged marriages leading to child and unwanted pregnancies, and female genital mutilation.

All MTR reports showed that gender norms and perceived traditional roles of GYW in She Leads countries are key factors affecting implementation in the reviewed period. For example, girls have been forced to drop out of school because of competing interests at home, or because boys are more favored to continue education after the COVID-19 restrictions. (Young) women provide most work in the agricultural sector, and thus have limited time to be organised and engage in decision-making processes at the grassroots level.

¹⁰ See How will COVID-19 affect girls and young women? | Plan International (plan-international.org)

3.1.5 Technological developments

The evaluation findings show that GYW have particular experiences in using the internet. Technology and the internet are great enablers for GYW and facilitate many opportunities, yet the lack of skills and access, experiences, and fear of discrimination through online (sexual) harassment prevents GYW from making use of its potential. Cyberbullying, hate speech, an increase in rumors, misinformation, and fake news making the online environment a toxic place with an impact on GYW their groups and organisations – as is being experienced by She Leads GYW-led partners – and are since COVID-19 more prevalent. The risks, threats, and challenges GYW are exposed to when working online, underscores the critical importance of safe online spaces and the need to focus on meaningful online engagement. More emphasis should be on equipping individual GYW with the tools to navigate these online dynamics, including their technological literacy to identify misinformation, and to have sound online safeguarding guidelines.

Access to the internet remains a challenge to GYW, to participate meaningfully in decision-making and to connect with other GYW groups and movements. Poor network coverage and expensive data packages in remote and rural areas in the She Leads implementing countries resulted in a high number of GYW not being engaged with She Leads activities in 2021 and 2022.

Countries like Uganda and Ethiopia experienced social media shutdowns as a result of government directives in the last two years. The restricted utilization of Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and Twitter affected GYW online advocacy and visibility of She Leads interventions during that period. While acknowledging that the directives have since been lifted in both countries by 2023, there is a need for advocacy efforts to ensure such key spaces that enhance the participation of girls and young women are accessible and free from any forms of intimidation by the government¹¹.

3.1.6 Legal developments

Impactful development in laws and policies include the anti-homosexuality bill 2023 enacted and adopted by Uganda's Parliament, which criminalizes same-sex conduct and LGBTQI+ issues. It is a direct restriction on civic space as it impedes open dialogue on LGBTQI+ issues, making it impossible for CSOs to work and advocate for the rights and well-being of LGBTQI+ GYW.

Developments in laws and policies that are in favor of women's rights include the Political Parties Act 2022 in Sierra Leone which provides that at least 30% of all executive positions in a political party should be given to women. After the recent elections, the implementation of this act will have to be proved in practice.

¹¹ Plan International (2022) State of the Worlds' Girls Report: The Truth Gap

3.1.7 Environmental developments

Climate change is cited by several networks as a key challenge in the meaningful participation of GYW in decision-making processes (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, Uganda, Mali, Kenya, MENA). GYW advocates that are being supported by She Leads identified climate change as a prioritized topic of discussion at international fora such as during the CSW66 where GYW delegates held governments accountable who agreed on conclusions regarding the linkages between the climate crisis on the one hand and violence against women and girls on the other hand. During the UN water conference in 2023, GYW advocated for a gender-transformative response to climate-related WASH.

The evaluation showed that climate change has a direct negative impact on girls and women's rights; women and girls are more vulnerable to the effects of climate change – especially as they constitute the majority of the world's poor and are more dependent for their livelihood on natural resources that are threatened by climate change. GYW are generally disproportionately affected due to the inherent combination of hunger crises and entrenched gender inequalities. Droughts and irregular rainfall in East Africa in 2021 drove more people to displacement. GYW faced more pressure to drop out of school and contribute to family earnings as women are mostly engaged as agricultural workers and are primary providers for their families. Girls face a heightened risk of being removed from school when food is scarce. This had an effect on the participation of GYW from rural areas in She Leads. In addition, fire outbreaks, flooding and mudslides as a result of land degradation and deforestation, and more general climate change, put a barrier on the participation of GYW the past 2 years as this impedes their free mobility. More recently, due to Tropical Cyclone Freddy, the 2nd Africa Girls and Young Women's Festival had to be moved from Maputo, Mozambique to Nairobi, Kenya.

3.1.8 Civil Society Context

The position of human rights defenders in She Leads countries is deteriorating as civic space is shrinking. For example, in Jordan, the environment for civil society and activism is becoming increasingly hostile. Also, for the regional network the backlash on DCI Palestine and five other Palestinian human rights organisations, impacts organisation and has caused some delays in work, especially in the first and second years of the programme. Similarly, in Uganda, there was heavy surveillance and restriction of online space during the election period in 2021. The controversial Ugandan Anti-Homosexuality Act of 2023 restricts freedom of speech on LGBTQI+ civil rights and the work of many human rights organisations and youth engagement on the topic. The LGBTIQ backlash is also heavily felt in Ghana (e.g. gender equality work is seen as also promoting the LGBTIQ agenda), with the Family Rights Bill still being at the table and strong conservative forces behind that. GYW minorities cannot openly express their sexual and gender orientation as they will be exposed to extreme risk, including life-long imprisonment. CSOs in Mali receiving funding from EU donor countries, and in particular from the French government, have since 2022 a reporting obligation towards the Mali government. Furthermore, the ban on abortion in many states in the United States represents a significant step back in the progression of global sexual and reproductive health and rights. She Leads witnessed coordinated pushback from regressive

governments against the advancement of the gender equality agenda in global fora. In 2022 and 2023, anti-right actors attempted to take over UN summits, including at the CSW. They have used discriminatory language and disruptive tactics to undermine women's and girls' rights. She Leads continues to be an active partner in the women/LGBTQI+ caucus to defend an intersectional and inclusive approach to multilateral participation in international fora.

3.2 Changes in risk & mitigation

Risk developments

This section identifies changes and trajectories of changes in risks and mitigation mechanisms from the start of implementation until June 2023, and how they inform future programming. In addition, new and foreseen risks and possible mitigation strategies are included. When assessing the risks, it becomes evident that safeguarding risks are identified as the most critical issue in all countries. Alongside these, contextual, programmatic, and organisational risks also demand our attention.

Contextual risks

In regions like Mali, Ethiopia, and Lebanon, we have observed the adverse impact of economic and political instability or crises on programme implementation. To address these contextual risks effectively, it is essential to adopt adaptive programming, which allows us to respond promptly to evolving needs during crises.

Programmatic risks

A specific programmatic risk lies in the potential lack of inclusion and diversity among She Lead GYW advocates, particularly on the international stage. Factors such as time constraints due to school and work commitments, as well as language barriers, can act as significant limitations. To mitigate this risk, it is imperative to ensure that GYW cohorts, GYW boards, and GYW advocates receive the necessary support and resources, thus fostering inclusivity.

Organisational risks

Within the organizational realm, staff turnover, and financial challenges pose notable risks that can jeopardize the programme's success. Insufficient funding can impede staff's ability to adequately plan for youth involvement in the design, execution, and monitoring of activities. Therefore, measures must be taken to address these challenges and ensure programme continuity.

Safeguarding risks

At the start of the programme, consortium members signed partnership agreements that stipulate how to handle safeguarding incidents, have safeguarding focal point persons, and

conduct refresher training on safeguarding measures. To date, 6¹² safeguarding incidents have been reported during the course of programme implementation.

GYWs who participate in She Leads and engage in lobby, advocacy, and influencing activities and/or use social media risk being exposed to racist, sexist, inappropriate, or other hateful language. Online bullying and harassment – especially since COVID-19 when much of GYW activism turned online – emerged as a high safeguarding risk. The exposure to online safeguarding risks can lead to psychological or emotional distress and a (continuous) feeling of unsafety. For example, one of the She Leads GYW advocates at CSW67 in 2023 was attacked on social media by a delegate from an anti-rights wing. A She Leads partner in Ethiopia experienced a wave of online attacks on their social media channels.

Furthermore, GYW advocates may be subject to sexual exploitation, abuse, or harassment (SEAH) and other forms of violence while traveling or when engaging in She Leads events. Although the likelihood of this happening is deemed relatively low, the consequences could be devastating for the GYW and others involved. She Leads staff should be vigilant and routinely check for this kind of behavior. Local staff are responsible for the provision of psychosocial support mechanisms. During (international) travel and activities where GYW are involved, a member of staff should be appointed as Child and Youth Protection (CYP) focal point. Comprehensive CYP procedures should be set in place before any event, including briefings, emergency contacts, reporting mechanisms, and action plans, as well as guidelines for chaperones. GYW should be meaningfully engaged in these procedures so they feel ownership and shared responsibility over their safety and well-being. Other safeguarding risks that remain relevant: are visa, traveling, and expectations/jealousy in communities.

The MTR observed that safeguarding can be “overdone”; by treating young women advocates as children. Trust and agency should be at the basis of the relationship between them and She Leads. The safeguarding policy of She Leads should ensure that GYW feel a sense of responsibility and ownership over their own safety and well-being as well.

The She Leads programme intentionally positioned young female professionals at the helm of each network. Over the course of the implementation of She Leads, many of these young coordinators experienced forms of sexism, ageism, inappropriate behavior, and other incidents. Because young women leadership is not perceived as the norm, young female leaders encounter enormous backlash, just because they are young and female leaders. We have invested as a programme in a support system for the coordinators, namely central safeguarding mechanisms (when reporting in their own host organization was not possible) as well as strong peer-to-peer support through the Peer Support Initiative.



*Over fifty girls and young women from around Africa joined the African Girls and Young Women Festival in Accra, Ghana
©FEMNET*



*Blessing speaks at a project meeting in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Last year, she successfully lobbied the Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Bill
©MJ Sessy Kamara*

¹² 0 in 2021, and 3 each in 2022 and mid 2023

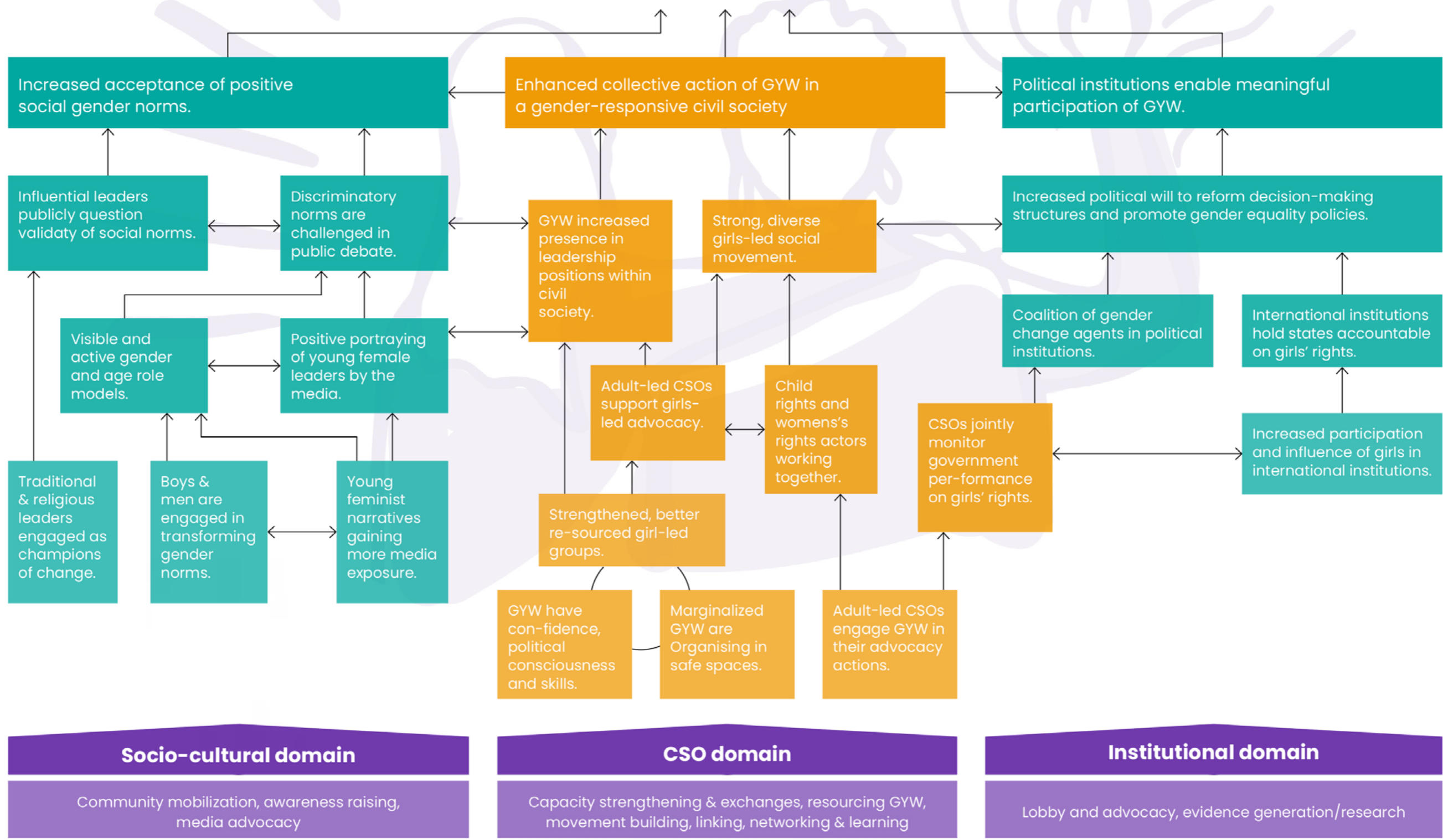
Theory of Change

Impact:

GYW perspectives are included in gender-responsive laws and policies and societal norms & practices.

Strategic objective:

Increased sustained influence of GYW on decision-making and the transformation of gender norms in formal and informal institutions



3.3 ToC discussion

The Theory of Change for the She Leads partnership comprises 3 pathways with a long-term aim (impact) **that GYW's perspectives are included in gender-responsive laws and policies and societal norms and practices.** The strategic objective is **to increase the sustained influence of GYW on decision-making and the transformation of gender norms in formal and informal institutions.**

The three pathways strive towards changes in the 3 domains: the social-cultural domain, the civil society domain, and the institutional domain. The following assumptions about the cause and effect relationships between the three domains and between the outcomes and the strategic objective:

1. Increased (meaningful) participation, representation, and visible leadership of GYW in political institutions and civil society organisations will alter people's attitudes and perceptions on GYW's participation in decision-making at home, the community and local and national politics. In other words, we assume that the emergence of more young female leaders and activists in civil society and in political institutions will trigger and challenge people's beliefs about girls and young women equally taking part in decision-making.
2. Shifts in existing gender norms (towards a less rigid gender role division) help to create a more favourable political environment for girls and young women to participate in decision-making processes.

The MTR findings do not question the validity of these overarching assumptions on the relations between the different domains. To achieve effective participation and sustainable influence of GYW in decision-making, current negative gender norms need to change while an increased (more visible) presence of GYW activists in public spaces does contribute to shifting people's expectations and attitudes towards girls and young women as rightful change agents. However, She Leads organizations have also learned that shifts in gender norms take a long time to develop and that these change processes are never entirely progressive nor predictable. They take place at unequal speeds: while some social expectations may gradually start to change (for example, about GYW being invited to meetings with key decision makers), others remain unchanged (in meetings with senior leaders and decision-makers, GYW ought to listen and show respect). Furthermore, slowly changing attitudes will not automatically affect all girls and young women equally. Community members may for instance adopt a more positive attitude towards young female activists from better-situated families while still rejecting leadership aspirations of girls from marginalized groups. Each country and regional network has contextualized the global ToC. Each of these individual ToCs was reviewed and reflected upon in the MTR process. This section mainly focused on the reflections and validity of the global ToC with references and examples from networks.

3.3.1 Outcome area 1: Socio-cultural domain

This pathway works towards increased acceptance of positive gender norms. The key strategies used by networks include community mobilization, lobbying, and working with role models. The key stakeholders targeted are Influential religious and traditional leaders, boys and young men champions, and media narratives on GYW issues.

Core assumptions underpinning this pathway are:

- Influential leaders play an important role (as gatekeepers of social norms) in encouraging people to change their attitudes and beliefs on the traditional gender and age role division.
- Boys and young men tend to have more progressive attitudes towards gender equality and a more equal gender role division. They are more likely to act as champions of change.
- Increased visibility of girl activists and leaders challenges stereotypes and social expectations about the gendered nature of political leadership and representation.
- Increased visibility and representation of GYW in leadership roles and community decision-making enhance GYW's aspirations and attitudes about roles for themselves and other girls and young women.
- Positive portrayal of girls and young women's leadership will influence communities' and societies' perspectives on and behaviors towards girls and young women's participation in decision-making and in the public space

The progress made across networks, especially in influencing the community-level leaders and boys and young men across networks has proven the validity of this pathway. These stakeholders are definitely more engaged and informed through the programmes leading to space being created or enhanced for GYW at the community level. The key assumptions listed above are valid. Networks in East Africa (Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia), and West Africa (Liberia, Ghana, Sierra Leone) have observed positive changes in this domain, sometimes in spite of insatiable socio-cultural circumstances (Mali).

The partnership notes that the strategies and intermediate outcomes (and assumptions) relating to media engagement need to be further tested. The focus has shifted to greater use of social media in the past 2.5 years, while the focus of these outcomes at the time of inception was leaning towards influencing print and electronic media. There are several outputs coming up in the field of engaging communities through radio and TV shows, specifically in West Africa. However, influencing media houses and journalists to cover young feminist narratives positively has not seen considerable progress yet. The relevant strategies and assumptions need further testing. The focus on social media engagement (partially due to contextual factors such as Covid -19 pandemic) has on the other hand widened the scope of this pathway, and the She Leads partnership has decided to adapt the language of 2 intermediate outcomes, specifying the social/digital media in addition to the mention of media which was largely focused on traditional media.

3.3.2 Outcome area 2: CSO domain

This pathway contributes towards enhanced collective action of GYW in a gender-responsive civil society. The key strategies used by networks include capacity strengthening, movement building for GYW rights, joint learning, linking, resourcing GYW-led CSOs/groups, and networking. The key stakeholders targeted are formal and informal youth groups with membership/leadership of GYWs, and adult-led women and child rights organizations.

The core assumptions underpinning the intermediate outcomes in the civil society pathway are:

- GYW's political empowerment occurs in safe spaces where girls can build their skills, knowledge, confidence, and critical consciousness.
- Because of their organizational characteristics (as a loosely connected network of diverse organizations operating without a centralized decision-making structure) social movements are less vulnerable to civic space restrictions.
- Social movements, particularly women's rights movements, have demonstrated to be effective drivers of policy and norms change.
- When GYW-led initiatives are supported by more established women's and child rights organizations, the space for them to self-organize and develop their own advocacy agenda will increase.

All country and regional networks have heavily invested in providing capacity-strengthening support to youth groups. As a next step, West Africa (Ghana and Sierra Leone) has reported outcomes on providing direct resourcing to GYW-led groups to set their advocacy agenda and carry out activities independently. Important to note that many of these groups received capacity support previously (during GAA and She Leads), confirming the underlying assumption that political empowerment occurs in safe spaces where girls can build their skills, knowledge, confidence, and critical consciousness. This experience is also a lesson in thinking about the sustainability of the youth groups supported in the programme and an example of the positive impact achieved due to sustained engagement.

While the assumption about the essence of GYW-led organizing and empowerment hasn't lost any of its validity, we have gained a deeper understanding of the fragile conditions in which these processes take shape. Youth-led organizing is inherently fragile as 'being young' is not a permanent status. Youth organizations are therefore always in flux, with older (more experienced) members transitioning out as they reach a certain age. On top of this GYW-led groups face other challenges in building and developing their organizations. Due to the harsh economic situation, many GYW cannot afford to dedicate their time to be part and active members of a group as livelihood needs have increased. In several She Leads countries, the rapidly deteriorating security situation has forced them to drop out. In other situations, groups have been losing members due to girls being married or girls who decided to drop out because of the lack of parental and family support. All these cases demonstrate the complex interplay of constraining factors towards GYW-led organizing and mobilizing that cannot be solved by the promotion of safe spaces and political empowerment alone.

In this ToC pathway, the She Leads partnership assumed that for a successful GYW organization to evolve, it is important to link newly emerging GYW groups to established CSOs, especially the organizations belonging to the child rights and the women's rights

movements (the fourth assumption). The MTR recognizes progress in linking youth groups with adult-led groups working (on child rights and women's rights) and these strengthened linkages are considered important by girls and young women. They have proven to be beneficial in navigating shrinking civic spaces, especially in the three Middle Eastern networks (Jordan, Lebanon, and the ME region). The intergenerational dialogue between renowned feminist activists and girls and young women activists in Ghana is another testimony to the importance of the crucial - mentoring - role experienced feminist actors have towards young female leaders. For GYW becoming part of the networks of feminist organizations is incredibly rewarding: apart from the advice and support these networks have to offer, girls and young women find something even more valuable, namely, the trust, solidarity, and sense of belonging which for them is often hard to get from their immediate environment.

The consortium recognizes the need for a greater focus and investment towards achieving the outcome of building a strong and diverse girls-led social movement in the upcoming years. This would also be a logical next step after supporting the capacity strengthening of many GYW-led groups individually. These strategies in upcoming years would also facilitate further testing of assumptions two and three. There seems to be sufficient ground for upholding the third assumption about the impact of the women's rights movement on changing gender norms and policies. She Leads organizations to be less confident about the second assumption regarding the lower vulnerability of social movements to shrinking civic space actions. As states continue to invent new ways of silencing critical voices, oppressive tactics will equally affect organizations operating under the umbrella of a social movement. The collective reflection brought out that the intermediate outcomes 'Child rights and women's rights actors working together' and 'CSOs jointly monitor government performance on girls' rights' are interconnected and the ToC visual is adapted accordingly.

3.3.3 Outcomes area 3: Institutional domain

This pathway contributes towards the goal that political institutions enable meaningful participation of GYW. The key strategies used by networks include lobby and advocacy, alliance building, capacity support on youth-led advocacy, evidence generation, and research. The key stakeholders targeted are national and subnational political institutions, regional and international institutions, and fora.

Key assumptions for this pathway are:

- Governments are susceptible to political pressure from CSOs and international accountability mechanisms.
- International processes and mechanisms are persuaded by data- and evidence-based advocacy by GYW-led groups and their allies
- Collective advocacy driven and led by local and national actors, outside the state and within the state, enjoys greater legitimacy. Hence, it can't be less easily ignored by political leaders and government authorities.

Under this pathway, we noticed that the global advocacy network and the pan-Africa network have succeeded in ensuring the representation and voice of GYW in regional and international fora. Many youth advocates actively participated and influenced notable processes at the African Union level, the Human Rights Council, and the United Nations. The country networks have also influenced subnational/county-level institutions to create greater spaces for the meaningful engagement of GYW. However, the MTR observed that the political and legal contexts in the countries impact the engagement at the national level both positively (Sierra Leone, Liberia) and negatively (Uganda, Jordan, Lebanon, Mali). The political will, susceptibility to change or the lack of it determine if the impact is positive or negative. Hence, the first assumption is partially validated with a need to adapt it to acknowledge that the susceptibility of the governments is subjected to geopolitical conflicts and legal contexts. While the logic of this pathway is valid, the MTR reflections led to the conclusion that the country networks, specifically, need to invest in capacity support and consistent engagement with institutions and the bureaucracy. Currently, we engage them only to influence them, however, it is needed to engage in a more continuous dialogue.

Quantitative progress made on the outcome indicators is reported in the consolidated document in Annex B and country/network-specific data with accompanying descriptive information is available in Annex C.

3.4 Outcome Area 1: Socio-Cultural Domain

She Leads operates with a firm commitment to bring about a substantial transformation in the social and cultural norms that have historically hindered the participation of girls and young women (GYW) in decision-making processes. The ultimate goal is to create an environment that not only encourages but actively supports the inclusive participation of GYW in public life. This goal involves challenging and reshaping existing gender norms that have perpetuated gender disparities. The program deploys a range of strategies, involves various key actors, and engages in specific activities in different regions, all contributing to substantial changes and grappling with their respective challenges.

Outcome Area 1, places significant emphasis on the need to increase the acceptance of positive social gender norms conducive to GYW's participation in decision-making. The involvement of influential traditional and religious leaders is instrumental in this process. These leaders, owing to their status and authority within their communities, can effectively denounce discriminatory norms and practices and encourage their communities to embrace more positive norms. It is crucial to forge strong coalitions of reform-minded actors, which include these progressive leaders. For example, in Kenya and Uganda, GYW have seen increased opportunities for participation in decision-making, primarily due to the engagement of religious and community leaders. In Liberia, GYW have taken on leading roles in demanding changes in social norms, laws, and policies. In Sierra Leone, there is a noticeable decrease in the exclusion of women from traditional leadership positions. In Mali, two young She Leads participants gained entry into the conflict management committee of Niamakoro, alongside community leaders, due to the efforts of a committee member influenced by She Leads activities.

Furthermore, actively engaging boys, young men, parents, and caretakers as agents of change is vital for ensuring the sustainability of this transformation. She Leads networks implement several strategies to engage Boys and young men as champions of change. As a result, in Ghana, Uganda, and Sierra Leone, boys' groups have notably shifted their perception of girls, actively promoting their participation in decision-making and gender equality. In Lebanon, GYW produced a short film emphasizing the importance of joint custody, leading to positive change in parental acceptance of GYW-led groups.

The media plays a pivotal role in disseminating new narratives and providing a platform for young feminists and GYW to have their voices heard. However, the attitudinal change within media organizations is crucial to overcome existing stereotypes and present GYW leaders and activists in a more positive light. Similarly, social media played a crucial role during the COVID-19 pandemic by enabling GYW to continue engaging, despite the lockdown.

The progress made is assessed by examining activities and achievements within the pathway, such as shifts in norms, attitudes, and behaviors. Advocacy campaigns, capacity development, mobilization, and activism are highlighted as key strategies for driving these positive changes. Notably, several positive developments have been identified that build upon the earlier efforts of the Girls Advocacy Alliance program. Community engagement, mobilization, and the emergence of role models are observable in the early phases of program implementation.

In 2022, the networks expanded their engagement with key community leaders, focusing on sensitization meetings and awareness-raising. Notably, some religious or community leaders emerged as Champions of Change, actively challenging harmful social norms in various communities. Encounters between GYW and boys and young men's groups also yielded examples of individuals actively promoting gender equality and leadership of GYW in decision-making. In Ethiopia, changes in the socio-cultural domain are largely the result of capacity development interventions, including discussions organized by girls' clubs. In Uganda, GYW have begun occupying leadership positions and fostering gender-inclusive decision-making, although challenges remain. In Jordan, the network actively participated in local protests during child law negotiations.

However, it's essential to acknowledge that the transformation of deeply rooted social norms is an ongoing process, and resistance is prevalent in certain areas. The involvement of the media has yielded attitudinal changes in some organizations but has encountered resistance in others, largely dependent on the regional political climate. Despite these challenges, She Leads remains dedicated to fostering more visible, active gender role models, as well as influential leaders who question negative social gender norms.

The program also places a significant focus on media influencing and advocacy. Efforts to amplify young feminist narratives in the media began with the '#SheBoldlySpeaks' media campaign, and the "I Speak for Myself" strategy developed in the Pan-African Network. This strategy aims to enhance the visibility and participation of GYW in the media while equipping them with the capacity to articulate their issues. The MTR underscores the crucial role of regional and international networks in amplifying the change efforts of the country

networks. GYW advocates have been invited to global fora and have played an essential role in advocating for girls' and women's rights in CSW and HRC events

In conclusion, GYW have stood up for their rights via their participation in community activities, dialogues, working groups, and via traditional and online media. They have been able to mobilize and influence boys and young men and community leaders to also promote GYW rights and address harmful practices such as FGM. This contributed to influential leaders publicly questioning the validity of harmful social norms as well as the adoption of more gender-equal by-laws or the transformation of existing by-laws (on this indicator almost all the She Leads country networks report considerable progress towards the 2025 target with a total of 177 by laws influenced across the 9 countries). Through their presence in social- and traditional media, GYW are challenging discriminatory norms in public debate. Less examples have been found so far of positive portrayal of young female leaders by the media. This seems to be an area of attention for the remainder of the programme. Challenges faced in the various contexts relate mostly to resistance from community members trying to maintain the status quo, practical limiting factors for the participation of girls in activities (lack of funds, lack of time due to obligations at the household level, etc), and to new prohibiting laws and policies or political interventions limiting the possibilities to advocate for GYW rights. While technology and the internet is a great enablers for girls and young women, lack of opportunities and skills, and fear of discrimination through online sexual harassment and cyberbullying prevented many GYW from using and creating digital tools and online content. Empowering GYW through the provision of meaningful access to the internet and digital technologies could undoubtedly be a powerful tool to enable GYW to participate in governance, to associate, assemble, and express themselves on digital rights issues that are dear to them, and to develop relevant content for their empowerment. Ways to handle these challenges need to be taken up in the next half of the She Leads programme.

SHE LEADS SUCCESSFULLY LOBBIES FOR THE ADOPTED UN RESOLUTION ON CHILD, EARLY, AND FORCED MARRIAGE

Margaret amplifies the voices of girls in Mombasa at the United Nations

Meet Margaret, a 24-year-old community activist from the Kenyan city of Mombasa. By organizing community meetings, she educates girls and their parents about sexual and reproductive health and rights. Her activism led her to the Human Rights Council in Geneva, where she spoke about the often tough realities in which Kenyan girls find themselves.

When Margaret grew up in a poor neighbourhood on the outskirts of Mombasa, she noticed that many girls in her neighbourhood got pregnant at a young age. *"Those girls are shamed and often have to drop out of school. Without a job or a diploma, marriage is seen as their only option. These girls sit in front of their houses all day, with a baby on their lap,"* she says.

In Kenya, nearly one in four girls are married before their eighteenth birthday. Lack of health education and contraceptives are just some of the causes of child marriage, says Margaret. *"Because of deep-rooted social norms, people in many parts of Kenya consider it normal for a girl to be forced into marriage. Poverty often plays a role in driving parents to marry off their daughter, hoping to give her a better future."*

Determined to improve the future of girls in Kenya, Margaret and other young activists from the She Leads programme and contracted partner KAACR fight to ensure that girls have bodily autonomy and can decide when and whom to marry. *"We organise community meetings and go door-to-door. We tell the young people and parents we meet about sexual and reproductive health and the importance of education. We also train girls to stand up for themselves."*

As a member of the Global Advocacy Network, Margaret brought her experiences at the community level to the Human Rights Council, where she spoke with delegates from member states about the causes of child marriage. As one of the few young delegates in Geneva, she wanted to ensure that Member States include girls' perspectives in their upcoming vote on the resolution on child, early, and forced marriage. *"I advocated for the rights and well-being of girls to be at the centre of the text,"* she explains.

Shortly after her return home, the United Nations reauthorized their resolution on child marriage. *"This helps young activists and NGOs to hold leaders worldwide to account on child marriage and ensuring girls' rights,"* she says. However, she adds: *"A resolution alone does not address the root causes of child marriage, which requires social norm change. This motivates me even more to resume my advocacy work at the community level."*

*Margaret lobbied the Child, Early, and Forced Marriage resolution at the United Nations
©Antoine Tardy*



3.5 Outcome area 2: Civil-Society Domain

Meaningful GYW-led participation in decision-making is not provided by external actors; it is fought and won by girls and young women themselves. That is the central principle of the She Leads programme and that's why the civil society pathway, which is all about GYW organizing and mobilizing to claim their right to participate in relevant decision-making, is at the core of She Leads' Theory of Change. Across the world, GYW are increasingly organizing and expressing, at all levels and on a diversity of issues that matter to them. She Leads supports their organizing efforts, provides capacity-strengthening support to increase their advocacy capacity, and facilitates their ties with other civil society actors. For this purpose, She Leads members and their civil society partners employ strategies such as resourcing GYW-led groups, capacity-strengthening support, and linking and networking. By influencing relevant adult-led CSOs, She Leads also builds a more fertile ground for GYW meaningful participation in a civil society, which is often dominated by (male) adult leaders in most countries. One of the key assumptions of the She Leads is that stronger connections between GYW-led groups and key allies such as child rights and women's rights organizations and feminist activists will contribute to the growth of a social movement spearheaded by GYW.

3.5.1 Girls and Young Women Organizing

The majority of GYW-led groups supported by She Leads consist of approximately 15 to 20 active members. In most cases, the groups consist entirely of girls and young women aged between 18-24; some groups also include boys and young men. The total number of GYW-led groups engaged and supported by She Leads is 347 (tier 3). In Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda, many of the supported groups were actually formed under the previous Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA) programme. As assumed in the ToC, the presence of a safe space is important for GYW to organize. Almost all groups operate at the local level so often the school, a community centre, or the office of a local NGO serves as the meeting place for the group. The role of the She Leads partner staff member working with the GYW-led group is crucial: s/he liaises with the group members on a regular basis, guaranteeing the conditions for every member to participate in meetings, identifies their needs and priorities, provides training and plays an important linking role between the group and the outside world. Trust and safety are the key ingredients here. In the GYW-led research, almost all respondents from supported groups from Sierra Leone, Jordan, Mali, Ghana, and Lebanon, feel that She Leads organizations listen to them and respect their views and opinions. In Kenya, Liberia, and Ethiopia, around two-thirds of GYW report that their opinions and suggestions are incorporated into the programme.

She Leads members and partner organizations employ different strategies to strengthen GYW-led groups, mostly used simultaneously. The main strategies are

1. **Capacity strengthening support:** offering training sessions and workshops to enhance the skills and knowledge of GYW-led groups. This can include topics such as leadership, advocacy, communication, and project management.

2. **Mentorship:** pairing experienced individuals with GYW to provide guidance, support, and opportunities for personal and professional growth.
3. **Leadership training:** providing opportunities for GYW to take on leadership roles within their groups and communities, allowing them to develop leadership skills and become effective change-makers.
4. **Psychosocial support:** providing emotional and psychological support to GYW to help them navigate challenges and build resilience.
5. **Networking with NGOs:** connecting GYW groups with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other stakeholders to access resources, support, and collaborative opportunities.
6. **Resourcing:** providing funding to GYW-led groups to enable groups to build and develop their organization and implement their advocacy plans.

These strategies address the fundamental needs and issues experienced by informal and incipient GYW-led groups. During the global MTR meeting, members of the global GYW Board of She Leads confirmed that resources, relationships (networking), organizing, and leadership skills are key to the development and growth of GYW-led groups. The country-level MTR studies clearly show promising signs of groups being strengthened. In Ghana, for instance, the Girls Advocacy Network (GAN) is a youth group that evolved during the Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA) Programme. Under the She Leads programme, the group has received flexible funding, which has helped the group to fortify its internal processes, expand its activities, recruit new members, and strengthen its fundraising capacity. As a result, the group successfully acquired a new grant from another donor. The GAN group members confirm that the availability of funding opportunities is key to ensuring the continuity and consistency of the group's organizing efforts. In other She Leads countries, supported GYW-led groups managed to strengthen their relationships with other actors in their environment. For example, members of GYW-led groups in Kenya were integrated within technical working groups at the county level in Kenya such as the Gender Technical Working Group (TWG) in Kisumu and the Youth Sector Working Group in Nairobi County. In Ethiopia, as a result of inter-generational dialogues between GYW groups and prominent women's rights activists, a common platform between the various generations was created aimed to promote experience sharing, joint learning, and coordination of joint actions.

3.5.2 Challenges in GYW-led organizing

Even though the MTR shows that partly due to the support of She Leads GYW-led groups have become stronger, they are still facing huge challenges. Limited access to funding continues to hinder the development of their organizations. Most (I)NGOs or funders are reluctant to financially invest and support (informal and new) groups of young women and girls in particular. In addition to the funding challenge, emerging GYW-led groups often struggle with a fairly high turnover rate. The outflow of members (a phenomenon inherent to youth-led organizing) is exacerbated in the current context by the economic crisis and the deteriorating security situation. Beginning (informal) groups struggle to retain active members because many GYW are forced to spend their time on income-generating activities or are concerned about their safety if they actively participate in collective action and advocacy.

Since GYW groups can only use She Leads' support for lobbying and advocacy purposes, they can do little for GYW whose livelihoods are at stake. The issues around recruitment and retention of new members have negative effects on the groups' development prospects.

The constant changes in group membership also reveal another challenge. Many groups seek formal status as a (community-based) organization. Registration has advantages: it makes fundraising easier and it can contribute to greater recognition of the group by public bodies and/or other CSOs. In Uganda, registration has helped groups access governmental funds (like the Parish funds), supporting GYW members' livelihood perspectives. In many cases, She Leads partners have supported GYW groups to acquire official registration. At the same time, there are also many doubts among groups about the implications of registration. Groups are concerned that registration will lead to a loss of autonomy and an increase in bureaucratic requirements being imposed on them. They fear becoming a formal NGO with its hierarchical structure, strong dependence on individual leaders, and bureaucratic procedures. Instead, GYW groups aspire to act as a strong collective, characterized by a flat structure, where tasks and responsibilities are shared and where no individual can pretend to be 'the leader' of the group.

In view of these challenges, She Leads needs to improve its support to GYW-led groups. The Global GYW Board has some clear recommendations for the consortium. First, She Leads organizations that should put more effort into resourcing GYW-led organizations. Increased resources owned by GYW-led groups open up more opportunities for their organizational development and enable the recruitment of new members. The initial results of the resourcing pilots (in Ghana, Sierra Leone, Uganda, and Kenya) are positive and the consortium should use the learnings to enhance its support to GYW-led groups. Secondly, She Leads organizations should tailor their support to groups to the specific needs and context of each group. GYW groups need more flexible support modalities while maintaining accountability criteria and keeping requirements as simple as possible. Thirdly, She Leads should give more attention to the organizational development support provided to GYW-led groups. Its current capacity-strengthening support is too heavily focused on building the group's capacity for lobbying and advocacy. The capacity for advocacy is pivotal to achieving the influencing goals of groups but for groups to be successful in the longer run, they need to develop and consolidate a basic organizational structure, skills, and processes. A broader, more consistent approach is needed to support the organizational development process of groups, in which the different components (like decision-making structures, leadership, human resource management, communication, and resource mobilization) are included and addressed. As suggested by various GYW-led groups, to build these organizational capacities, other support modalities should be considered such as scholarships and internships for group members.

3.5.3 GYW-led groups advocacy

The lobbying and advocacy of the groups supported by She Leads mainly take place at the local level. The MTR studies and the global MTR validation meeting reveal that groups choose their own advocacy issues. Groups feel passionate about issues that are relevant

and urgent in their local context. Most of the groups have selected advocacy issues related to the unequal access to education for girls and young women, the high prevalence of gender-based violence (especially child marriage but also FGM), equal and safe access to the internet, or the unequal treatment of girls and women in national legislation (such as in family law in Jordan and Lebanon). Other issues are climate change and menstrual hygiene. In all cases, girls' rights to be politically active and participate in decision-making processes are part of their advocacy claims. In some cases, groups have selected political participation and young female leadership as their core advocacy issue.

A richly varied picture emerges from the MTR of the advocacy activities undertaken by groups. Groups conduct research to identify the needs of GYW, undertake peer-to-peer awareness raising, engage in dialogue with influential community and religious leaders, contact local authorities to convey GYW perspectives, use social media to inform and activate followers, speak on local media and organize lobby meetings (events) with GYW and local politicians (mostly in the context of (inter)national days and campaigns such as the IDG and the 16 days of activism against GBV campaign). Other advocacy actions, such as demonstrations, protest marches, and offering petitions are much less common. The use of these more confrontational tactics is simply too risky in the current political context of She Leads countries where civic space has been under pressure.

The MTR country studies show the results of GYW-led groups' advocacy actions. The results can be classified into three broad categories. The first category refers to the increased recognition by and engagement with the targets of GYW-led groups' advocacy: communities, community leaders, local authorities, and adult-led CSOs. In every She Leads country, GYW-led groups are increasingly being invited by local leaders and politicians to present their issues and advice on local policies and by-laws. Especially in the three West African countries, many traditional and religious leaders show an increased willingness to listen to GYW-led groups and involve them in their council meetings. There are also strong signs of increased acceptance and buy-in from adult-led CSOs operating in the communities of GYW-led groups. The second category of advocacy results entails the adoption of new laws and policies by advocacy targets. This is happening mainly at the local level, with the introduction of new by-laws and local policies addressing specific areas of gender inequality, discrimination, and gender-based violence. In some instances, where the advocacy of GYW-led groups was reinforced by advocacy efforts of She Leads members, partners, and other CSO networks, national-level policy change was achieved. In Sierra Leone, for instance, the advocacy of GYW-led groups contributed to the enactment of the Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE) Bill. Finally, a third category of GYW-led advocacy results relates to deeper institutional change: the reforms of existing decision-making mechanisms in order to make them more inclusive for girls and young women. There are fewer examples of this type of institutional change as it requires political will and commitment which are often not widely available. However, some promising signs can be observed resulting from the advocacy by GYW-led groups, like the formalization of a GYW advisory committee at the Ministry of Education in Sierra Leone. Another example of decision-making spaces and structures opening up for GYW, can be observed in Ghana where more young women have been elected as presidents of students' university councils.

3.5.4 The strengthening of a social movement

She Leads' Theory of Change expects that stronger GYW-led groups and organizations, in collaboration with adult-led CSOs, can give an impetus to the emergence of a social movement led by girls and young women. This starts with strengthening the relationships between GYW-led groups and organizations in their environment that advocate for children's rights and women's rights. The MTR studies show that since last year, She Leads networks have started to facilitate these interactions. The aforementioned activity of organizing intergenerational dialogues between young GYW activists and renowned feminist activists appears to be working well in a number of countries.

She Leads networks in the countries also indicate that bringing the different GYW groups together (spread across the different implementation areas) is the first necessary step for the development of a social movement. To this end, Girls Summits or Festivals have been organized in almost all countries: multi-day meetings led by GYW in which the different GYW-led groups present themselves to each other, exchange experiences and jointly draw up an action agenda. The summits or festivals also offer the groups an opportunity for joint (media) advocacy, as well as creating connections with other actors, networks, and programmes (such as other PoV strategic partnerships and the Dutch Embassy). In the next two years, the program will step up its efforts in strengthening the connections with GYW-led groups and organizations outside She Leads.



Nisreen (left) and her fellow advocates call for their inclusion in decision-making at a She Leads meeting in Accra, Ghana – ©Geoffrey Buta

FUNDING GRASSROOTS INITIATIVES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Ensuring resources is one of the key strategies employed by She Leads to establish autonomy and sustainability of youth groups. We believe that when groups led by girls and young women are resourced, it makes them independent, they are recognized in their communities and exposed to other funding opportunities.

Girls Advocacy Network is a Ghanaian GYW-led group that evolved during the Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA) programme, and is now part of She Leads. It has close to a hundred members, of which about eighty percent are young women and twenty percent are men. Part of this network is made up of members of the GAA, who have extensive experience in lobbying and engaging with key stakeholders like traditional and religious leaders on issues of girls' rights.

Youth activist Nisreen was a key member of the GAA, visiting schools and educating girls about sexual and reproductive rights: *"These foundational skills have enabled me to identify and attempt to alleviate key issues regarding girls' development. We now successfully engage girls and boys at the local and national level"*. Nisreen is determined to continue her work as a member of her Girls Advocacy Network:

"We organize district quiz competitions to mobilize youth in the Gushegu and Sagnarigu districts and a regional girl's quiz competition in Tamale, in the Northern region."

When the She Leads programme began, the Girls Advocacy Network recognized the need for capacity support in fundraising for their group. To start with this, the youth-led group received resourcing from She Leads. This was a part of the pilot carried out by Plan International in Ghana, which provided small amounts of funding to youth-led groups. With this funding, they organized a leadership summit for girls and young women in several senior high schools in the Sanyarig district. With support from the women's rights organization Songtaba and YEFL Ghana (a youth-led organization), the Girls Advocacy Network also held a regional Girls Summit in the Northern region.

In addition, the She Leads program is providing the Girls Advocacy Network with capacity support in fundraising and proposal development to explore other funding opportunities. Nisreen: *"We recently managed to secure a small grant from KGL Foundation, a platform that invests in Ghanaian-led solutions. We'll use this to enroll 20 girls into apprenticeships and equip them with skills that will improve their position in the labor market."*

The Girls Advocacy Network believes that access to funding opportunities and the continued development of its members are critical to ensuring the continuity of the group. Nisreen is proud of the network's progress and determined to keep on fighting for girls' rights: *"Advocacy is addictive, we cannot stop it."*



3.6 Outcome area 3: Institutional Domain

To achieve our strategic **objective** of increased sustained influence of GYW in decision-making, Outcome 3 of the She Leads program focuses on enabling meaningful participation of girls and young women (GYW) in political institutions and processes. While political systems are in general dominated by older individuals, and GYW are rarely represented in Parliament or local councils, youth activism is on the rise, and in many countries GYW are increasingly protesting, mobilising at the local level, setting up their own groups, raising awareness of their peers and engaging local authorities and leaders. By supporting collective action and lobbying governmental institutions to build a coalition of agents of change, She Leads works to increase political will to reform decision-making structures and promote gender equality policies. This is done, at the same time, by increasing the participation and influence of GYW in the UN and other regional fora so that these institutions hold governments accountable to GYW needs.

In this line, one of the main **strategies** implemented to increase political will is advocating for Girls' Access to Regional and International Institutions and human rights mechanisms, so that they can contribute to international accountability processes and bring local/national issues to regional/international fora. Lobby and advocacy also happen at the national and sub-national levels, by engaging in data-driven and evidence-based advocacy & research. Generating data is used to monitor progress, highlight gaps, and hold decision-makers accountable.

The program seeks to raise awareness among policymakers about the benefits of including GYW in decision-making processes, leveraging data and evidence to drive policy change. It also aims to mobilize progressive policymakers and key champions of change within the state apparatus. Additionally, She Leads recognizes the importance of international and regional monitoring bodies to advocate for GYW's rights and participation.

3.6.1 Political institutions enable meaningful participation of GYW

During the first 2.5 years of implementation of She Leads, the different country networks have been able to lobby and advocate governmental institutions to create spaces for GYW to express their views on issues that affect them. This is especially true at the subnational level, with some milestones achieved at the national and international levels. In Sierra Leone, the Gender Empowerment Act (2022) has been passed to enhance the representation and participation of more women in politics and increase leadership opportunities for adult and young women. The She Leads network had been advocating for this bill. Also, the launch of the Revised National Youth Policy and National Youth Dialogue (June 2021) was the result of the network's lobby to the Ministry of Youth and the Youth Commission and the participation of 3 She Leads GYW in the planning committee. This sign builds on efforts from the former program Girls Advocacy Alliance. She Leads contributed to the development and implementation of the Jordan Women's Strategy 2020-2025, through collaborative engagements with key stakeholders like the Jordan National Commission for Women (JNCW) and the Shamaa network. At the sub-national level, following direct lobbying, government institu-

tions are now deliberately involving GYW in the planning and budgeting process of the County Development, Annual Development Plans, and Sectoral Plans (Kisumu-Kenya) and including GYW in regular county consultation meetings where they can take the floor to advocate their issues (Bugiri-Uganda). GYW are also participating in Municipal and District Assembly meetings in Ghana. Although these are not all institutionalized participation mechanisms, they demonstrate that GYW have taken up spaces enabled by political institutions to influence decisions.

3.6.2 Increased political will to reform decision-making structures and promote gender equality policies

In the quest for creating spaces for GYW in decision-making, She Leads is lobbying government officials to influence political will. In Ghana, for instance, the affirmative action bill that aims to build gender parity in politics was finally submitted to the Parliament after 12 years. She Leads campaigned for this. In Liberia, She Leads contributed to the development of the Abortion Law, which the legislature has promised to pass by this year, and to the Children's Law that was presented to the Legislature by the Child Protection Network, Liberia. Even when all these bills are still in the approval process, their submission shows an increasing political will to promote gender equality. These examples also provide evidence that governments are susceptible to collective advocacy led by local actors.

3.6.3 Local institutional coalition of gender change agents/CSOs jointly monitor

At the national level, in order to influence political will, CSOs in She Leads work together to monitor governments with the aim of creating a coalition of agents of change in political institutions. It is at this level of the ToC that the different networks have achieved the biggest amount of signs of change. In Sierra Leone, the impact of Youth CSOs has been recognized by stakeholders in communities, at district level, and across the borders, where they have been in partnerships and collaborated with key government ministries: The Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs and the Gender and Legislative Committee in Parliament, working together with Child Right Coalition members and Children's Forum Network to review the gazette Child right Act for parliamentary adoption. In Ethiopia, a GYW-led association built a task force consisting of government and local & international NGOs working on GYW and has already started bringing pressing challenges and issues to the attention of policy/decision-makers and development partners for further action and intervention. At the district government structure, Women and Social Affairs offices established a women's leadership forum to enhance the meaningful participation of GYW in political leadership positions. In Jordan, continuous engagements with the judiciary (criminal and Sharia judges) and officers from the Family Protection and Juvenile Department have been used to discuss divorce and get a better understanding of domestic violence, and served as a space to advocate for a unified process for domestic violence cases. In Lebanon, GYW's collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and the Syndicate of Lawyers in Lebanon, along with the participation of the Attorney General of Baabda, has contributed to the advancement of CSO demands and positions on women's representation. The Minister of Education even participated in activities led by GYW. As evidenced in these examples, and across all networks,

the engagement of decision-makers in the programs' activities shows that She Leads is breaking into political spaces, in some cases interrupting a pattern of resistance and denial towards gender-sensitive issues.

3.6.4 International influence and accountability

The increase of political will towards gender equality is pursued as well through increased participation of GYW in regional and global fora so that international institutions pressure to hold states accountable. In this line, She Leads has been creating opportunities for GYW to engage. At a regional level, GYW from Ethiopia have participated in the 4th Gender is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) Strategic Engagement with the African Union and their recommendations will be presented to the African Union Summit. In addition, the ACERWC adopted 4 recommendations submitted by GYW in a communique submitted during the 21st CSO forum on the protection and engagement of GYW in the digital environment. In the global fora, She Leads contributed to **CSW outcome documents**. At CSW66 in 2022, GYW lobbied strongly to include their recommendations on the meaningful participation of women and girls in decision-making processes related to climate change. The CSW67 in 2023 concluded with one of the GAN's biggest policy wins to date: for the first time, an entire paragraph in the Agreed Conclusions, which had been co-designed with GYW, was devoted to girl adolescents. Three She Leads countries have engaged in **UPR processes**. First, numerous EU member states used recommendations made by She Leads-supported GYW during the UPR of Sierra Leone (2021), which would adopt the Gender Empowerment Act in late 2022, partially as a result of these recommendations. This could be providing evidence that supports the assumption that governments are indeed susceptible to international accountability mechanisms. Second, She Leads advocate Mastula played a pivotal role in the adoption of recommendations suggested by GYW during the UPR of Uganda (2022). Third, following Ghana's UPR pre-session (2022), the UN stakeholder summary report explicitly made reference to multiple inputs by She Leads, taken from the girl advocates' alternative report. She Leads GYW advocates have been invited numerous times as speakers to global fora. For example, a group of GYW from the She Leads programmes in Ghana, Liberia, Jordan, Kenya, Uganda, and Ethiopia conducted joint advocacy at the HRC in June 2022. Solea and Victorlyn, GYW advocates from Uganda and Liberia, were the only youth speakers at separate panels on gender-responsive care and menstrual hygiene management. Fancy, a Ugandan youth activist, was similarly selected as the only youth speaker during the Interactive Dialogue with the UN Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls, warming up diplomats to vote in favor of the new resolution on girl activism. These examples show GYW directly influencing recommendations that are later (or can later be) the base for country reforms. However, at the moment, the extent to which these recommendations translate into legislation change is yet to be seen. In other words, while She Leads GYW are currently influencing international institutions with concrete outputs, there is less evidence of the power they have to hold states accountable. For this, strong coordination between the global and country networks is still required for local CSOs to follow up on the recommendations made to ensure their impact.

The advocacy efforts within the institutional domain have started to show some relevant results. Sierra Leone has made a huge stride toward gender equality with the passing of the Gender Empowerment Act in November 2022 as described above. This groundbreaking legislation was developed in response to recommendations from the UPR and CRC processes, to which She Leads and GYW contributed. Under this Act, women's voices will be heard loud and clear in public office, with a minimum of 30% quota for women in elective and appointed positions. This achievement shows how GYW advocacy efforts can result in a change of legislation. Another key achievement to celebrate within the institutional domain is that in June 2022, the UN unanimously adopted a historic global policy regarding the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and girls, as outlined in 'Draft resolution A/HRC/50/L.22/Rev.1,' without the need for a vote. The previous year's UN Human Rights Council resolution, which centered on the theme of girls and young women's activism, underscored the unique challenges they encounter in their efforts and offered recommendations for addressing these hurdles. This achievement was the culmination of extensive advocacy efforts, including engagement with the Permanent Missions of Mexico, Netherlands, and other supportive allies, in which She Leads played an active role by participating in negotiations, providing language assistance to various delegations, and facilitating the involvement of two young women in presenting their perspectives at a closed-door meeting with diplomats on this resolution. These types of resolutions are key lobby instruments that can later be used by country networks to advocate to change national legislation.

In the institutional domain, She Leads has built experience and achieved results with a bigger amount of signs of change in the initial steps of the pathway: GYW are increasingly influencing the international space (CSW, HRC, UPR) with concrete recommendations issued to their states, while at the country level, continuous engagements with decision makers show a growing coalition of agents of change within political institutions, especially in subnational spaces. Proximity of local CSOs and GYW to local, sub-national, authorities might explain the progress made at this level. It is worth noting that reforms at the national level require more time and are heavily dependent on momentum and political context. For instance, the current humanitarian crisis in Ethiopia, the lack of government in Lebanon, and the coup and security situation in Mali, heavily impact the possibility of influencing political will, as priorities and attention of decision-makers shift to other topics.

Together with the progress described above, the advocacy efforts during the past 2.5 years have shown some challenges as well. The meaningful participation of GYW in international political spaces like the UN is often ad hoc and tokenistic, youth participation mechanisms are not institutionalised, with a complex and technical language, where English and French predominate excluding many girls. Underrepresentation of GYW from minority and Global South regions results in a significant gap between global forums and the lived experiences of GYW. In addition, spaces for participation in international and regional fora are very limited, offering only a handful of spaces for She Leads. This means that only a few advocates are able to engage annually. Although there are some examples within She Leads of evidence generation and research to support advocacy efforts, this strategy has proven to be more difficult to implement for many organisations who find this task overwhelming and beyond

their capacity. Discussions around gathering data at the local level, including GYW lived experiences, are taking place in several networks.

As She Leads keeps dedicated to promoting the involvement of girls and young women in international arenas, and looking ahead at the program's upcoming years, it becomes now crucial to enhance the collaboration with She Leads organisations in the different country networks, strengthening the link and coordination between international and national advocacy. This collaboration should aim to monitor the implementation of recommendations directed towards states, ensuring their effective utilization in holding governments accountable and driving transformative changes at the national level. This is especially the case of UPR processes that some countries have engaged in with specific recommendations to national states. For efforts at the national level, a strengthened collaboration towards a common goal between the different organisations that are part of country networks should be a priority in the upcoming years. This will mean identifying specific advocacy targets (policies, legislation) and adjusting plans to ensure true joint action.



A YOUTH-LED INITIATIVE LINKS INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL ADVOCACY EFFORTS IN THE MENA REGION

Meet Aroub, a determined young advocate from Jordan, whose journey inspires as she connects regional and international advocacy spaces, empowering young women to make a difference. Her journey, coupled with her involvement with the **Global Advocacy Network (GAN)** and the **MENA regional network**, showcases the impact of youth-led initiatives.

Aroub found out about the UN's Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) through her participation in the UN youth cohort of the GAN. "I realized that many young women in the MENA region lacked opportunities to participate in international decision-making spaces" she says. Hence, she decided to organize an online CSW side event tailored to young women in the region.

It started with forming a team of 15 girls and young women from Palestine, Jordan, Egypt, Tunisia, and Lebanon. The team conducted focus groups and pre-sessions to educate participants about the CSW. "We invited young women from all kinds of backgrounds and from all over the region to participate in the online event", states Aroub. "The aim was to enable girls and young women to participate in the decision-making process and to provide

a learning platform that showcased how CSW engagement can be more inclusive and accessible, despite geographic barriers and access constraints."

In this Middle East CSW side event, the participants joined breakout sessions on various issues relating to girls and young women and gender equality. In these sessions, they engaged with guest speakers and experts. Aroub: "It provided a safe and inclusive space for girls and young women from the Middle East to engage in discussions on gender equality."

The event was a great success with over a hundred participants, most of whom were girls and young women, sharing their CSW recommendations via social media. Their posts reached over 50,000 views. However, the organizers wanted to go beyond just organizing one event to raise awareness. So they formed a community of practice for ongoing exchange, networking, and collaboration on regional issues.

Aroub and her fellow advocates particularly stress the value of connecting regional and international advocacy spaces to deepen and broaden the participation of girls and young women in She Leads.

Aroub (middle) bridges regional and international advocacy to empower young women as leaders – ©Bete van Meeuwen



3.7 Findings on cross-cutting themes

Inclusion, meaningful participation, Safeguarding, and sustainability are key cross-cutting themes identified by She Leads. These are key issues that were researched by GYW researchers during the MTR to better unveil the relationship of She Leads partnership with the GYW/youth-led groups engaged in the programme. A total of 1004 GYW participated in the FGDs and participatory score cards activities led by 28 GYW researchers across 9 country networks.

3.7.1 Inclusion

Inclusiveness, intersectionality, and embracing diversity form an important shared principle of She Leads. While advocating for the inclusion of diverse GYW perspectives at the local and national levels, She Leads aims to ensure this inclusion within the programme as well, so that every GYW, regardless of their identity, is able to take part in programme activities and internal decision-making processes.

First, the **gender composition** of the GYW-led groups involved in She Leads varies between networks. For example, in Kenya, 80% of groups are GYW-only and 17% are mixed-gender. Similarly, in Mali, almost 90% of group members are GYW, and in Lebanon, the gender composition of the groups is exclusively female with no mixed-gender participation. Jordan paints a contrasting picture, in which all groups are mixed-gender. In the other networks, there is a relatively even presence of GYW-only groups and mixed-gender groups. Still, participants in most networks have indicated the importance of engaging more boys and men as allies in She Leads activities. In Sierra Leone, participants noticed that it became easier to promote GYW empowerment when collaborating with BYM. In this research, data on the sexual orientation of group members was not collected due to safeguarding considerations in light of the recently adopted Anti-Homosexuality Act of Uganda.

In terms of **age**, most members of the GYW-led groups in the She Leads networks are generally between 18 and 24 years old. Jordan has the highest participation of those aged 25 or above with a little over 38% of all group members. Some networks include a significant number of members who are below 18 years old. For example, this is 39% in Ethiopia and even 43% in Uganda. Minors who participate in She Leads activities face various challenges such as the risk of safeguarding concerns and parental consent.

School enrolment rates vary significantly between networks. In Ethiopia and Mali, respectively 89% and 75% of group members are enrolled in school. In Uganda, 36% enrolled in school, as the geographical focus of the partnership is in rural and underprivileged urban neighborhoods. In Kenya, this is divided 50/50. Focus group discussions revealed that She Leads group activities sometimes clash with educational commitments.

In Kenya and Mali, the vast majority of the group's members represent the majority **religion and ethnicity**. In Ethiopia, this is even 100%. In Sierra Leone, where there is an even mix of majority and minority religions and ethnicities. Overall, it should be noted that sometimes

a religious or ethnic mix is not possible. Firstly, for geographical reasons: in terms of **area of residence**. Secondly, as evident in Lebanon and Jordan, religion and certain related cultural norms are sensitive topics for disclosure. In the She Leads, this has potentially led to hesitation among some participants to fully engage in discussions and activities related to these themes.

Including persons with disabilities is a vital aspect of She Leads across all networks. For example, in Kenya, one-third of assessed groups have at least one member with a disability. In Uganda, there are GYW-led groups exclusively composed of girls with disabilities. Collaborative efforts, such as sign language interpreters and tailored empowerment programs, have been undertaken to support GYW with disabilities (Ethiopia and Ghana). However, challenges related to accessible meeting locations for persons with disabilities were observed, underscoring the need for deliberate efforts to enhance inclusion.

3.7.2 Meaningful Participation

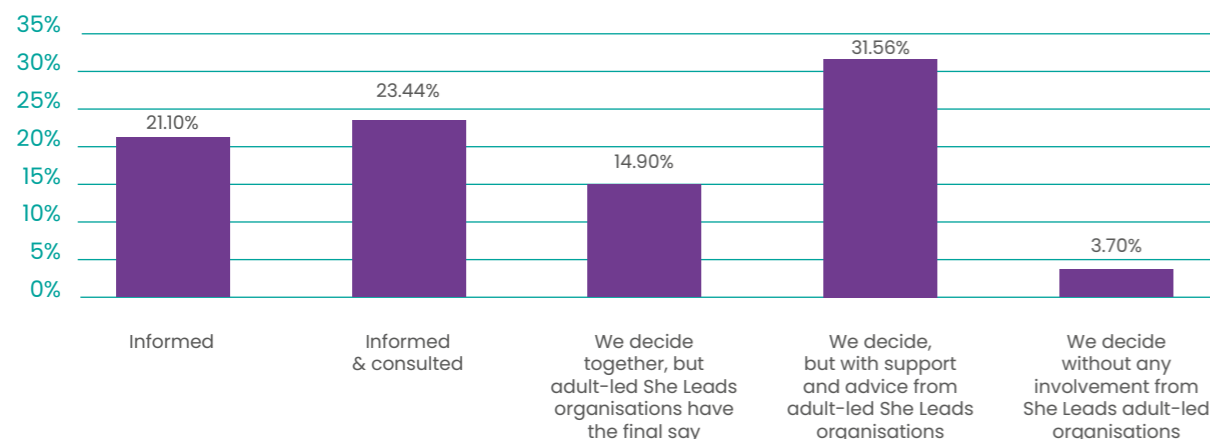
Groups and organisations led by GYW are key partners in the She Leads. The voices and opinions of these GYW are central to the programme, both in design and implementation.

When it comes to GYW's decision-making power in **programme implementation**, one-third of GYW indicated that they are actively involved in decision-making, and adult-led She Leads organisations to offer support and advice. For example, in planning their activities, 66.7% of the participants in Ghana, 81% in Lebanon, and 45% in Mali indicated that they decide together with support and advice from adults. **Overall, GYW reported decision-making power without any involvement from adults the most times in terms of their freedom to implement activities and assess their success.**

Within programme implementation, it seems that GYW have the least decision-making power when it comes to allocating She Leads funds to their groups. GYW report a similar level of decision-making power in defining the support they receive from She Leads. The graph below shows the consolidated decision-making power of GYW participants in terms of programme implementation.

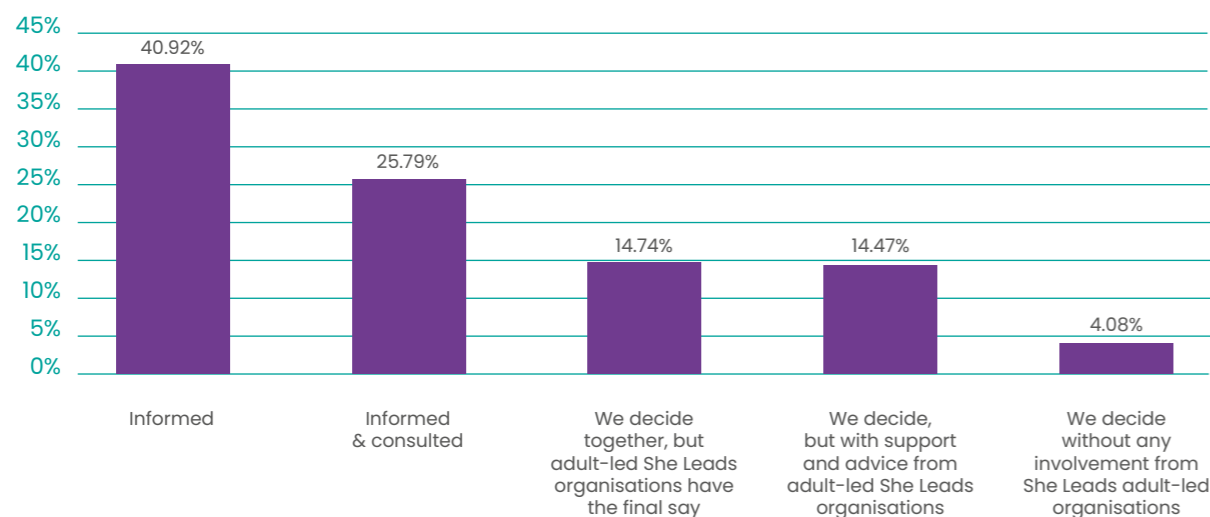


Programme implementation



In comparison to programme implementation, GYW reported overall less active involvement in **network-level decision-making**. Nearly half of GYW report that they are only informed about the agenda for network-level meetings, the collection of Outcome Harvesting signs, and the establishment of new collaborations. The development of the networks' learning agendas seems an adult-led process in which the majority of GYW remain only informed and/or consulted, like in Uganda, Mali, Kenya, Jordan, and Lebanon. GYW have reported the least decision-making power at the network level in terms of funding. Regarding allocation of the joint budget, more than two-thirds of all participants indicate that they are only informed.

Network-level decision making



The graph shows the consolidated decision-making power of GYW participants in terms of network-level decision-making¹³:

To ensure that GYW participation is truly meaningful, the consortium is determined to improve the relationship between the GYW-led groups and adult-led She Leads organisations.

In Liberia and Ethiopia, 80% of GYW indicated that they feel encouraged by She Leads organisations and staff to participate in activities. This is even 100% in Uganda and Ghana and 91% in Lebanon. GYW speak of the "profound positive impact"¹⁴ that She Leads has had on them, encouraging their enthusiastic involvement in programme activities. In Sierra Leone, Jordan, Mali, Ghana, and Lebanon, almost all participants report that network members listen to them and respect their views and opinions. However, the majority of participants in Uganda highlight the limited time to share their views with the network, as GYW representatives are not always invited to She Leads meetings. In Kenya, Liberia, and Ethiopia, around two-thirds of GYW report that they are invited to network meetings and that their opinions and suggestions are incorporated into the programme.

The vast majority of GYW is very positive about the way they receive clear and easy-to-understand (youth-friendly) information about the programme like in Uganda: "[They] provide us with knowledge and information so that we are in the position to advocate for our issues wherever we go." At the same time, they emphasise the need to translate this information into local languages to enable more GYW to understand.

GYW have differing views on whether She Leads organisations and staff are flexible and adjust timeframes and procedures to their specific needs. However, the majority believe that She Leads staff are flexible: "We are always capable of asking questions if we have any concern. Sometimes the time is changed or other choices for timeframes are given."

GYW do not always feel like they can openly question or object to matters related to She Leads and decisions made by staff. In Jordan, participants shared that this uncertainty comes from unfamiliarity with consortium organisations Participants. This indicates a need to build an environment where GYW feel comfortable expressing their concerns.

Main challenges and recommendations

One of the most prominent challenges that GYW reports when trying to participate in She Leads activities is a **lack of financial and material resources**. GYW in almost all networks, particularly those from rural areas, emphasise the logistical ordeal of arranging (often expensive) transportation to She Leads activities. Various participants have also raised the point of a lack of adequate meeting materials and facilities, including pens, chairs, and refreshments.

¹³ This graph excludes data from the FGDs conducted in Ghana due to unavailability of raw data. The 6% that is not represented in this graph either answered "Not informed" or "Not sure/not applicable" to the statements.

¹⁴ Quote from one of the FGDs conducted in Lebanon.

The GYW have shared several recommendations to address this obstacle. Firstly, some have called for increased transparency on She Leads budget allocation and additional support to formally register their groups. Moreover, various GYW recommend capacity-building training on resource mobilization and lobbying to reduce their dependence on adult-led She Leads organisations. This could enhance the degree of financial agency offered to GYW-led groups and organisations.

Most GYW sometimes face **difficulties with combining She Leads activities with other responsibilities, particularly school and (house)work-related**. Other GYW are hesitant to attend activities because they fear this will negatively affect their earnings at work. In addition, some have highlighted the difficulties that young mothers face when trying to participate in She Leads. With no other options available, they sometimes must bring their children along to activities, causing a distraction to others, or not participating at all. To address these obstacles, participants emphasize the need for effective and flexible planning of activities to accommodate the schedules of as many GYW as possible.

GYW from marginalized groups and remote areas commonly report experiencing **feelings of shame and a lack of confidence** when engaging in She Leads activities. This is attributed to persistent negative social gender norms in their communities, with GYW fearing judgment from others. Many GYW are also hesitant to speak or express themselves in public.

In response to these challenges, GYW across all networks emphasizes the crucial importance of having safe spaces. One participant in Sierra Leone recalls a particularly successful case in this regard:

“During a boot camp, one participant from the rural areas was also part of it. Because of the [high number] of girls and young women present, she felt intimidated and was not giving any input. She called her mentor and told her she could not talk because of the other participants. The mentor informed the group leaders about this. They created a space for her to talk, and her input was really outstanding.”¹⁵ In order to deal with negative responses from their parents or community, the GYW recommends more localised outreach and awareness-raising.

In all networks, GYW have called for **increased meaningful participation in network-level engagements and decision-making**. The scorecards revealed that GYW are often only informed about decisions made at the network level, without being consulted or having actual decision-making power. In some networks, participants have reported that their concerns are not always considered, consequently making them feel that they are not worth sharing.

First and foremost, participants have emphasised that they would like to see increased GYW participation in network-level meetings. This includes the annual planning meeting and Outcome Harvesting sessions. GYW report they want to have capacity-building training that

¹⁵ Quote from one of the focus group discussions conducted in Sierra Leone

improves their ability to meaningfully participate in and contribute to these meetings. Such trainings include M&E workshops (e.g. on the Theory of Change) and trainings on report- and proposal writing. Others also suggest computer and English lessons. In a few networks, participants have raised the issue of a lack of communication and synergy between consortium organisations. In a network, participants find it unfortunate that there is little interaction between GYW-led groups hosted by one organisation and those hosted by other organisations. This challenge brings to light opportunities for more joint-learning activities and regular communication.

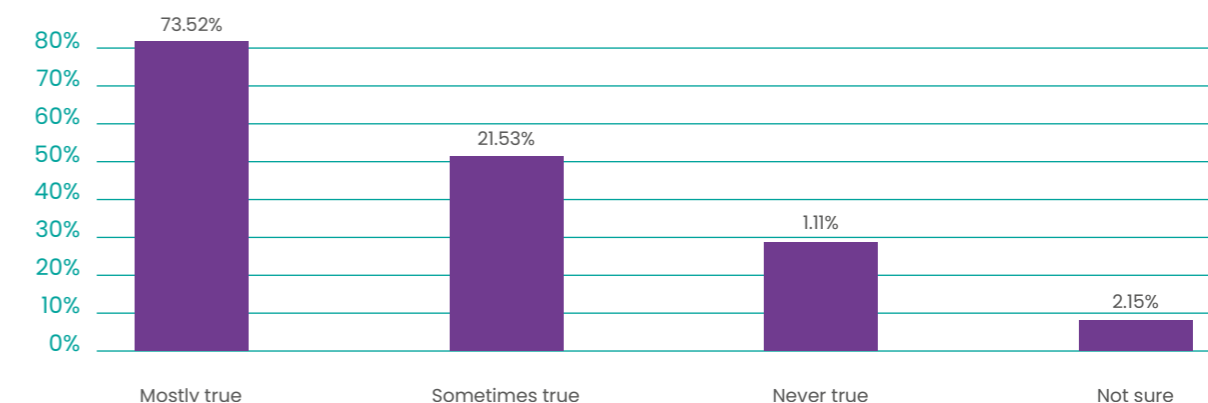
3.7.3 Safeguarding

Safeguarding principles and protocols are fully integrated in all aspects of the programme, taking a gender-responsive and survivor-centred approach.

In all networks, the GYW have shown that they possess a good level of knowledge about She Leads safeguarding policies and protocols. This was assessed through a story approach: the GYW were presented with a hypothetical scenario. The participants highlighted the importance of reporting safeguarding incidents as soon as possible. They were generally well aware of the persons they could reach out to in case of an incident.

The following graph shows that the majority of the GYW participants across all networks find that She Leads organisations and staff members take measures to ensure that they can engage safely and effectively in She Leads actions and decision-making:

She Leads organisations and staff members take measures to ensure that GYW can engage safely and effectively in She Leads actions and decision-making



Several safeguarding measures that consortium members have taken include the appointment of chaperones to activities, meetings and events; comprehensive safeguarding training for staff and contracted partners; the designation of safeguarding focal persons; clear reporting mechanisms; confidential hotlines; screening of personnel; daytime planning of activities; and informed (parental) consent practices. The GYW were particularly positive about the designation of safe spaces, where access is restricted to authorised

personnel. In Ghana, participants provided the example of a secure walk-in centre in Kumasi that serves as a dedicated safe space where they feel at ease.

The GYW's knowledge of and trust in She Leads safeguarding policies and procedures is at a good level. However, there continues to be room for improvement: not every participant was aware of the existence of a safeguarding focal point, and some expressed that GYW may find it difficult to report an incident due to shame or a lack of confidence. Therefore, there is a need for safeguarding refreshers and briefings for both GYW and staff and involving parents in these awareness-raising efforts, enabling them to play an active role in their safeguarding as well.

3.7.4 Sustainability

She Leads builds on the previous work done in the project counties through the Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA) and in some programme countries. As a result, She Leads is reaching impact beyond the programme, especially due to continuous engagement and influencing activities with the traditional leaders, boys and young men, and local, national, and international institutions.

Since She Leads focuses its main activities on enhancing the skills and knowledge of GYW, including male champions, and local leaders (the community chairmen, chair ladies, youth, and traditional and religious leaders), it showed signs of sustaining immediate and long-term gains. Some strategies that would further solidify this work include: linking She Leads networks to other networks and girl-led social movements; activating mentorship forum and strengthening mentorship/ alumni fora as well as supporting linkages to other CSOs.

3.7.5 Climate

By design, the program was set out to offer support and a platform for GYW to pinpoint the issues that impact them directly and to develop advocacy strategies addressing these concerns. Within this framework, various general topics have been raised by GYW themselves, such as gender-based violence, child marriage, SRHR, access to education, political participation and young female leadership, etc. Even though climate change was not initially included in the program proposal as a cross-cutting issue, it has organically become a significant aspect of the program's implementation.

Many networks, including those in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, Uganda, Mali, Kenya, and the MENA region, consider climate change a significant obstacle to the meaningful participation of GYW in decision-making processes. For instance, East Africa experienced droughts and erratic rainfall in 2021, leading to increased displacement. GYW faced greater pressure to leave school and contribute to family income, given that women are predominantly involved in agriculture and often serve as primary providers for their families. This makes them especially vulnerable due to a combination of food scarcity and deeply rooted gender inequalities. In this context, it is not surprising that GYW have been raising this issue since

the beginning of the program and in some cases, deciding to make climate change part of their advocacy agenda. In Lebanon, one of the GYW newly created groups identified climate change as their main advocacy purpose. Especially in the global forum, with the backing of She Leads, GYW have underscored the significance of climate change. During CSW66, GYW representatives demanded accountability from governments, emphasizing the intricate links between the climate crisis and violence against women and girls. Likewise, at the UN water conference in 2023, GYW pushed for a gender-transformative response to climate-related Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) challenges. At the end of 2022, GYW advocates from the UN cohorts identified the need to prioritize this topic, which led to the creation of a new international cohort with the specific aim of lobbying and advocating for measures to tackle climate change.

In light of the program's evolution and the pressing concerns raised by GYW, it is crucial for the She Leads program to continue supporting advocacy on this issue. The program's success lies in its ability to adapt and respond to the dynamic needs of GYW. Moving forward, it is recommended that She Leads explores new ways of supporting GYW in this quest. This can be done either through the provision of training, facilitation of knowledge exchange, the establishment of linkages with other organizations and/or key actors, and especially supporting the creation of advocacy spaces for GYW to raise their voice to drive meaningful change, and be listened to not only in the global stage but also in their communities and local governments.



4 PARTNERSHIP, COLLABORATION & POWER-SHARING

4.1 Introduction

An online survey by a team at Plan International in the Netherlands between February and July 2023, identified enabling and disabling dimensions for collaboration within the partnership and assessed decision-making power dynamics. This chapter captures the outcomes of the partnership assessment as derived from the survey, participatory reflection meetings, and the validation workshop.

4.1.1 Conceptual framework

A conceptual framework for the assessment of enabling and disabling partnership dimensions was developed building on extensive (action and empirical) research and organisational network theory that indicates that successful¹⁶ partnerships across sectors and (cultural) contexts have key characteristics in common. In the [Brokering Better Partnerships Handbook](#), these critical success factors are grouped into four partnership dimensions: efficiency & effectiveness; approach; attitudes & competencies; and results & productivity. The research team added a fifth one to do justice to the essential role of resources & funding in partnerships, as underlined by a study by branch organisation Partos in 2022.

To assess power relations within the partnership, elements of the Partos Power Awareness Tool were integrated into the survey. This tool focuses on decision-making as the gauge of power dynamics. The survey asks respondents to assess the level of participation of their organisation in decision-making throughout the partnership cycle. It provides insight into the distribution and dynamics of power and enables a comparison of the decision-making power of global North and global South partners, INGOs and local NGOs - where She Leads aspires to shift power in accordance with its shared principle of Leading from the South. The partnership dimensions and partnership cycles are elaborated on in [Annex D](#) of this report.

4.1.2 Survey design, sampling, and analysis

The survey recorded key attributes of respondents and their organisations; their agreement¹⁷ with statements capturing the indicators of the partnership dimensions; and

¹⁶ Success of partnerships is often understood in terms of the social outcomes that they aim to achieve. Measurement of outcomes at these levels has methodological, practical and ethical challenges, notably for partnerships like She Leads that address complex social issues. Alternative models assess partnership success in terms of outcomes at the level of the partnership, the individuals involved (as representatives of constituent organisations) and the constituent organisations.

¹⁷ On a five-point Likert scale: (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neutral, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree.

their perception¹⁸ of their organisation's participation in specified decision-making items. It also includes open questions and questions on interactions with the MFA and embassies. Out of 196 individuals representing organisations involved at the global (consortium), international (regional), national (country), and sub-national (district, province, or community) levels of the consortium, 106 (54%) successfully completed the survey. Only employees and organisations with contractual relationships were targeted. The survey was administered using the Kobo Toolbox. SPSS and Stata were used for descriptive analysis and Atlas.ti for the analysis of qualitative information.

4.2 Assumptions

Although the conceptual framework is grounded in research, it has not (yet) been scientifically tested. In fact, current literature on organisational networks does not provide a comprehensive model for evaluating partnerships. The assumption is nevertheless that the conceptual framework is relevant for She Leads, and that it will feed new insights, reflection, and actionable recommendations. Secondly, with regards to the power analysis, it is assumed that relationships between Northern-based (I)NGOs and Southern-based (I)NGOs in the partnership are characterised by power imbalances and that the North-South divide is more decisive than organisational size or accountability relations. Finally, it is assumed that if partners have a better understanding of power dynamics, they will work towards shifting power in line with their shared principles. In some cases, institutional-level power dimensions are at play that is beyond the direct influence of the respondents or their organisations.

4.3 Key Findings and Discussions

4.3.1 Description of respondents and their organisations

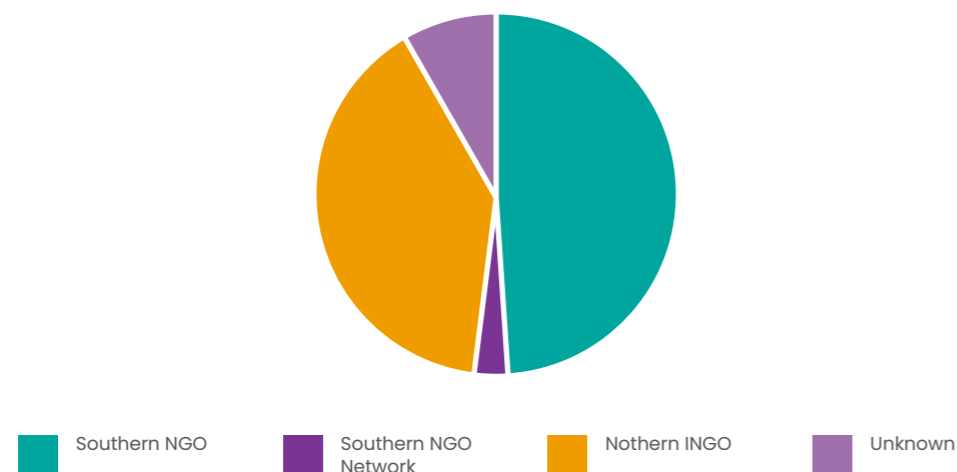
The vast majority of respondents (72%) identify as female. The age groups 25 – 34 and 35 – 44 are practically equally represented and together account for 75% of the respondents. A good deal (40%) is active in more than one position in the partnership. The largest group (35%, N=37) is primarily engaged in the country or regional networks, and the second largest group (14%) is programme officer/manager. Well over half of the respondents (60%) have been involved in She Leads from the beginning. Most (37%) work almost exclusively on She Leads, while one-third (33%) spend more than half of their working time on She Leads.

The respondents' organisations are located across the programme countries and in the Netherlands. Best represented are Sierra Leone and the Netherlands with 16 respondents each (15%); the smallest representations are from Ghana and Jordan with 6 respondents each (6%).

¹⁸ On a five-point Likert scale based on the Partos Power Awareness Tool: (1) not involved; (2) informed about the decision made, (3) consulted before the decision was made, (4) co-decided, (5) decided

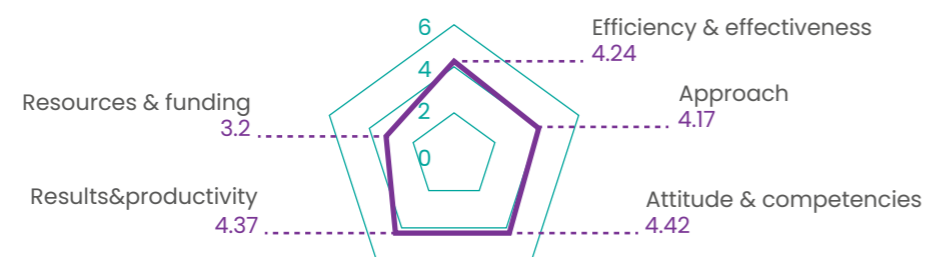
Half of the respondents (49%) work for a Southern NGO that does not form part of a larger international organisation (i.e. DCI national sections and ECPAT network members, FEMNET network members, and partner organisations of Plan International and Terre des Hommes). A small number (3%) could be linked – based on the outcomes of the survey – to a Southern network (i.e. FEMNET). Most other respondents (40%) work for a Northern-based INGO. Some two-thirds of these (62%) are based in the Global South, working for country offices of Plan International and Terre des Hommes; the rest (38%) are based in the Netherlands and work for Plan International Netherlands, DCI-ECPAT Netherlands or Terre des Hommes The Netherlands.

Respondents' organisations



4.3.2 Results and discussion per partnership dimension

Dimension scores



The survey outcomes indicate that all dimensions of the partnership as outlined above have an enabling influence on collaboration within She Leads. The highest enabling dimension is **Attitudes & competencies** (4.42 on a constructed scale from 1 to 5). The least enabling dimension is **Resources & funding** (3.2).

With an average score of 4.24, the dimension of **Efficiency and effectiveness** can be considered as highly enabling for collaboration. Respondents have a clear vision of what She Leads stands for and aims to achieve, and they are well aware of their roles and of what is expected from them. It is clear who the lead organisation¹⁹ is, and coordination by the lead organisation and by network coordinators is across the board appreciated as effective and positive. Senior management of the organisations involved is seen to appreciate She Leads as an important partnership and to support their staff in their work for it.

Responses are less pronouncedly positive about processes for decision-making, conflict resolution, monitoring, and reporting within the partnership. Some feel that performance reviews, dialogue, and reflection should be put on the agenda more regularly, and most notably that there should be more exchange of information across the partnership, including between regional and country networks. Outcome harvesting meetings, joint annual planning and reflection exercises, online webinars, regular network meetings, the Peer Support Initiative (PSI), and internal newsletters are repeatedly mentioned as helpful practices, as well as good connections between the network coordinators through the PSI and regular communications and contact. There is nevertheless a call for more exchange of information, within country and regional networks as well as across country and regional networks – as is confirmed during reflection and validation meetings. Suggestions include an online SharePoint for storage and exchange of documented learnings, more face-to-face meetings, co-designed learning events, more frequent internal newsletters, and peer-to-peer monitoring and evaluation.

Internal communication and other collaborative mechanisms are important preconditions for transparency and mutual accountability. Not surprisingly, respondents are slightly reticent when it comes to mutual feedback on performance within She Leads. Mutual accountability is not perceived as self-evident in She Leads – at least not at the level of country and regional networks.

Finally, although the survey indicates overall clarity about roles and responsibilities in the partnership, reflection, and validation meetings underscored the need to further elaborate and clarify the role and responsibilities of the GGYWB. On which levels and items does the GGYWB advise the consortium, how do its members connect with the consortium (at the country and regional network level and at the global consortium level), and how can the consortium be accountable to the GGYWB? Moreover, network coordinators of some country and/or regional networks indicated that documentation of roles and responsibilities of constituent organisations would facilitate mutual accountability and strengthen collaboration.

The **approach** to collaboration within the partnership was scored slightly lower (4.17) but is still considered highly enabling. Respondents' inputs and opinions are respected and taken

¹⁹ Although the consortium organisations each take a coordinating role in one or more countries, 'lead organisation' was in the survey understood as the overall consortium lead (Plan).

into consideration, and they generally feel that others understand what their organisation brings to the partnership. There's slightly less confidence that the way organisations work is fully understood by others, and that the strengths and expertise of organisations are well utilised in the partnership. This is especially true for grassroots and smaller organisations in their collaboration with INGOs within She Leads. During reflection and validation, participants confirmed that there is room to deepen, at the network level, knowledge of each other's organisations and of the strengths and values of these organisations, for better appreciation and utilisation of the diversity within the consortium.

Considerable differences were observed between networks. Most respondents are positive and some describe the collaboration in their network as smooth and amicable, but others mention a lack of alignment and competitiveness at the network level. The fact that partners at the country level had no say in the choice of organizations to collaborate with is clearly seen as unhelpful for strong collaboration at this level.

The highest enabling effects (4.42) come from the **Attitudes and competencies** of the people involved. There are strong indications of engagement, commitment, and contribution. The goals and vision of the partnership align well with those of the participating organisations and also resonate, inspire and motivate at the individual level. Respondents generally experience a sense of belonging and they enjoy discussing She Leads with outsiders. New and relevant information is readily shared, yet full and visible recognition of the work put into She Leads is also considered important – which is consistent with observations shared during reflection and validation meetings that the precedence of organisational interests is sometimes hampering collaborative efforts. Joint activities are seen as an important way to further foster and capitalize on the existing engagement and commitment.

The survey moreover suggests that the people engaged in She Leads are generally well placed for working in partnerships. Most respondents feel that they have the right skills and knowledge to perform their role(s) in the partnership. A good deal of them prefers settings that are more typically associated with working in single organisations contexts, with strict adherence to set roles and responsibilities, but the majority prefer working in environments that foster creativity and flexibility, which is typically considered an advantage for working in partnerships. Still, there is an expressed need for more flexibility, partly in terms and conditions, processes, and procedures, but certainly also in mindsets and willingness to adapt to changing circumstances and to broaden the focus beyond short-term goals. Within She Leads, a basic level of trust is experienced. Although there is some reservation as to whether organisations are open and transparent about their participation and investments in the partnership, respondents report that they generally know what to expect from the other organisations. By way of explanation, respondents indicate that sharing information about budgets and mechanisms for budget allocation could support transparency and mutual understanding.

With the second highest score (4.37), the Results and productivity dimension can also be considered as a highly enabling influence on collaboration. Respondents confirm that She Leads helps organisations to achieve their organisational level goals, and generally agree

that it brings new opportunities and benefits for their organisation. More so, they agree that through joint advocacy and a common voice, the partnership helps organisations to realise a wider impact and influence than on their own. There is widespread agreement that She Leads is likely to succeed in achieving its objectives.

Respondents are slightly less univocal on the opportunities and benefits that She Leads brings for them as individuals. The vast majority (95%) find that She Leads makes their work more satisfying or pleasant, but for 5%, She Leads makes work more disagreeable, troublesome, or even frustrating. The quantitative data moreover shows that for some respondents, work in She Leads is demanding more time than they have available. The fact that many are involved in multiple roles in the partnership supports the impression that She Leads is no exception to the general rule that working in partnerships often increases workloads for those involved. This seems to be especially true for colleagues from smaller organisations.

The least enabling elements are related to **Resources and funding**. With an average score of 3.2, this dimension is still considered a moderately enabling influence on collaboration, but positive effects are clearly weaker. Respondents are most outspoken about the activity budget and the overhead costs available for their organisations. The budgets that organisations receive through the partnership are often seen as insufficient for the activities they are expected to implement, and as inadequate to cover the costs of maintaining the organisational (infra)structure or the actual hours that staff spend on the partnership. There is not just an expressed need for more budget, but especially for more flexibility and alignment of internal processes and procedures across organisations to revise and adjust budgets to evolving circumstances. Network coordinators are especially outspoken in this respect, as they manage the networks' joint (coordination) budgets, and rally budget and other resources from network member organisations to act on emerging opportunities for (joint) advocacy – there is a clear demand for more resources for more joint activities. Funding for (activities of) the GGYWB is also a topic mentioned as deserving more attention and clarity. Some positive assessments of the fairness of contributions, resources, and funding were noted as well, but more insight in mechanisms for budget allocation (across organisations and partners) would increase mutual understanding and foster realistic expectations.

Funding arrangements within She Leads (including monitoring and reporting requirements, and processes and procedures around transfers and receipt of funding) are generally clear, and do not particularly strain or restrict organisations' business operations. Overall, respondents do not perceive participation in She Leads as a heavy burden on their organisation's available (human) resources. However, reporting requirements – especially IATI – are repeatedly mentioned as burdensome, and relaxation of (internal) bureaucracy would be welcomed as this would free up time and resources for implementation.

The lower appreciation of resources and funding in the partnership is consistent across countries. Attitudes and competencies were appreciated as the strongest enabling factor for collaboration by respondents from all countries except for those from the Netherlands, Kenya, Ghana, and Jordan, who were just slightly more positive on the results and produc-

tivity dimension or the effectiveness and efficiency dimension – which were scored as second and third most enabling dimensions overall.

With regards to personal attributes, the most noticeable observation is that representatives of strategic or technical partners (2%) score lowest on all dimensions. These include representatives of the MFA and embassies who operate at a relatively larger distance from – and are not directly involved in – actual implementation. Country or regional network coordinators (11%) report significantly higher than other respondents. This is consistent with the finding that respondents for whom She Leads form the sole (or main) focus of their work score relatively high on all dimensions. These respondents are also by the nature of their positions in the partnership more intensively involved in collaboration and dynamics between the different organisations.

4.3.3 Results and discussion on decision-making power

Differences in decision-making power are most pronounced for the scoping & building phase, where potential partners are identified, mapping and planning take place and (formal) partnership agreements are concluded. The largest portion of the sample (15%) reports that their organisation co-decided (score 4) on these aspects, but 9% recorded that their organisation was only informed about decisions after they had been made (score 2). Overall, during this phase, participation in decision-making was relatively low (3.42) compared to other phases. Differences in decision-making power gradually decrease in the consecutive partnership phases, with 31% of respondents indicating that their organisations co-decide during the phase of sustaining outcomes, where key decisions are made on sharing knowledge and experience, scaling and increasing impact, and the future of the partnership during the phase of sustaining outcomes. Participation in decision-making during this phase is assessed as relatively high (3.7).

Apart from the actual level of participation in decision-making, the survey also assessed the desired level of participation in decision-making. Overall, even though differences between actual and desired levels are relatively small, respondents desired greater involvement in decision-making for their organisations in all phases of the cycle, but especially so during scoping & building and reviewing & revising.

Respondents representing partners from the Global North (36%) consistently assess their organisations' participation in decision-making higher than respondents representing partners from the Global South (61%). Respondents involved in diplomacy (representing the MFA and embassies) (5%) assess their organisation's involvement in decision-making as markedly and consistently lower than others. They are less involved in decision-making in all stages, but are generally still informed about decisions made. This is consistent with the significantly low perceived decision-making power of strategic and technical partners (2%), with average scores between 1,4 and 2,0 for all partnership stages. Members of the board of directors (3%) and the Global Steering Committee (12%) score relatively high throughout the partnering cycle.

Furthermore, levels of perceived participation in decision-making differ depending on whether respondents spend a larger or smaller part of their working time on the partnership. Those who work on the partnership only occasionally (8%) report below-average decision-making power. The highest decision-making power (3,6 or higher) across all partnering stages lies with people spending almost all of their working time on the partnership (37%). In terms of gender, male respondents (28%) on average reported slightly higher decision-making power than females (72%) throughout the entire partnering cycle. When looking at age, there are no big differences in the first two stages. In the reviewing & revising and sustaining outcomes stages, respondents in age groups 45–54 (16%) and 55+ (2%) review themselves as having the most decision-making power (3,7 to 4,3) as compared to the other age groups.

4.3.4 Reflections on interactions with the MFA and embassies

The largest group of respondents (44%) had, at the time of the survey, never been in contact with the MFA or one of its embassies. Another 20% interacted only once or twice; 26% 1–5 times per year. Less than 3% contacted the MFA or embassies monthly or more often. The interactions were appreciated with an average of 6,8 on a scale from 1 (highly unsatisfactory) to 10 (highly satisfactory). However, 24%²⁰ rate their contacts with the MFA or embassies as unsatisfactory (5 or lower). The qualitative data confirms that interactions, notably with embassies, are often experienced as quite strenuous, especially in terms of time commitment and accountability requirements, and that there is an overall lack of clarity on the role of the MFA and the embassies in the partnership.

Interactions with the MFA and embassies are often about the exchange of information (21%), receiving information (18%), or coordination with other partnerships (17%). Providing information and strategic discussions are also important themes (15%). Exploring opportunities (for further collaboration) is less often mentioned (13%). There is an expressed desire among respondents for more effective interaction with the MFA and embassies to strengthen the connection with the program. At current, there is a feeling of disconnect and lack of flexibility from the side of the MFA and/or embassies to adapt to changing circumstances.

4.3.5 Conclusions

Based on the survey findings, it can be concluded that the She Leads consortium is experienced as a valuable partnership. The work in She Leads contributes not only to the joint goals and vision but also to those of the organisations and individuals involved in the partnership. People's opinions are valued and one feels appreciated as being part of She Leads. Being part of the partnership generally contributes to a higher satisfaction and pleasant experience in people's work, although especially for colleagues from smaller organizations, She Leads can cost more time than people have available. Roles and responsibilities are generally clear, but there is a need to clarify these for the GGYWB.

²⁰ After filtering the sample for respondents who did not interact with the MFA or its embassies, a sample of 54 remained for the analysis of interactions with the MFA and embassies.

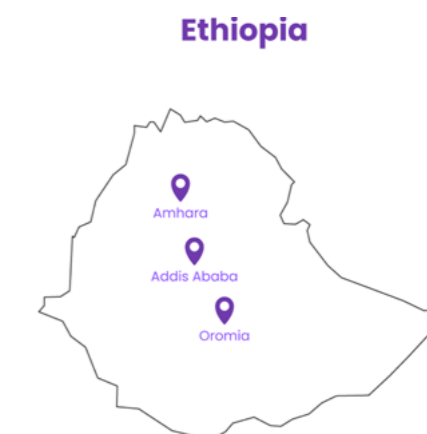
Collaboration, coordination, and networking within She Leads are appreciated, and there is an overall feeling that the quality of collaboration has grown over time. Nevertheless, more exchange of information would further strengthen the functioning of collaborative mechanisms and contribute to greater transparency, mutual accountability, and the realisation of synergy. This includes sharing of experiences and lessons learned from program implementation, regular (joint) review of progress in realising outputs and outcomes, exchange on strengths and peculiarities of network member organisations, openness on budgets and other resources, and insight into mechanisms for budget allocation throughout the partnership.

There is also an expressed need for more flexibility, in processes and procedures as well as in mindsets and willingness to adjust to changing circumstances and to respond to emerging needs and opportunities for (joint) advocacy. Country and regional network coordinators especially, call for more pooled resources for joint activities, and the streamlining of processes and procedures and internal bureaucracy to make these readily available. Finally, there is also some desire to have more equal decision-making power and involvement throughout the partnership cycle. In annex E, we will answer the key questions the partnership assessment set out to address.

5 NETWORK HIGHLIGHTS

5.1 Ethiopia Network

# of laws influenced	0
# of by-laws influenced	157
# GYW groups engaged	29
% of GYW reporting that they are involved in decision making about implementation	10%



5.1.1 Introduction Ethiopia Network

The She Leads consortium partners in Ethiopia include the coordinating organisation Terre des Hommes Netherlands (TdH NL), Plan International Ethiopia, and FEMNET (Tier 1 organisations). Implementing partners include; the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association (EWLA), Network of Ethiopian Women’s Associations (NEWA), New Millennium Hope Development Organisation, and The Yellow Movement (Tier 2 organisations). The organisations work in close partnership with several local CSOs (Tier 3 organisations). She Leads is operational in different parts of Ethiopia with a focus on the Amhara and Oromia regions. Primary targets include; early married GYW, internally displaced girls, school-going and out-of-school girls, GYW in industrial parks and universities, GYW with a disability, GYW at risk of migration, and returnees.

5.1.2 Context analysis

Political: The 2021 Ethiopian general parliamentary election caused difficulty in accessing government officials and delays in She Leads’ advocacy activities. The war that erupted in northern Ethiopia immensely impacted GYW with an increase in child marriage, and a myriad of rape, harassment, and femicide. This long-time conflict resulted also in the closure of most universities in the North (Tigray and Amhara regions), delaying GYW education activities and directly affecting project plans.

Socio-economic: The COVID-19 pandemic, especially in 2021, affected program implementation as restrictions were made on mass mobilisation or campaign-based interventions. Also, due to the high inflation rates (32.0% in 2023), the She Leads had to reduce the scope of programmatic activities and targets while making budget amendments to fit in with the allocated budget without compromising on outputs.



During the 16 Days of Activism, Kideest (16) protests against Gender-Based Violence. Her sign reads **Lets respect women at home**
©Martha Tadesse



During the 16 Days of Activism, Ethiopian school clubs organise activities to draw attention to gender-based violence
©Martha Tadesse

Technological: The blockade of social media caused delays in implementation of online advocacy campaigns, affecting the social mobilisation and advocacy efforts of She Leads.

Socio-cultural: It is important to anticipate that the internal hostilities that have been happening in some parts of the country will continue during the second half of the She Leads period resulting in anti-government protests and related violence, excessive inflation, and social instability. For instance, the ongoing and long-lasting ethno-religious conflicts may affect She Leads' effort to engage religious and traditional leaders as champions of change.

Civil society: New government directives to facilitate the space for more associations/CSOs to function and be registered created a positive energy and conducive environment for the She Leads network in upgrading existing informal GYW associations to a formal structure.

Internal changes: Following the current economic inflation, the She Leads Ethiopia network has been challenged by key staff turnover which negatively impacted the overall performance of the program.

5.1.3 Risk analysis

Safeguarding: in some occasions, a limited engagement of GYWs, an outdated safeguarding policy, and a lack of funding for a chaperone have occurred. In addition, GYWs have faced discrimination and safety issues as they have been nicknamed and harassed by men and boys due to their advocacy engagement in the program. Mitigation measures include awareness-raising sessions, life skills training for GYWs, and capacity-building support for local organisations to revise safeguarding policies.

Contextual Risks: like political instability, the COVID-19 pandemic, and economic inflation have impacted the program. In addition, as government attention is focused on the humanitarian conflict, security issues related to interethnic conflict and civil unrest made participants of activities feel uncomfortable or unsafe. Mitigation strategies include promoting human equality, creating security plans, raising awareness of COVID-19, and lobbying for budget adjustments, and re-discussing them with partners. There are high expectations for GYW livelihood support and demands for income-generating activities in the context of high unemployment and humanitarian crises. In this context, L&A has been considered a luxury approach. Mitigation measures include clarifying program scopes, linking GYW with micro-finance institutions, and engaging stakeholders in consultative meetings.

Organizational risks: included difficulties in selecting partners (as most in Ethiopia focus on service delivery, not on advocacy), outdated policies from partners affecting compliance, providing grants for unregistered GYW-led groups, and high staff turnover. Mitigation involved selecting partners based on criteria, partner capacity building, assisting CSOs with legal registration, and offering competitive benefits packages.

Technological risks: may include potential technical failures, the digital divide for disadvantaged GYW, and dependency on technology. Mitigation includes providing technical support, using accessible media outlets, raising awareness about technology-related risks, and ensuring community engagement.

5.1.4 Analysis of basket outcome indicator data

WRGE indicator 2.1: # laws, policies, and strategies blocked, adopted, or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private, and civic spheres. (link SCS2).			
	Quantitative measurement		
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG012: # of laws	1	0	1
WRG013: # of governmental policies	1	0	1
WRG015: # of by-laws	256	151	256

The improvement of the Ethiopian Revised Family Code 10 gives room for GYW to make/ involve in decisions related to practices that affect them such as child marriage. She Leads works through the GYW-led association and has formed a national task force comprising government representatives, NGOs, CSOs, and GYW and has started bringing GYW issues to the attention of policy and decision-makers. By December 2022, through capacity building and social mobilization efforts, 116 Iddirs (42.3% of the 2025 target) have revised their by-laws to end child marriage and strengthen community-based child protection mechanisms.

WRGE indicator 2.2: # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private, and civic spheres, through agenda-setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.			
Quantitative measurement			
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG017: # of times at the national, regional, and international level	8	13	19
WRG018: # of times at the subnational level	9	33	49

Finally, She Leads and CSOs have successfully influenced the debate and created space for women's voices and agency in decision-making processes at various levels, both nationally and subnationally, surpassing their 2025 targets significantly. If She Leads continues with the current momentum, the performance rate will be more than 500% for sub-national level targets (WRG018) and 167% for national, regional, and international level targets (WRG017) by the end of 2025. Therefore, a revision of targets was suggested.

5.1.5 Network-level ToC Reflection

Assumptions: Most of the assumptions made during the inception period of the project are still valid and help guide the change process. However, some assumptions should be reconsidered during the second half of the project period. (Eg. decline in COVID-19 infections reduces the pandemic's risk to project implementation)

Strategies: There are variations in the contribution of the different strategies to achieving long-term outcomes (Eg. L&A has contributed to fewer signs of change than other strategies). She Leads Ethiopia should reflect on the use and effectiveness of these strategies and consider adjustments.

Intermediate outcomes: Some outcomes were not significantly impacted by the program implementation, so they need to be revisited. For example, in Outcome 1, there is a need to unpack the role of traditional leaders, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), religious leaders, parents, and caregivers as champions of change. The focus has primarily been on

CBOs, and the role of the others is not well-documented. It's also worth considering whether the engagement of boys and men in transforming gender norms should be a precondition for GYW to become visible role models, or vice versa. Outcome 3 shows signs of change, but there is a disconnect between the changes and their corresponding intermediate outcomes. The ToC may need to reflect these nuances, including building blocks related to international influences and revisiting the logical linkage of the change pathway.

5.2 Uganda Network

# of laws influenced	5
# of by-laws influenced	3
# GYW groups engaged	51
% of GYW reporting that they are involved in decision making about implementation	47.5%



5.2.1 Introduction Uganda Network

She Leads consortium partners in Uganda include coordinating organisation TdH NL, Plan International Uganda, and FEMNET (Tier 1 organisations). The implementing partners include; the Girl Up Initiative Uganda (GUIU), the Multi Community Based Development Initiative (MUCOBADI), Karamoja Women Umbrella Organisation (KAWUO), YADNET Uganda, the Trail Blazers Mentoring Foundation, Global Learning for Sustainability (GLS) and Integrated Disabled Women Activities (IDWA) (Tier 2 organisations). The organisations work in close partnership with over twenty local CSOs (Tier 3 organisations).

She Leads is operational in different parts of Uganda, including Napak, Moroto, Bugiri, Iganga, Kamuli, Buyende, Kampala, and Wakiso districts. The Network follows an advisory structure with a country Network (including the country network steering committee) that is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and operations and a Country Steering Committee, which is the final decision-making body in the network.

5.2.2 Context Analysis

Political changes: The compulsory disarmament program in Karamoja has led to a decline in male participation in project activities because of fears of government arrest. Collaborative efforts with the government and the Peace Committee, with support from the United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS) assess and advise on safety before project activities are undertaken. These conditions often lead to project implementation delays. Additionally, the enactment of Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Act 2023 elicited inter-

national backlash, leading to the suspension of World Bank funding for the country, and the relocation of UNHCR operations from Uganda to Kenya. Furthermore, the shrinking civic space, e.g. the stringent conditionalities for the operation of the civil society led to the closure of Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) and the halting of funding to some of our partners who were implementing complementary activities.

Socio-cultural changes: The emergence of the male movement in Uganda is diverting attention from GYW's agenda. While male involvement is one of the key strategies under our programme, the overemphasis in all advocacy spaces for boys and men to be included as beneficiaries in girl-centered programmes contributes to a shrinking social space for advocacy on girls' rights. Relatedly, the local leaders' misconceptions about GYW involvement in politics, viewing them as potential competitors in the 2026 government elections affects the programme plan of GYW being mentored by the women in leadership, and closing the generational gap in building a joint movement for GYW participation in decision making.

Environmental changes: The ban on charcoal burning, causing livelihood loss and potential security threats. Dry spells in Eastern Uganda affected engagements with GYW living with albinism, while urban flooding disrupted some of the activities.

Technological changes: Disparities emerged due to the increased use of digital platforms post-COVID-19. The digital divide affects GYW with especially limited digital skills, internet availability, and affordability. GYW still faces challenges with online applications and time zone comprehension. GYW with hearing impairments often find it difficult to participate.

Internal changes: The internal composition, structure, and organization of the Uganda Network have had a number of developments. New GYW representatives were selected for the country steering committee (1 Young Woman), the country network (2 Young Women), the UN (1 Girl and 3 Young Women), and the Human Rights Council (3 Young Women). There were staff changes in the network organizations; the Program Coordinator at TdH NL left for further studies, the Project Manager at Plan International took up another role, and project officers at GLS and IDIWA left the organizations. All the positions have since been re-filled. Also, in order to amplify the voices of GYW in leadership, GUIU and GLS selected GYW representatives for their governance boards. A girls' advisory council was also formed by GUIU.

5.2.3 Risk analysis

Safety and security risks affect **safeguarding** in places where activities take place. If not assessed, beneficiaries risk being attacked, defiled, kidnapped, and even killed given the security situation in some of the areas, e.g. Karamoja. Conflicts amongst GYW groups related to various issues such as differing opinions, competition for resources and opportunities, leadership struggles, or misunderstandings among GYW in the project.

Environmental risks: include a long period of drought in rural areas causing famine amongst communities, and heavy rains causing floods and impassable roads.

Contextual risks: include Inflation, a surge in commodity prices; that has caused a slowdown in purchasing power of the general public due to high prices of commodities, and increased vulnerability of GYW.

Organizational risks: are related to staff turnover- nearly 70% of the staff who started the program and had understood the TOC left, while new staff are still getting to know the project, leading to slow implementation.

Analysis of basket outcome indicator data

5.2.4 Analysis of basket outcome indicator data

WRGE indicator 2.1: # of laws, policies, and strategies blocked, adopted, or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in the public, private, and civic spheres. (link SCS2).

Quantitative measurement			
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG012: # of laws	3	1	3
WRG013: # of governmental policies	7	4	8
WRG015: # of by-laws	5	3	10
WRG016: # of international agreements	0	8	8

The Succession Amendment Bill 2018 was improved by pushing for it to address the gaps in succession, and unequal distribution of property based on gender. Unlike at local government level, the national level influencing processes are slower given the many players and competing priorities. In terms of policies and strategies, the network improved a local Child Protection Ordinance. At local government level, the network achieved the passing of a Resolution to regulate the operation of Street dances and lodge, Child Safeguarding By-Law which restricts children and girls from hawking goods and moving at the trading centers past 6pm was drafted, a resolution to regulate late night markets to protect girls from engaging in the late night market was passed.

WRGE indicator 2.2: # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private, and civic spheres, through agenda-setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.

Quantitative measurement			
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG017: # of times at the national, regional, and international level	4	4	10
WRG018: # of times at the subnational level	8	35	55

The consortium collaborated with the Netherlands Embassy in Uganda and Uganda Women Parliamentary Association (UWOPA) and tabled a motion on Elimination of Violence against women and women and Girls and at the floor of parliament. CSOs succeeded in creating spaces for GYW to engage with the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) and the Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRD). Safe spaces were created for girls advocacy in the 8 districts where the project is implemented in Uganda.

5.2.5 Network-level ToC Reflection

Civil society domain: The consortium resolved to strengthen engagements with Tier 3 organizations for sustainability, and also as a strategy to influence them to institutionalize the GYW agenda. All assumptions under the CSO domain are still valid.

Socio-cultural domain: The assumptions under the social norm domain are still valid. However, one of them; ‘Positive portrayal of GYW by religious, traditional, and local leaders are influential in changing perceptions and attitudes’ was amended to include the media, given its critical role in influencing perspectives about GYW.

Institutional domain: There is a need to revisit the approaches and strategies to ensure the realization of the outcomes in the institutional domain. For example, meeting with key parliamentarians outside parliament, and following up on commitments made by UWOPA members. All assumptions under the institutional domain are still valid.

Strategies and challenges: Lobby and advocacy have been more effective for the institutional domain, however, it is more effective when working in partnership with other like-minded organizations, especially at the national level. Similarly, linking and networking have been effective because it taps into other holistic approaches that enable girls to benefit from other topics that She Leads does not directly cover such as SRHR, education, and economic empowerment. Media engagement has been more effective, especially in tackling issues at the community level, where negative social gender norms are being practiced. However, data-driven research and evidence generation have not been widely applied due to a lack of resources.

Recommendations: Overall, the MTR concluded that the ToC outcome areas, actors, assumptions, and strategies are still relevant to the She Leads 2025 outcomes. The key recommendation is for the network to prioritize national-level data collection through rapid assessments, for the production of factsheets and other influencing actions at the national level.

5.3 Kenya Network

# of laws influenced	3
# of by-laws influenced	2
# GYW groups engaged	68
% of GYW reporting that they are involved in decision making about implementation	27.5%



5.3.1 Introduction Kenya Network

The She Leads consortium partners include Plan International Kenya, Terre des Hommes Netherlands, POLYCOM Development Project, and Kenya Alliance for Advancement of Children (KAACR) (Tier 1 Organisations). Other organisations in the network include The Network for Adolescent and Youth of Africa (NAYA), Pamoja CBO, and African Gender and Media Initiative (GEM) Trust (Tier 2 organisations). The consortium works with 60 GYW-led, Youth-led, and Women-led CSOs (Tier 3 organisations).

5.3.2 Context analysis

Political Context: Kenya’s general elections on 9 August 2022 were characterised by a highly violent campaign period. During the project implementation, the country has made significant political reforms that could influence sustained economic growth, social development, and political stability gains. Key development challenges still include poverty, inequality, youth unemployment, weak transparency and accountability, and the vulnerability of the economy to internal and external shocks.

Socio-economic context: The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted international trade and transport, tourism, and urban services activity. The government put in place emergency containment measures, of which the impacts included a spike in domestic and GBV affecting GYW. Women are disproportionately represented in the informal economy sector, exposing them to a lack of security, including gender insensitivity in workplaces. While there continue to be significant socio-economic gender gaps, women are now venturing into male-dominated economic sectors. In addition, the government recognizes the importance of the economic empowerment of women in achieving national development goals. This includes improving access to employment and providing economic opportunities as one of the avenues.



*Nancy of She Leads Kenya shares GYW perspectives with CSOs in Kisumu, Kenya
©Felista Nduta*



*Girls and young women cheer during a She Leads team building session in Kisumu, Kenya
© Felista Nduta*

Socio-cultural context: Socio-cultural norms and gender stereotypes have been known to influence the role of women in the country. The country's commitment to addressing gender equity and inequalities can be traced in both international and national policy commitments. As a result, the country has put in place various policies and interventions including legislation, female-specific policies, plans, and programmes aimed at addressing specific gender gaps or forms of discrimination. This includes gender equality recognition that states that women and men have the right to equal treatment, including the right to equal opportunities in political, economic, cultural, and social spheres.

Civil society context: Civic space is the physical, virtual, and legal place where people exercise their rights to freedom of association, expression, and peaceful assembly. Although a vibrant and engaged civil society sector exists in the country, civic space restrictions and systemic challenges to the enabling environment continue to throttle the full exercise of civic freedoms and undermine civic space. Prior to the August 2022 elections, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC) published a report on the trends in SGBV against women during electoral seasons. It revealed patterns

of election-related SGBV against women in Kenya, including gang rape by security agents. This shrinking space is defined as a violation of human rights mostly against women.

Economic context: Women are disproportionately in the informal economy sector compared to men, exposing them to the lack of security that characterizes the sector. This includes gender insensitivity in workplaces, the inability of women to effectively negotiate their pay and a general bias against women in the workplace, and gaps in areas such as labour force participation, wages, and income, pensions, as well as occupational segregation, social norms, and workplace culture, leadership positions among others. Nevertheless, women are now venturing into male-dominated economic sectors, and the Government recognizes the importance of the economic empowerment of women in achieving national development goals.

Technological context: The digital transformation includes immense potential to improve people's economic and social outcomes. Still, challenges remain regarding GYW's access to and use of these technologies. However, the benefits of digital transformation are currently not gender-neutral or equally balanced between societal groups and genders and access, use, and ownership of digital tools. While Kenya is a success story in Africa in digital technology, the country's digital revolution continues to exclude women resulting in a huge digital gender gap affecting GYW and women. There are different causes of the digital gender divide; this includes hurdles to access, affordability, education (or lack thereof), and lack of technological literacy, as well as socio-cultural norms and biases that lead to gender-based digital exclusion.

5.3.3 Risk analysis

Programmatic risks: The project is entirely dependent on donors. This poses a potential risk to financial, project, and organisational sustainability in case of a donor shift in interventions and changes in donor approaches regarding the implementation of projects and programmes. Mitigation strategy; diversify She Leads funding base.

Technological risks: The internet can be a powerful tool for advancing gender equality and the human rights of all girls, enabling and empowering them to fulfill their potential and pursue their ambitions. However, digital technologies have increased the scale of child sexual abuse and exploitation. Child sex offenders have increased access to children through unprotected social media profiles and false identities. Increasing access, skills, and opportunities come with increased risk. Mitigation: It is recommended to create awareness among girls on online safety as they use online solutions in their advocacy initiatives. Ensure the meaningful and safe participation of girls and young women, in all policies, programmes, and decision-making processes concerning the digital environment.

5.3.4 Analysis of basket outcome indicator data

WRGE indicator 2.1: # of laws, policies, and strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic spheres. (link SCS2).			
Quantitative measurement			
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG012: # of laws	4	2	4
WRG013: # of governmental policies	5	1	5
WRG014: # private sector policies	0	0	1
WRG015: # of by-laws	10	2	10
WRG016: # international agreements	0	1	2

On the number of laws, the network achieved two out of 4, making it a 75% achievement at mid-term. On the number of policies, the network achieved 6 at midterm, much as they planned for only a total of 5, making it a 120% achievement. The number of by-laws achieved at mid-term was 2, out of a total of 10, making it a 20% achievement at mid-term.

WRGE indicator 2.2: # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private, and civic spheres, through agenda-setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.			
Quantitative measurement			
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG017: # of times at the national, regional, and international level	24	20	44
WRG018: # of times at the subnational level	25	22	45

Although achievements have been made, they were done so in just a few counties and a few CSO and few partners can showcase it. The evaluation team believes that if She Leads strengthened its M&E systems, it will be able to demonstrate the outcome indicators more clearly across all the consortium partners. Civil society coalitions should develop relationships to engage policymakers at the national and county levels so that the outcome-level indicators are sustained.

5.3.5 Network-level ToC Reflection

The programme has a well-thought Theory of Change (ToC) that clearly highlights the logical outcome of the intervention. The ToC applied strategies for implementation, and selected relevant stakeholders were relevant and appropriate and ensured GYW perspectives are included in gender-responsive laws and policies and societal norms and practices.

Challenges and recommendations: The Kenya network evaluation team feels that the ToC is long-winded on advocacy, and the synergies and linkages between the strategic objective and other challenges facing GYW are unclear and based on significant assumptions. This calls into question the linkage between the overall outcome and GYW other needs such as SRHR. While indicators were generally SMART, they could have been improved further so that they link activities more clearly to targeted outputs and demonstrate the logic of their contribution to the outcome. This would have also improved clarity in design.

Adaptations: The Kenya network evaluation team recommends programme redesign through the ToC to reflect on the above-identified indicators with shared critical linkages in the Theory of Change that underpin the intervention logic. This should form the basis for the project Results Framework and project management. In addition, the Results Framework should be the central element of the She Leads so that it articulates the project's Theory of Change and should be the basis for tracking progress against the overall strategy.



Network coordinator of Kenya Caroline Boraya speaks out during a She Leads intergenerational dialogue ©Geoffrey Buta

5.4 Sierra Leone Network

# of laws influenced	9
# of by-laws influenced	4
# GYW groups engaged	43
% of GYW reporting that they are involved in decision making about implementation	28.26%



5.4.1 Introduction Sierra Leone Network

Consortium partners in Sierra Leone include Defence for Children International Sierra Leone (DCI-SL), serving as the coordinating organisation; Plan International Sierra Leone (PISL); and FEMNET, represented by Women’s Forum (WF) (Tier 1 Organisations). They work in close partnership with local civil society organisations, amongst others second tier organisations such as Mirror Africa, Girls Advocacy Development Network (GADNet), the Sierra Leone Association of Women in Journalism (SLAWIJ), Girls Advocacy Alliance group, Inspiration for Human Development, Female Force Foundation and a lot of other formal and informal GYW-led and youth-led groups as third tier organisations, like Young Women Advocacy Network (YWAN), the Children’s Forum Network (CFN) and Initiative for Women and Girls’ Empowerment.

The network members implement the She Leads program in 7 different districts: Tonkalili (WF); Port Loko (WF); Western Area, rural and urban (WF, PISL, DCI-SL); Moyamba (PISL, DCI-SL); Koinadugu (PISL); Bo (DCI-SL) and Bombali (DCI-SL) districts.

5.4.2 Context analysis

Political context: General elections (presidential, parliamentary, and local councils/ municipal elections) were held on 24 June 2023. There has been civil unrest as a result of these elections (and also due to the high cost of living) which also affected the implementation of activities in some cases due to restricted participation in activities. According to the analysis done during the development of the She Leads proposal, visibility, participation, and representation of women in elective positions remained very low compared to men. The current government of Sierra Leone has demonstrated political will through efforts to adopt policies that support the empowerment, inclusion, and political representation of GYW.

Socio-economic context: The cost of living continues to increase more than it was the case at the start of the programme. This resulted in higher project costs and thus re-adjustments in activities. The rise in the cost of living has hindered the implementation of activities as

some girls and young women would rather go out to earn their living than attend She Leads activities. As a way of addressing inflation and its effect on citizens, the government through a National Commission for Social Action has provided financial support in the form of loans targeting young women to boost their small-scale business and give them an opportunity to sustain their livelihood.

Socio-cultural context: GYW are increasingly engaging community leaders and stakeholders on their inclusion and participation in leadership and decision-making processes. More safe spaces are emerging in communities for GYW, including young activists, to discuss and provide correct actions to address such issues. Male champions are becoming very instrumental in the advancement of girls and women’s rights to participate in leadership and decision-making processes in Sierra Leone.



Girls take part in She Leads project meeting in Freetown, Sierra Leone
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Girls take part in She Leads project meeting in Freetown, Sierra Leone
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Civil society context: While there has been increased collaboration amongst CSOs, NGOs, and CSOs are still threatened by the NGO policy that was adopted by the Ministry of Planning and Development (MOPED). This development affected the programme in many ways, including limiting lobby and advocate Ministries, especially for younger organisations that are not registered with the MOPED. The She Leads network organisations in their different districts were able to engage the district council to give GYW groups the possibility to register with their councils freely. In 2022 there has been a slight shift from improved collaboration to the creation of more space and opportunities for women, at the CSO and institutional level, especially in male-dominated areas. In April 2022, Campaign for Good Governance (CGG) and other partners initiated the formation of a network for women in politics. This network has helped to open up the space for women, and build their confidence and capacity to champion political ventures. Some She Leads GYW have joined the network.

Environmental context: Sierra Leone has been experiencing land degradation and deforestation for the past years which has resulted in fire outbreaks, flooding, and mudslides in Koinadugu, Moyamba, and Western Area. These incidents led to GYW's limited participation in the She Leads network activities. Parents in the Koinadugu district, for example, were afraid to leave their girls to come for meetings because of the flooding and heavy storms. During the rainy season, GYW are involved in a lot of farming – planting of groundnuts and other fruits and vegetables. This sometimes also limits their participation in the She leads activities in their communities.

Technological context: The She Leads network partners facilitated raising awareness of the cyber laws, lobbied, and gave technical support to the Ministry of Information. The Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ) appointed on the 6th of April 2022 a Gender Advisory Panel consisting of women to address the inequality in the media landscape. GYW are utilizing social media opportunities to carry out their lobby and advocacy programs.

Internal context: Staff turnover rate has not significantly impacted program implementation. Rather it is anticipated that new staff will add more strength in achieving the goals of She Leads. The network has also strengthened its collaboration and relationship amongst the partners by implementing joint activities in 2022 and 2023.

5.4.3 Risk analysis

Safeguarding risks: The consortium has been able to institute some measures to prevent GYW from experiencing abuse, exploitation, and other vulnerable situations. The assessment identified several measures that were in place to address safeguarding concerns. Additionally, feedback sessions were organized to gauge the perception of GYW on the mechanisms in place to prevent and respond to safeguarding concerns and how confident they are to report these concerns. A total of 3 safeguarding risks identified by the consortium occurred so far, with minimal impact on the programme. This shows that although the mitigating plans were in place, there is still room for improvement during the next half of the programme.

Contextual risks: As the programme continues to be implemented, the contextual risks are considered to be valid, and the programme needs to continue monitoring to ensure proper response mechanisms in place to prevent negative impact on programme implementation. Risks that have been addressed appropriately or have passed include the NGO policy, pre-election activities/tensions, and COVID-19.

Programmatic risks: Most identified risks had appropriate mechanisms (i.e. capacity building and mentoring) in place to address them. However, a major risk that needed additional measures including funding to ensure its full implementation is the risk related to including people with disabilities in the programme. The She Leads network needs to address the issue of a lack of materials to aid their full participation in the programme.

Organisational risks: Mitigation measures in place were adequate enough to address the risks. However, the network has not been able to fully address the risk of partners not communicating clearly to the GYW they work with and this was added to the 2023 risk matrix.

5.4.4 Analysis of basket outcome indicator data

WRGE indicator 2.1: # of laws, policies and strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere. (link SCS2).			
	Quantitative measurement		
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG012: # of laws	3	5	7
WRG013: # of governmental policies	1	4	5
WRG015: # of by-laws	3	4	8
WRG016: # international agreements	4	3	4

She Leads was able to influence the government for the adoption and enactment of the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act 2022. The Act has been passed to enhance the representation and participation of more women in politics and increase leadership opportunities for adult and young women. The She Leads network also influenced two policies: the adoption of the National Youth Policy 2021 was successfully influenced by PISL and DCI-SL, as well as by the GYW that are part of the programme. In addition, even though not planned for, DCI-SL was able to play a crucial role in the adoption of the Radical Inclusion Policy 2021 to enhance education for pregnant girls. There was an increase of 14.6% of elected female members of Parliament from 13.6% at baseline to 28.2%. DCI-SL contributed to the manifestos of political parties by facilitating consultation for girls and young women who put together their views and opinions to be included in the manifestos of the different political parties.

WRGE indicator 2.2: # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women’s voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private, and civic spheres, through agenda-setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.

Quantitative measurement			
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG017: # of times at the national, regional, and international level	10	9	15
WRG018: # of times at the subnational level	0	39	50

DCI-SL facilitated sessions for GYW to document recommendations from 4 districts, which were presented as part of the recommendations that CSOs from Sierra Leone made to the UN for inclusion in the Concluding Observation. These recommendations include health, education, access to justice for sexual and gender-based violence victims, and participation of GYW in leadership and decision-making processes. The She Leads network also organized capacity-building sessions for GYW on international mechanisms and how they can influence these mechanisms on issues affecting them. PSIL succeeded in creating the platform for girls and young women to be part of the CSOs report on the African Charter on Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC).

5.4.5 Network-level ToC reflection

Socio cultural domain: The outcomes in this domain remain valid. However, for some of the building blocks at the lower level, the programme has not been able to significantly show results achieved during the period under review. The second layer deals with a change of attitude to inspire local leaders including chiefs to challenge exclusion as male champions but it is recommended that the programme blends the building block for male champions into the community leaders condemning and challenging the exclusion of girls and young women in leadership and decision-making processes. This will reflect the block that community leaders and other male champions are challenging and condemning their peers on the exclusion of girls and young women in leadership and decision-making processes. All the assumptions have proven to be valid in this domain.

Civil Society domain: The private sector should be added at the lower level that deals with increased support and capacity for girls and young women to participate in leadership and decision-making processes. On increased awareness amongst parents, spouses, and employers there is a need to support the participation of girls and young women in decision-making processes. It was agreed that this layer be divided into increased awareness amongst parents and amongst spouses on the need to support the participation of girls and young women in decision-making processes. Additionally, on the third layer, it is recommended that increased awareness among parents and spouses is connected to spouses and parents to address barriers relating to girls’ and young women’s participa-

tion in decision-making processes as the immediate result. All assumptions in this domain remain valid.

Institutional domain: The network’s ToC should capture government policies and their impact on GYW’s development, rather than solely focusing on decision-making. The review is necessary for contextual development, as society and people change daily. Advocacy strategies should be designed to fit this context, and continuous review processes are necessary for newly enacted laws. The network should review activities and outputs under international and regional mechanisms to ensure meaningful participation in decision-making processes for girls’ rights and gender equality. The underlying assumptions in this domain are valid as they guide project outcomes and serve as key pointers for the network. Government reviews are crucial for ensuring GYW rights participation. An ongoing review of policies, laws, and regulations, such as the 1991 Constitution and the Child Rights Act, is necessary to address issues affecting GYW.

5.5 Liberia network

# of laws influenced	10
# of by-laws influenced	5
# GYW groups engaged	6
% of GYW reporting that they are involved in decision making about implementation	21.31%

Liberia



5.5.1 Introduction Liberia Network

The She Leads consortium in Liberia consists of DCI Liberia, Plan International Liberia (PIL), and Community Health Initiative (CHI –member organisation of FEMNET). Plan international Liberia implements through Kid’s Educational Engagement Project (KEEP) and Community Safety Initiative (CSI), and is temporarily implementing itself in one programme county. In Liberia, She Leads is implemented in the Grand Bassa, Cape Mount, Nimba, Bomi, Lofa, and Montserrado counties. The She Leads Liberia mid-term evaluation was conducted externally by local consultant Abraham Billy.

5.5.2 Context analysis

Political context: In 2021, women only made up 11 percent of Liberia’s legislators (representatives and senators). In September 2022, the New Elections Law (1986) was amended to establish that at least 30% of candidates from a political party should be female. There is an increase in women’s participation in elections. The Liberia National Elections Commission (NEC) reported that females constitute 50.06% of the total 2.47 million registered voters in the 2023 national elections (compared to 48% in 2017).

Socio-cultural context: A sharp increase in SGBV cases led to a three-day protest action in 2020 in Monrovia, and the President of Liberia declared rape a national emergency and set up a task force to address the issue of rape. Despite these actions, in 2021 SGBV cases rose to 1,761 cases, and rape alone accounted for 1,199 cases. There is a high prevalence of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). 31.8% of Liberian women and girls are living with the consequences of FGM. A 2018 ban on FGM on girls under 18 years of age expired in 2019. In February 2023, the head of the National Council of Chiefs and Elders in Liberia declared that Liberia is an entrenched traditional and cultural society and that the power and influence on the practices of FGM lies in the traditional leaders. Reports show about 36 percent of Liberian women are married or in a relationship before age 18, and 9 percent before age 15. In the MTR, over 80% of the GYW's interviewed reported a reduction in early child marriage, accounting for this to GYW's increased awareness and education on the consequences of early marriage. The 2022 Liberia Human Rights Report showed inconsistency in the law on the minimum age of marriage for girls, being 18 or 21 years, and also permitting girls to marry at the age of 16.

Civil society context: The civil society in Liberia is facing major challenges. There is a lack of trust and confidence between civil society and the Liberian government, and civil society is fragmented due to under-resourcing and competition. Even though CSOs play a major role in holding the government accountable, it is largely limited to specific areas of expertise with little collaboration.

5.5.3 Risk analysis

On the organisational side, there has been high staff turnover in She Leads. In 2022, the She Leads Liberia Network Coordinator resigned. Project staff reported about 20% of the programme delivery was negatively affected, and it increased the workload of senior staff assigned to the project and has left knowledge gaps (due to poor documentation). Furthermore, fund disbursement delays have caused some small delays in the timely implementation of some planned activities, particularly in the work of partners and GYW groups. There are serious challenges with PIL's direct programme implementation in Nimba after the sub-contract was terminated due to observed irregularities. There is a likelihood that this will lead to underperformance in the overall technical supervision due to limited project staff to supervise and implement the programme directly.

There is limited interaction and coordination amongst the consortium partners. The consortium did not apply the principle of "deliver as one", and lacked one visual identity of the project in Liberia. There is a lack of a national-level structure to coordinate and steer the affairs of the GYW. The GYW reported that some She Leads project outcomes will not be sustainable after the project has phased out in the absence of a national GYW structure. Over 90% of GYW's expressed serious challenges with coordination, collaboration, and communication among them. Finally, the programme M&E system is weak, resulting in struggles to measure the project's progress. Baseline data for the outcome indicators is unknown, which some reported was caused by the lack of on-the-ground consultants to support the baseline process and the baseline data having been remotely generated. All outcome and output indicators are poorly presented in the annual work plans of the consortium partners.

5.5.4 Analysis of basket outcome indicator data

WRGE indicator 2.1: # laws, policies, and strategies blocked, adopted, or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private, and civic spheres. (link SCS2).

	Quantitative measurement		
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG012: # of laws	3	6	8
WRG013: # of governmental policies	3	4	8
WRG015: # of by-laws	26	5	10

The project contributed to the development of the Abortion Law, which the legislature has promised to pass by 2023 – the likelihood of this being low due to general elections. She Leads also contributed to the development of the Children's Law that was presented to the Legislature by the Child Protection Network (a CSO working group) in Liberia. Through GYW and community traditional and religious leaders, all She Leads project communities have reviewed their existing or have developed community by-laws or Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs). The by-laws and MoUs now promote GYW's participation in leadership and decision-making in the communities, and communities ensure that MoUs are ratified by the city council and enforced.

WRGE indicator 2.2: # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private, and civic spheres, through agenda-setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.

	Quantitative measurement		
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG017: # of times at the national, regional, and international level	213	82	150
WRG018: # of times at the subnational level	222	42	100

Through She Leads, GYW participating in community meetings is becoming commonplace (previously being taboo). GYW are increasingly taking up leadership positions in Liberia and speaking and influencing in national and international spaces, building their capacity, and connecting and exchanging with other GYW. In 2022, two GYW were selected for a one-year internship in the Office of the Vice-President of Liberia. A GYW from Lofa County was elected as the Deputy Speaker for the National Children's Parliament. Five GYW serve on the Adolescent Girls' Panel at the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP).

5.5.5 Network-level ToC Reflection

Results of the assessment showed that the internal logic of this project is strong, and all essential outputs and outcomes were considered in the project design. The evaluation found that the relevant drivers and assumptions were adequately considered in the Theory of Change. A review of available progress reports demonstrates at this stage a good likelihood of this project's contribution to the expected impact.

Socio-cultural domain: Traditional and religious leaders, male champions, CSOs, and 30 GYW-led groups are involved in She Leads to promote positive social gender norms. Traditional and religious leaders stated that She Leads has not only helped them change their attitudes and practices but has also helped change the lifestyles of children in the community. The involvement of male champions in the She Leads has helped to create awareness of gender stereotypes, unfair power relation dynamics, and toxic masculinities in the communities. Evidence showed that GYW and BYM actively use media advocacy for socio-cultural influencing at community, sub-national, and national levels.

Civil society domain: More than a quarter of the GYW observed having a high level of confidence in expressing themselves and speaking up on negative social norms. In addition to the consortium partners, She Leads has supported various CSOs at the sub-national and national levels that have strong GYW representation, to provide GYW with capacity support on basic office communication, work ethics, and management training. Some government officials registered that GYW need more capacity-building support to occupy the space envisaged by this She Leads project as 66.6% of GYW are still less confident in speaking out and shy in taking public positions.

Institutional domain: The consortium partners have used their connections and close associations with the national actors including the Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), and MoGCSP to ensure the GYW voices are heard in law and policy formulation and implementation. Some project staff and GYW reported that the government of Liberia has shown some level of commitment to include the views of GYW on national issues through policy formulation and at national events. Even though 90% of GYW were observed knowledgeable of their basic rights, only 5% attempted to reference specific legal instruments. She Leads has done little to create an enabling environment for GYW to meaningfully participate in decision-making in political parties. There was no GYW observed playing active roles in national political parties. They were mostly seen engaged in local community and school politics.

5.6 Mali Network

# of laws influenced	2
# of by-laws influenced	0
# GYW groups engaged	38
% of GYW reporting that they are involved in decision making about implementation	27%



5.6.1 Introduction to Mali network

The She Leads Consortium in Mali comprises Terres des Hommes (TdH), Plan International, and FEMNET, through their local partner organization Association des Jeunes pour la Citoyenneté Active et la Démocratie (AJCAD), Sustainable Opportunity for Rural Organizations (A.SORO), Yam Diribolo TUMYA-G-TU), Développement, Intégration, Localisation du Rôle de la Femme (Divarof), and Réseau Ouest-africain des Jeunes Femmes Leaders (ROAJELF). Moreover, She Leads Mali works closely with children's rights organizations, feminist/women's rights organizations, and groups led by girls and young women. The network members and their partners implement the programme activities in Segou, Koulikoro, Sikasso, Bamako, Mopti, and Timbuktu.

5.6.2 Context analysis

The context of Mali is strongly marked by the 2020 coup d'état and its consequences. The context of the transition, with the main objective of the total security of the country and the organization of general and credible elections, leaves less room for the treatment of social issues. One of the main consequences of the change in priorities has been the low availability of political authorities to participate in meetings for their adherence to the programmes, especially at the national level. The political situation has also delayed the implementation and harmonization of international agreements and standards with national laws and policies. In addition, the massive displacement of certain populations has an impact on the holistic management of needs. In addition, the government has tightened the civic space by for instance requiring NGOs to report monthly on the implementation of their projects, specifying, among other things, the activities carried out, the number of beneficiaries, the amount of the budget used, the source of funding, and so on.

Despite the difficult political context, there remain a few opportunities to push for girls' participation in decision-making at all levels. First, the transitional authorities have launched a vast project to rebuild the country, and one of the areas focused on is the drafting of texts relating to, among other things, the Electoral Law, which in its articles 73, 78, 168, 181 and 207 refers to the access of girls, young women and women to the elective posts of deputies, national councils and local authority councils. Second, local political authorities



Fatoumata, age 17, took part in training sessions on issues such as child marriage and FGM. "I feel more comfortable now in public speaking", she says
©Plan International

are increasingly in favor of enacting policies that are much more sensitive to girls' issues. This is mainly due to the adherence of more community leaders, religious leaders, and communities at large to the concept of gender equality.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) imposed collective sanctions against Mali following the second coup d'état. These sanctions involved the closure of borders between Mali and its neighbors, including the suspension of financial transactions in favour of Mali by financial institutions and of all commercial activity with the exception of certain essential products. The assets of the Malian government were also frozen by the BCEAO (WAEMU). These sanctions lasted from 9 January to 19 June 2022. The start of the project's 2022 activities has been affected by these economic sanctions. The economic sanctions have had an impact on the transfer of funds between banks through the clearing mechanism of the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO). Project funds transferred to partners who are carrying out 100% of the project's activities have been affected by this difficulty.

Added to this is the war in Ukraine, which has dealt a heavy blow to the economic situation affecting the people of Mali and exacerbating violence against girls and young women. As far as the COVID-19 pandemic is concerned, the number of confirmed cases in Mali has been falling since January 2022, but the health authorities are still calling for compliance with barrier measures.

5.6.3 Risk analysis

The change in community can create social conflicts (intergenerational tension, opposing the abandonment of the practice of FGM/C. Efforts will be made to ensure that all segments of society are involved in the programme in line with consortium members' inclusion policies.

Deteriorating security situation can lead to an increase in the number of internally displaced persons Increase in the number of refugees Closure of schools and service centers for basic

social services. As more and more regions become unstable, the networks will have to cease their implementation and possibly adapt their activities to the changed context.

Extreme currency fluctuation could have an impact on the available budget and a reduction in the number of participants in certain activities. The network will need to Monitor currency fluctuation and alert stakeholders to possible budget cuts.

Delays in contracting and making funds available to implementing partners, which has a significant impact on the timeliness and effectiveness of the implementation

Frequent change in the project management team, which will have dire consequences for the network's learning.

Misuse of funds or insufficient documentation to justify expenses and/or services. Stakeholders will need to ensure compliance with the document of anti-fraud and anti-corruption policies and denunciations of abuses (ZERO tolerance). Partners will be trained on compliance requirements. Plan Mali has adopted a zero-cash policy applicable to government partners, which avoids the need for direct funding flows.

5.6.4 Analysis of basket outcome indicator data

WRGE indicator 2.1: # laws, policies, and strategies blocked, adopted, or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private, and civic spheres. (link SCS2).			
	Quantitative measurement		
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG012: # of laws	3	2	4
WRG013: # of governmental policies	1	0	1

With the indicator WRG 012/013 the Mali network is well on track to achieving its target. The network contributed to the improvement of the implementation of the 2025 electoral law (Law n° 2015-0520 by training and raising awareness of women in political parties on the importance of GYW participation in politics. The network, in collaboration with other CSOs, also developed tools to measure the government's commitment to review the 2002 Law (Law n° 02-044).

Unfortunately, no progress was measured in terms of the adoption of the draft law on the prevention and punishment of gender-based violence and assistance to victims. This is mainly due to the unstable political context as well as the lack of collaboration of political leaders.

WRGE indicator 2.2: # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women’s voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private, and civic spheres, through agenda-setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.			
Quantitative measurement			
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG017: # of times at the national, regional, and international level	2	8	10
WRG018: # of times at the subnational level	2	1	2

The Network is well on its way to achieving the targets. At the national level, the network created a space for CSOs to work on the Position Paper, facilitated, and participated in the International Forum of Gender Sensitive Reforms, and created space³ for the celebration of International Youth Day in the Sahel, etc. The Network also supported GYW who were selected for the different cohorts (Panafrikan Board, UN Cohort) where they had more space to express themselves.

5.6.5 Network level ToC reflection

Changes need to be made to Mali’s ToC. These changes are due to the political, security, and socio-cultural contexts of the country and also to the evolution of the country’s legal arsenal with new decrees and laws adopted. It is also all the more necessary as implementation strategies must be adapted to the current realities of the country. Depending on the three areas, changes occur in activities and strategies.

In area 1 (socio-cultural), the network opted to take into account all gender-based violence rather than only female genital mutilation and child marriage, the two themes initially addressed by Mali’s ToC. For Domain 2 (CSOs), the network looks more at the meaningful representation of GYW in civil society movements. Regarding the institutional field that has undergone the most changes, the network was inspired by the current political context, as the country is in the process of holding its presidential elections in 2024.

5.7 Ghana Network

# of laws influenced	2
# of by-laws influenced	6
# GYW groups engaged	24
% of GYW reporting that they are involved in decision making about implementation	76.25%



5.7.1 Introduction Ghana Network

The She Leads consortium in Ghana consists of DCI Ghana, Plan International Ghana, Women Aspire Network (WAN) and Gender Center for Empowering Development (GENCED)– the latter being member organisations of FEMNET. DCI Ghana implements together with sub-contracted partners Erudite Women Empowerment Foundation (EWEF) and Rights and Responsibilities Initiative Ghana (RRIG). Plan Ghana implements through partners Sontaba and Community Aid for Rural Development (CARD).

In Ghana, She Leads is implemented in 16 districts in six regions: Ashanti region, North East region, Central region, Western North region, Upper West region, and Greater Accra region. The She Leads Ghana mid-term evaluation was conducted by a team of national consultants hired from KASAD Development Concept Limited.

5.7.2 Context analysis

Meaningful participation of GYW: With only 14.5% representation in Parliament and less than 5% in the district assembly, women face significant barriers to effectively contributing to Ghana’s development. In 2023, local government elections are being held, which hopefully bring some change in the ratio in district assemblies. From December 2021 to July 2022, the Minister of Gender, Children, and Social Protection was not in post, meaning no political leadership to push and provide political support to gender issues. In December 2022 a new Minister and Deputy Minister were appointed. The government launched a revised National Youth Policy in 2022 with a very strong gender equality focus, serving as a solid foundation for young women to advocate for government support in their empowerment efforts.

Political unrest and restrictions of civic space: The amplified CSO activism, coupled with extensive media coverage, has created a conducive climate for advocating change, particularly concerning the rights and empowerment of girls and young women (GYWs). There are concerns regarding the shrinking space for advocacy. The government’s scrutiny of dissenting voices has been observed, and the US State Department has expressed concerns about the diminishing press freedom in Ghana. Ghana has also witnessed a significant surge



Youth advocate Rahama moderating the She Leads inter-generational dialogue in Accra, Ghana
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Young women participating in dialogue sessions organized by She Leads in Accra, Ghana
©Geoffrey Buta



She Leads youth advocates push for girls and young women political participation in Accra, Ghana
©Geoffrey Buta

in inflation since the beginning of 2022. The annual inflation rate has steadily increased, with 54.1% recorded in December 2022, and 42,5% in June 2023. The rise in costs has had a huge effect on GYW, especially those in rural and more remote areas. The country has seen a rise in migration to urban centers, which involves increased risks of violence and exploitation, particularly for GYW.

GYW and Education: Since its inception in 2019, the free Senior High School policy has increased equal access to (free) senior education for GYW. The Ministry of Education has also implemented a re-entry policy tailored to support girls who previously had to drop

out of school due to teenage pregnancy. The selection of the first female Vice-Chancellors at the University of Ghana and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology has ignited a positive transformation in perceptions regarding girls and young women in leadership roles. Consequently, there has been a noticeable surge in female students actively pursuing prominent positions within student councils and national student unions, traditionally dominated by males.

COVID-19: The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on in-person meetings as well as on mobilizing large numbers of people. While it also provided opportunities for strengthening online skills and capacities, some girls and young women (GYW) and stakeholders encountered difficulties due to varying internet connectivity, resulting in reduced active participation.

5.7.3 Risk analysis

External risks: High inflation and economic crisis have resulted in increased costs for transportation and goods, hindering GYW from participating in programme activities. Furthermore, the increased influence of violent extremist groups in neighboring Burkina Faso and Mali during 2022 poses a significant risk, particularly in the northern regions of Ghana. GYW in these areas face the risk of migration to other regions in order to avoid being caught up or tempted to join such extremist activities. The Non-Profit Organizations (NPO) Bill, enacted in 2020, raises concerns amongst NGOs, particularly the fear that this might affect young people's/GYW organizations. Finally, COVID-19, Marburg and Monkeypox viruses hinder in-person gatherings and activities, which have been mitigated with more online events – the difficulty is that not all GYW have equal internet connectivity and increased costs of data bundles.

Programmatic risks: There is a risk of GYW aging out of the program's target age group. Additionally, the migration of GYW from She Leads program communities to other regions in pursuit of higher education and employment opportunities, particularly GYW from more remote communities poses a risk to the successful implementation of the programme activities. There are also risks relating to the long-term viability and continuity of the GYW groups beyond the duration of the She Leads program. Challenges arise also in securing a substantial commitment from traditional and religious leaders to actively champion the leadership of girls and young women within communities (this has been mitigating by the 'Champions of Change' strategy)

Organisational risks: There is a risk of high staff attrition rate, where staff members transitioned to other organizations, particularly materialized in She Leads organisations DCI Ghana, RRIIG and EWEF. Finally, delays in funds disbursement directly affected the ability of She Leads organizations WAN and GENCED to carry out active implementation within their respective project communities

5.7.4 Analysis of basket outcome indicator data

WRGE indicator 2.1: # laws, policies, and strategies blocked, adopted, or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private, and civic spheres. (link SCS2).			
Quantitative measurement			
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG012: # of laws	3	2	3
WRG013: # of governmental policies	1	0	2
WRG015: # of by-laws	6	6	7

She Leads consortium contributed to the re-presenting of the Affirmative Action Bill to the parliament, after a long-delayed process for the enactment of the bill. Another result achieved under this outcome is the criminalization of witchcraft repression and accusations of people being witches, which some of the She Leads organisations and GYW have actively lobbied for. There is also an increased opportunity for GYW to speak out at the community level and to participate in decision-making at the community and sub-national level government structures. It also shows a lot of support from traditional leaders and male champions in speaking out against issues affecting GYW and creating more opportunities to engage them.

WRGE indicator 2.2: # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private, and civic spheres, through agenda-setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.			
Quantitative measurement			
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG017: # of times at the national, regional, and international level	7	3	7
WRG018: # of times at the subnational level	10	11	21

Through the L&A effort of She Leads, the UN Human Rights Commission has included Girls and Women's Rights and Gender Equality as one of its thematic areas of focus and on 31st October 2022 also made 4 recommendations on the same topic in its Stakeholders' summary submission on Ghana. There are several evidence instances of Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs) engaging GYW. Traditional leaders have taken over the She Leads agenda. Most notably, the Queen Mothers' Association in Wa joined hands with their chiefs to appoint 10 new young women as queen mothers. The L&A activities with adult-led

CSOs have resulted in two recognized adult-led CSO coalitions/ networks (NETRIGHT and WILDAF) registering 18 She Leads GYW organizations as members of their networks in 2023.

5.7.5 Network level ToC reflection

The partners made some progress in achieving the outcomes and results show that the ToC assumptions are still valid and some of them have been confirmed. There is however a mismatch between the results reported and the outcomes. The current design of the ToC does not link properly to the MoFA's basket indicators and that could have contributed to the partners not focusing and tracking for example the changes in laws, policies, and by-laws. Moreover, outcome indicators were not defined to fit the specific country context and this contributed to the measurement challenges and the lack of clear targets.

Civil society domain: She Leads activities that have resulted in strong GYW-led groups at local levels, and in GYW engaging the local governments and local government recognizing them as stakeholders and inviting them to their meetings and engagement. The GYW groups seem to be focused only at the district level. Moving forward the program will need to look at creating more opportunities for the GYW groups to participate at the national level, including actions that are not just organized by She Lead but by other CSO coalitions and networks.

Socio-cultural domain: The work with traditional and religious leaders helps to send across teachings and practices that will enable GYW to participate in activities at all levels without fear. Engaging with parents, especially on safeguarding contributes to ensuring that GYWs are protected. Engaging boys and men as agents of change promotes the participation of GYWs in decision-making without fear of being discriminated against by their male counterparts. There was no powerful feminist narrative gaining more media exposure, which is critical in order to influence existing gender norms.

Institutional domain: Results have been achieved at the community level where chiefs provided the space and at the district level where the local government provided space for GYW to participate in meetings and decision-making processes. No results were reported in terms of engagement with gender champions at the national level. Also, there is a focus on the engagement of state stakeholders, and not much was done with the non-state actors.

5.8 Lebanon Network

# of laws influenced	0
# of by-laws influenced	2
# GYW groups engaged	30
% of GYW reporting that they are involved in decision making about implementation	9.14%



5.8.1 Introduction Lebanon Network

The She Leads consortium in Lebanon comprises Plan International Lebanon (serving as the lead organisation); Terre des Hommes Italy; Defence for Children International (DCI) Lebanon; and Dar Al Amal (DAA). The second tier organisations are Amel (Plan international contracted partner) and KAFA (Terre des Hommes Italy contracted partner). Within She Leads, Amel has formed 9 GYW groups (3rd tier) to advocate for their (SRHR) rights. KAFA working with GYW groups created in 2023. Dar Al Amal established 2 GYW-led groups working on custody law and climate change and DCI Lebanon works with girls' clubs in 4 state schools in Lebanon. The country network has created a GYW advisory Board of 9 Young Women.

She Leads in Lebanon is implemented in Beirut and Mount Lebanon, South Lebanon, and Tripoli in the North. By 2025, She Leads wants Lebanese adolescent GYW and boys and young men to have the capacity to collectively mobilize citizens and political institutions on GYW meaningful participation and to influence gender norms.

5.8.2 Context analysis

Political context: The political climate regarding gender equality is more promising than in previous years. Debates surrounding conflict and a judiciary void faced in the country would push away further the talks about gender equality and women's rights. Additionally, conflicts may further deteriorate existing gender inequalities and pose risks to the safety and participation of girls in the program. Changes in institutional regulations and legislative and policy reforms level play a crucial role in shaping the political climate for gender equality and girl's empowerment. Laws concerning for example education, political participation civil society, and advocacy may influence the work in She Leads.

Socio-economic context: Lebanon has been in the midst of a severe financial crisis. This has led to employment losses and decreased income-generating options, hurting women and girls disproportionately. The wealth gap has widened, with vulnerable people, amongst them many women and girls, bearing a disproportionate share of the brunt of the consequences. School closures, lack of resources, and financial constraints have particularly

affected girls' access to education. The financial crisis directly affects the participation of GYW to the programme. The socio-economic situation also resulted in the fact that few girls that were participating in one of the GYW-led groups left, because they had to work instead of being engaged in She Leads.

Socio-cultural context: Social identities such as religious, sectarian, and tribal affiliations are integral to Lebanese society. Working with GYW and CSOs from different backgrounds can be challenging as there are different social norms and beliefs. Feminism has at times been burdened with negative connotations and misconceptions causing resistance, skepticism, or reluctance amongst certain segments of the population. The refugee situation and their dynamics with the hosting community is also challenging factor. Female refugees in particular emerge as a highly vulnerable group within these contexts.

Civil society context: Lebanon has witnessed the rise of new CSOs addressing various issues related to women's empowerment, gender equality, social justice, and human rights. These organizations bring fresh perspectives, innovative approaches, and localized solutions to address the evolving needs of society. Efforts have been made to enhance the localization of CSOs in Lebanon, aiming to empower local actors and communities.

Over 200 girls and young women participated in the event *I am the Leader of My Decisions* in Beirut, Lebanon
©Plan International



A young advocate hosts the advocacy event *I am the Leader of My Decisions* in Beirut, Lebanon
©Plan International

Technological context: The use of social media platforms has become increasingly prevalent in Lebanon. While access to the internet and technology is growing, it is essential to address the digital divide to ensure inclusivity. Connectivity, internet access, and increased costs have impacted the She Leads program’s online activities and digital engagement with participants and GYW. While social media usage and digital access present opportunities, cyberbullying and the safety of girls and young women while using the internet can become a topic to be taken into consideration within She Leads.

Environmental context: Environmental challenges in Lebanon, such as pollution and waste management issues, can indirectly influence the She Leads program.

Internal context: The consortium in Lebanon faced a slow start as the organizations in the consortium had no history of working together. Due to COVID-19 regulations (no face-to-face meetings possible) and unrest in Lebanon (roadblocks), only online meetings were possible and hindered the relationship building. Only until 2022, meetings in person were possible.

Staff changes occurred in the leading organization as well as in member organisations, and in 2022 Terre des Hommes discontinued the collaboration with their partner Family Rights Forum. In 2022, KAFA entered the consortium as a new partner of TdH.

In 2021 the GYW advisory board was formed and throughout 2022, the GYW advisory board became more frequently involved and the 6 members are steady and committed participants.

5.8.3 Risk analysis

External risks: Economic crises and ongoing political instability stand out as the most prominent external risks. High inflation rates and economic turmoil have led to increased transportation costs, which have, in turn, posed obstacles to GYW participation in program activities. Additionally, political instability and civil unrest have caused disruptions in the program’s implementation. To address these challenges, we have established contingency plans for program activities during uncertain times and put in place communication channels to monitor the security situation, ensuring the safety of our staff and GYW participants. It is essential to remain vigilant and adaptive in the face of these ongoing risks.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented a unique set of challenges, hindering relationship building and effective collaboration within the consortium. For the first year, and partially into the second year, only online meetings were permissible. As the pandemic risks decreased, we transitioned from online meetings to face-to-face interactions in the latter part of the second year. The network’s ability to adapt to changing circumstances remains a critical factor in mitigating such external risks.

Technological risks: The MTR has identified several technological risks, including limited digital literacy and restricted access among participants, which can impede their effective engagement with online activities. Cybersecurity threats and data breaches, while initially perceived as minor risks, have gained increased attention, particularly concerning the

protection of sensitive program information. Addressing these technological risks demands a proactive approach to digital literacy and robust cybersecurity measures to safeguard program integrity.

Organisational risks: High staff turnover presents a risk that can significantly impact program continuity. Some member organisations within the consortium have experienced key personnel changes, including the network coordinator, largely due to the unstable context in Lebanon and young professionals seeking opportunities elsewhere. Mitigation strategies, such as staff retention initiatives, regular staff appraisals, and investments in professional development opportunities, are in place to retain staff within the program. Furthermore, a focus on proper handovers and the availability of backup staff is indispensable for the seamless continuation of the program in the face of organizational risks.

5.8.4 Analysis of basket outcome indicator data

WRGE indicator 2.1: # laws, policies, and strategies blocked, adopted, or improved to promote women’s voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private, and civic spheres. (link SCS2).

Quantitative measurement			
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG012: # of laws	4	0	2
WRG013: # of governmental policies	1	0	1
WRG015: # of by-laws	4	2	6

WRGE indicator 2.2: # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women’s voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private, and civic spheres, through agenda-setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.

Quantitative measurement			
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG017: # of times at the national, regional, and international level	5	7	21
WRG018: # of times at the subnational level	4	10	60

The Lebanon network spend considerable effort to set up the partnership (as it’s the first round of the program without any preceding experience in partnering) and navigate deteriorating socio-economic contexts in the country at the beginning of the program. Despite that, the initial awareness-raising and capacity-strengthening activities have led to GYW getting space 10 times at the subnational and 7 times at the national level.

5.8.5 Network-level ToC reflection

Overall, the ToC at the network level in Lebanon is still valid and will not undergo major changes in strategies and assumptions. Considerations on activity/ output level were focussing on the sustainability of the GYW groups instead of creating more groups, and engagement of men. Due to the financial crisis more basic support is needed to guarantee participation of the GYW. The basic support relates for example to a (higher) transportation fee.

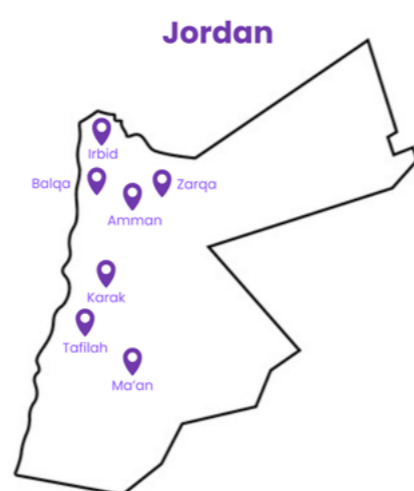
Social and cultural domain: Interventions within the social and cultural domain remain valid. Cyberbullying, sexual harassment, gender-based violence, discrimination and personal status law, and gender equality are the main topics the consortium partners are raising awareness for and building up capacity amongst GYW and their families and communities.

Civil Society Domain: As of the midterm review, the She Leads consortium has made substantial progress in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation. Targets can be adapted to higher numbers.

Political and Institutional Domain: Given the current context in Lebanon and its ever-changing nature and instability, with a struggling government, the targets are reduced to more realistic ones. It is worth noting that a coalition on a national level will be created to advocate nationally and collectively to reach parliamentarians and governmental entities but the advocacy plan set will have to be very contextualised and realistic to create action-focused change that might occur in a regional municipality level and moving up the ladder.

5.9 Jordan Network

# of laws influenced	4
# of by-laws influenced	4
# GYW groups engaged	18
% of GYW reporting that they are involved in decision making about implementation	22.22%



5.9.1 Introduction Jordan Network

In Jordan, the She Leads consortium partners include Plan International Jordan as the lead organisation; Terre des Hommes, which is represented by Fondation Terre des Hommes Lausanne; Jordan River Foundation; and Jordanian Women's Union (Tier 1 organisations). Plan and Terre des Hommes.. Plan International Jordan collaborates with Takatoat,

the Jordanian Association for Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, and the Jordanian National Commission for Women, and the Sha'ama network. The Creativity Club in Karak dedicates itself to empowering the younger generations, TdH collaborates with Ruwwad, Creativity Club, and Idoun. The network furthermore has a GYW advisory board which includes 6 GYW. Activities are primarily held in the governorates of Amman, Irbid, Zarqa, Balqa, Karak, Tafilah, and Maan.

5.9.2 Context analysis

Political context: The rights and needs of GYW received limited priority in national policies and decision-making processes in the last few years in Jordan. In 2022, the Jordanian government introduced a new child rights bill aiming to safeguard and advance the rights of children. It emphasizes the provision of essential services and promotes the inclusion of children in decision-making processes. Legislative amendments and initiatives are being undertaken to enhance the rights of GYW, including the inclusion of "Jordanian women" in the constitution, child law, and the implementation matrix of Jordan women strategies 20-25, the new electronic crimes law

Socio-economic context: Jordan has grappled with economic challenges characterized by high unemployment rates and sluggish economic growth. These difficulties have disproportionately affected women, exacerbating gender disparities in accessing economic opportunities. Economic difficulties have led to an increase in child marriage cases and school dropouts, affecting the lives of GYW.

Socio-cultural context: There has been a perceptible shift in perspective on women's status and rights, towards increased access for women to opportunities that were traditionally reserved for men. Language and terminology often default to male terms in official texts, reflecting inherent gender biases. The number of reported cases of femicide in Jordan reached the highest number since records began in 2015. GYW also experienced new social realities due to lockdowns and emergency laws. This increased their vulnerability and led to an increase in domestic violence rates. The shift to online education and limited job prospects posed significant challenges to women's education and financial stability.

Civil society context: NGOs have increased funding for youth and women's programs, providing access to education, financial literacy, job training, and entrepreneurship support, contributing to the elimination of GBV. Civic space in Jordan has been diminishing, hindering the ability of She Leads to engage GYW in decision-making processes. The Jordanian Ministry of Social Development reviewed laws on association formation and public assemblies, potentially leading to further constraints on youth engagement and GYW-led organisations.

Technological context: There is a significant increase in cybercrimes, such as spreading rumors, electronic defamation, cyberbullying, and hate speech during the pandemic. Jordan has witnessed a remarkable expansion in internet coverage and accessibility rates, creating opportunities for She Leads to expand its reach.

Environmental context: Increased funding for the green economy presents a significant opportunity to promote greater women’s participation in this sector, fostering diversity, innovation, and sustainability.

5.9.3 Risk analysis

Risks from She Leads Risk Matrix, including the impact of COVID-19, tension between refugees and host communities, currency exchange fluctuations, and changes in government and personnel, are no longer valid or applicable to the current context in Jordan. Rising pressing risks are related to technology, like digital literacy, quality and accessibility of digital content, online engagement, and retention.

External risks: Changes in the political landscape of Jordan have unfolded that can have an impact on the objectives and outcomes of the She Leads project. The shrinking civic space in Jordan may impact the gender equality domain. Mitigation involves developing project designs that consider the context and collaborate with civil society organizations (CSOs) and CBOs.

Programmatic risks: Girls and boys publicly advocating on sensitive or controversial issues may be at risk of violence or ostracization. Sensitization campaigns for the community and offering safety and support nets are suggested mitigation measures. There is a risk of girls and boys not effectively using the media to cover, advocate, and discuss sensitive or controversial topics. Mitigation measures include orientation sessions and developing safeguarding policies and a code of conduct.

5.9.4 Analysis of basket outcome indicator data

WRGE indicator 2.1: # of laws, policies and strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women’s voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere. (link SCS2).			
Quantitative measurement			
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG012: # of laws	5	4	7
WRG015: # of by-laws	1	4	6
WRG016: # of international agreements	0	0	1

She Leads tends to influence laws and policies indirectly by implementing interventions like dialogue sessions, advocacy actions, protests, and safeguarding policy training, which raises awareness and empowers GYW. She Leads indirectly contributed to the Jordan Women’s Strategy 2020-2025 and its implementation matrix through collaborative engagement with the JNCW and the Shamaa network. Other laws, policies, or strategies influenced by She

Leads in Jordan include the Nationality Law; Law on Electronic Crimes; Children Law; and Law on Protection from Domestic Violence, which have all been adopted and/or amended.

WRGE indicator 2.2: # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women’s voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private, and civic spheres, through agenda-setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.			
Quantitative measurement			
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG017: # of times at the national, regional, and international level	3	0	1
WRG018: # of times at the subnational level	3	71	86

Girls and young women (GYW) now have improved access to spaces and platforms where they can freely express their concerns and voice their needs during public events and national seminars. The She Leads project has significantly strengthened its engagement with national and regional institutions to effectively support CSO demands and positions and has facilitated the promotion of women’s voices, agency, and leadership in decision-making processes within the public, private, and civic spheres. The collaboration between the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) and Plan Jordan under the She Leads program has heightened the institutional recognition of GYW.

5.9.5 Network-level ToC reflection

Overall, the TOC at the network level in Jordan is still valid and will not undergo major changes in its strategies and assumptions. However, on the output level of all three domains, there have been some adjustments.

Socio-cultural domain: An adjustment has been made to the output.; originally the output refers to social media influencers sharing a powerful feminist narrative, that has evolved to girls and young women participating as champions of change towards gender equality. Within the CSO domain, an adjustment has been introduced being: the creation of girls and young women-led CSOs, and stems from acknowledging the scarcity in this specific category.

Institutional domain: Revising outputs to “enhancing service providers and stakeholders’ capacity to implement gender justice policies and laws” emphasizes a focused and actionable approach to building capability. Furthermore, moving to “empowering girls and young women to participate in advocacy campaigns and gain support for equitable law enforcement” recognizes their advisory role due to the lack of official monitoring authority, necessitating capacity building for effective contribution. “Amplifying youth influence on

social media and local institutions to advocate for gender equality” underscores the broader demographic of youth as pivotal in gender equality advocacy, utilizing social media and local institutions for a multi-dimensional approach. The focus on establishing a judicial system and collaborative stakeholders supporting gender equality through unified policy and legal application highlights the need for expertise from various stakeholders to ensure consistent gender equality implementation within the legal framework. Finally, activating and enforcing gender equality policies shifts the focus from legislative reforms to practical outcomes, ensuring active and effective implementation of gender equality policies.

5.10 Pan Africa Regional Network

# of laws influenced	17
# of by-laws influenced	NA
# GYW groups engaged	10
% of GYW reporting that they are involved in decision making about implementation	NA



5.10.1 Introduction Pan Africa Regional Network

The Pan Africa regional network of She Leads consists of The African Women’s Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) as lead and consortium partners are Plan International African Union Liaison Office (AULO), Defence for Children International – Regional Desk for Africa, Terre des Hommes Netherlands, and ECPAT International. For the Pan Africa regional network, two implementing partners are contracted. This is the Horn of Africa Youth Network, contracted by Terre des Hommes Netherlands and the Gender is My Agenda (GIMAC) Young Women Network, contracted by Plan AULO.

The PAN Africa Network influences regional advocacy spaces that are relevant for the She Leads African countries. These include the African Union, African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR), African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC), African Conference of Ministers of Gender & Women Affairs, AU Department of Gender, AU Office of the Youth Envoy and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) such as East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). The PAN Africa Network has an advisory body of seven (7) girls and young women who represent all 7 African networks at the regional level. The team is involved in the planning, advocacy, and annual planning of the Pan Africa programme.



Over 50 African girls and young women met in Nairobi, Kenya to review the Maputo Protocol and give recommendations to the African Union
©FEMNET



During the African Girls and Young Women festival in Nairobi, Kenya, over 50 GYW reflected on the reality of human rights in various countries
©FEMNET

5.10.2 Context analysis

Political unrest and restrictions of civic space: Over the last two and half years, various Pan-African countries have witnessed incidences of political instability that shifted power dynamics, including Ethiopia, that have affected the planning and implementation of high-level AU meetings that aimed at promoting the rights of girls and young women. As a result of ongoing socio-political instabilities in countries like Niger, Mali, and Burkina Faso, the ECOWAS’ priorities have shifted towards addressing political and insecurity issues with little or no involvement of GYW. Besides this, we foresee ramifications of the Russian-Ukrainian war in the African context, such as instability and higher cost of living. Already inflation and increased cost of living continue to constrain the implementation of She Leads programme activities as a result of global inflation which had a direct impact on the program’s budget, some planned activities were affected and had to be either postponed or shelved entirely.

A growing number of governments in sub-Saharan Africa are now cracking down on civil society organisations addressing human rights issues. Governments are not only shrinking the space for civic activism, but also destroying the backbone of democracy and inclusive development[1]. Consortium members have been pushing and supporting GYW to attend the high-level meetings convened by AU and other regional bodies.

Conflicts and poor working relationships between the government and organizations involved in She Leads might result in restrictions on operations and interference with programme implementation. While no major incident due to lack of cooperation has been reported, continuous engagement with the government in the planning and implementation of activities under the She Leads programme should be encouraged to mitigate such risks according to the consortium members engaged during the evaluation.

Socio-economic context: The high cost of living is affecting the African girls who are now more vulnerable to child labour and sexual exploitation. The Pan-Africa programme partners therefore will keep monitoring the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) that many African states are keen on. Already inflation and increased cost of living continue to constrain the implementation of She Leads programme activities as a result of global inflation which had a direct impact on the program’s budget, some planned activities were affected and had to be either postponed or shelved entirely. The high cost of living is affecting African girls who are now more vulnerable to child labour and sexual exploitation.

5.10.3 Risk Analysis

Programmatic risks: On the program level, the most common risks are actors who may react negatively to the policy area, strategies, and approaches of the She Leads programme. Some of the key actors identified were traditional and religious leaders, male politicians, and community elders who are still largely patriarchal and might be unwilling to support the programme agendas.

5.10.4 Analysis of basket outcome indicator data

WRGE indicator 2.1: # of laws, policies and strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women’s voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere. (link SCS2).			
Quantitative measurement			
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG016: # of international agreements blocked, adopted or improved to promote women’s voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere;	7	17	34

WRGE indicator 2.2: # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women’s voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private, and civic spheres, through agenda-setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.

Quantitative measurement			
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG017: # of times at the national, regional, and international level	20	31	51

5.10.5 Network-level ToC reflection

The systemic barriers to meaningful participation and inclusion that girls and women face must be addressed on three levels: individual, institutional, and sociocultural. While change may not happen simultaneously on each level, all three must be addressed in order to create an enabling environment for girls and women to reach equal and sustainable political participation. Breaking down the barriers and creating opportunities at each level calls for enhanced collaborative efforts among states, CSOs, and the international community. These stakeholders, from lawmakers to activists to religious and traditional leaders to family members, can play a different roles in addressing different challenges. Additionally, instituting mechanisms that report on gender equality commitments and ensure accountability for increasing women’s political participation is essential for tracking progress and collecting data at the local and state levels. The path forward needs to ensure and support girls’ and women’s right to be involved in decision-making processes.

Social Cultural domain: Having religious and traditional figures, celebrities, and online influencers as part of the leaders to be engaged in the programme to promote positive feminist narratives on Girls and Young Women was an over-ambitious assumption under this pathway. The consortium members majorly worked with influential leaders representing high-level governance institutions and this approach has proved to be effective so far. Other factors highlighted were the high costs incurred when accessing mainstream media platforms during the implementation of programme activities. The consortium will more focus on the utilization of digital media spaces in the next phase of the programme.

Civil Society domain: The consortium members have been working with women’s rights and girls and young women’s rights networks across the continent like the GIMAC Young Women Network. Plan AULO through the GIMAC partnership was able to mobilize GYW across the continent twice a year for strategic advocacy towards the African Union. In addition women’s rights networks like CSW Africa and child rights organizations were involved in mobilizing and strengthening the capacities of GYW for collective actions at the regional and national levels. These collaborations have been instrumental in regional reporting on the status of women and lobbying for the implementation of the Maputo Protocol at the AU summit and high-level meetings. The consortium members have facilitated platforms for CSOs from the She Leads implementing countries to consolidate their voices at the regional level on advancing the rights of girls and women in Africa. Our efforts need to be sustained

to enhance the urgency of GYW in advocacy and strengthen the positions of women's rights and girls' rights organizations in the implementing countries. In the next phase of the project, there is a need to shift focus to ensure GYW collective actions are improved at the national level where most activities take place. Participation in technical and CSO working groups at the regional level and during AU convenings should also be enhanced.

Institutional domain: Pathway 3. Consortium members and partners have organized GYW to develop recommendations which have been presented to the African Union, ACHPR, ACERWC, African Conference of Ministers of Gender & Women Affairs, AU Department of Gender, AU Office of the Youth Envoy and the RECs (EAC and ECOWAS). The adoption of recommendations collected by girls and young women in Ministerial and head-of-state statements at the AU and RECs have enabled the consortium members and implementing organizations to push governments at the national level to enhance measures on promoting the rights of GYW and increase their meaningful participation.

Key recommendations from the consortium members and partners engaged during the evaluation were on the need to target other key institutions like UN agencies, IGAD, and EU who initially were not mentioned under this pathway. Development of joint plans and activities to push the girls' and women's rights agenda with these institutions that shape policy processes in Africa was also highly encouraged. There is a need to strengthen the participation of consortium members in conducting follow-ups with governments at the national level on the status of implementation of policy recommendations that were presented and adopted at the AU and REC convenings.

5.11 Global Advocacy Network

# of laws influenced	15
# of by-laws influenced	NA
# GYW groups engaged	11
% of GYW reporting that they are involved in decision making about implementation	NA



5.11.1 Introduction Global Advocacy Network

The Global Advocacy Network (GAN) is the international programme of She Leads. The GAN consortium members include Plan International Netherlands and its liaison offices in New York and Geneva, Plan International Global Hub, Terre des Hommes Geneva, Defence for Children International Secretariat Geneva, FEMNET, ECPAT International, and Equal Measures 2030.



Hiqmat from Ghana advocates for online safety and access to technology at the Commission on the Status of Women in New York
©Joel Sheakoski



Racheal, Lynne and Margaret represented the She Leads networks at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva
©Antoine Tardy

The GAN particularly aims to influence global norms, policies, and practices that enable GYW's meaningful participation in the United Nations (UN), human rights bodies, and development processes.

Important stakeholders and mechanisms that the GAN aims to influence or collaborate with include the UN Human Rights Council and other Human Rights Committees, the Universal Periodic Review, the UN Commission on the Status of Women, the Generation Equality Youth Task Force, the Agenda 2030 process, and the Dutch government and civil society.

5.11.2 Context analysis

COVID-19 implications: The start-up and implementation of She Leads programme activities were delayed by the COVID-19 global pandemic. At a practical level, the COVID-19 restrictions impacted the mobility and participation of civil society and She Leads partners in key moments to influence international fora. The pandemic also magnified the unequal pace of

digital transformation and the gender digital divide within and across countries. While most meetings were conducted online, some GYW dealt with very poor access to technology and digital devices.

Economic crises and climate change: The ongoing war in Ukraine has led to high inflation, food shortages, and increased poverty on a global level. In Lebanon, there is an ongoing economic crisis that could lead to an increase in gender-based violence and exploitation of GYW. Several She Leads countries, including Ethiopia, Mali, and Kenya, belong to the countries most affected by the hunger and climate change crises. Some girls face more difficulties in gaining access to drinking water. Landslides have also impeded GYW's free mobility and meaningful participation in She Leads activities. She Leads girl advocates who have now identified climate change as a prioritized topic of discussion at international fora.

Political unrest and restrictions of civic space: The increased insecurity in Ethiopia, Lebanon, Kenya, and Mali has undermined the implementation of regional and subregional agendas in promoting GYW's rights. The position of human rights defenders in She Leads countries is deteriorating as civic space is shrinking, such as in Jordan with heavy restrictions on online mobility and internet access, and in Uganda with the passing of the Anti-Homosexuality Act of 2023.

The GAN witnessed the coordinated pushback from regressive governments against the advancement of the gender equality agenda in global fora. In 2022 and 2023, anti-rights actors attempted to take over UN summits, including at the CSW. At the same time, there is a growing force of youth across the globe advocating for their rights.

Meaningful participation of GYW in political space: The meaningful participation of GYW in international political spaces remains contested and challenging. In the UN Geneva space, GYW's participation in decision-making processes is ad hoc and often tokenistic. GYW express frustrations with the use of difficult language and excessive technicality of decision-making processes. In-person GYW participation in the international political space is also limited due to the high costs involved and difficulties in obtaining non-immigration visas. GYW from a minority and from Global South countries are often absent. GYW may also not be able to participate due to political instability in their country.

5.11.3 Risk analysis

External risks: GYW who actively participate in international lobby and advocacy activities may be exposed to hateful language. For example, one of the She Leads advocates at CSW67 in 2023 was attacked on social media by a delegate from the anti-rights wing. GYW may face additional safeguarding risks while traveling, including the complexity of visa procedures, potential culture shocks, and travel sickness. Some youth advocates may become overwhelmed by the large international events and opportunities to speak. Therefore, they must have sufficient time to rest during events as well as be provided psychosocial (peer) support and safe spaces.

The work of GYW-led organisations is often complicated due to a strained and negative relationship with their national government. Human rights mechanisms, treaty bodies, and UN bodies may also be subject to defunding or elections of new committee members who are less favorable to key issues. The most impactful contextual risk is the closing of civic space and lack of access to international fora, impeding GYW's ability to meaningfully participate in decision-making processes.

Programmatic risks: There is a potential lack of inclusion and diversity among She Leads GYW advocates. It is easy to continuously engage the same youth advocates, but this risks that they are "celebrityised" and advocates at the beginner level or of a younger age are not included. The access of GYW advocates with a disability to global fora should also be taken care of in advance and included in the budget. Additionally, GYW are exposed to the risk of poor access to the internet and digital devices when trying to participate in global fora and meetings.

5.11.4 Analysis of basket outcome indicator data

WRGE indicator 2.1: # of laws, policies and strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere. (link SCS2).

	Quantitative measurement		
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG016: # of international agreements	52	15	52

WRGE indicator 2.2: # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private, and civic spheres, through agenda-setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.

	Quantitative measurement		
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG017: # of times at the national, regional, and international level	40	57	100

5.11.4 Network-level ToC reflection

Socio cultural domain: The GAN made considerable strides in the use of and reach through social media. Many Dutch social media influencers reposted their content and GYW involved in the programme engaged with the wider public through social media.

One of the key assumptions was the following: Individual strategic male champions in positions of power or influence can drive change especially related to perceptions, attitudes,

ideas, and beliefs. Activities of the GAN indeed garnered many responses and commitments from men in power, including HRC representatives and the Plan Global CEO. There is also a need to engage boys and young men.

Social media is used predominantly as opposed to other international media platforms. It is important to build on a unified and coordinated media strategy within and across networks and make use of diverse international media platforms.

CSO domain: Many signs of change point towards success in making space for GYW participation in several international advocacy processes and fora. This includes Mastula's successful participation in the UPR of Uganda in 2022. Another example is the participation of Fancy, a Ugandan youth activist, who was selected as the only youth speaker during the Interactive Dialogue with the UN Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls at the HRC in 2022, warming up diplomats to vote in favor of the new resolution on girl activism. The CSW processes marked successes as well. For example, in 2023, the She Leads cohort launched a Youth Declaration, which enabled them to discuss their recommendations with multiple delegations.

In the past 2.5 years, much action has been taken towards the representation of individual GYW in international fora. However, the cascading effect of this participation on their group or organisation needs to be further researched. Does this lead to greater visibility, credibility, and opportunities to build networks? A relevant assumption is that Enhanced collective action of GYW at national levels in She Leads countries enables enhanced collective action of GYW at the regional and global levels. This was confirmed through experiences at the CSW and at the AU level, but there is a need to monitor and document the impact of global participation and collective action at the local and regional levels.

Connections and interactions between the national and international networks need to be further explored. There are outcomes with a focus on linking GYW-led groups and international youth groups, as well as regional interactions between groups. Reflections and activities so far suggest that not much has been done in this direction, but there is much opportunity to work towards this in the coming years of the programme.

Institutional domain: There is a contextual challenge of shrinking civic spaces at the national and regional levels. This directly questions the following assumption: National governments in Africa and the Middle East are susceptible to the influencing and political pressure from civil society and intergovernmental institutions. While some governments in African and Middle East countries may be more susceptible to influences from civil society and international organisations, it is not accurate to assume that all governments in the region share the same level of susceptibility.

Secondly, the assumption that international and regional processes and mechanisms are persuaded by data- and evidence-based advocacy by GYW-led groups and their allies is still being evaluated and there is no conclusive information on this as the research is still ongoing. Hence, the advocacy efforts can be definitely concluded as GYW-led, but not data-driven as of yet.

The assumption that the GYW groups see value in engaging institutions at the international and regional level was verified to be true. There is an increasing recognition of the importance of directly including GYW in the international decision-making process. Blessing, a She Leads youth advocate from Sierra Leone, was for example invited to be part of the Sierra Leonean delegation to the CSW67. Hiqmat, a She Leads advocate from Ghana, was invited for a bilateral meeting and consultation with the Ghanaian delegation for the first time at CSW67 as well.

The GAN programme was also able to contribute to the adoption or improvement of a variety of international agreements. This includes multiple CSW outcome documents and UPR sessions. One of the most notable successes of the GAN is the adoption of the policy on girl activism by the UN Human Rights Council. The She Leads delegation made a significant contribution to this through long-term lobbying and advocacy activities, as well as participating actively in the negotiations. Other influenced international agreements include several thematic reports by UN Special Rapporteurs, an agreement made at the AU-EU Summit in 2022, and UNGA resolutions. The latter includes the establishment of the first-ever UN Youth Office.

5.12 Middle East and North Africa Regional

Middle East North Africa (MENA)

# of laws influenced	1
# of by-laws influenced	NA
# GYW groups engaged	19
% of GYW reporting that they are involved in decision making about implementation	NA



5.12.1 Introduction MENA Network

In the Mena region, the She Leads consortium partners include Plan International Jordan, as the lead organization; Plan International Lebanon, Terre des Hommes, which is represented by Fondation Terre des Hommes Lausanne; and the DCI MENA Regional Desk hosted by DCI-Palestine. Terre des Hommes partnered up with Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD). The regional advisory board of GYW consists of several Girls and Young Women from the MENA Region. from Jordan and Lebanon.

5.12.2 Context analysis

Political context: The political context of the She Leads project in the MENA region is complex and multifaceted. The unstable political situation in the region has caused significant harmful impacts on girls and young women (GYW), which has led to situations such as displacement, loss of homes, and disruption of vital services like healthcare and education. The challenges that arise from conflicts disproportionately affect the services provided to girls. Simultaneously, the project's advocacy for increased women's representation in politics aligns with progress made, yet persistent gender disparities call for continued efforts. While there has been progress in increasing the number of women in political roles, their underrepresentation in critical national discussions remains a significant challenge. Several countries in the MENA region have implemented quota systems to enhance women's political participation and representation.

Socio-economic context: The severe economic downturn in the region has disproportionately affected women, intensifying their vulnerability. The economic crisis in Lebanon affects the resources available for sectors like education, which can hinder the program's efforts to improve educational outcomes for GYW. It may necessitate finding alternative resources or methods to ensure education continuity. Moreover, health emergencies like the cholera outbreak put additional strains on the program's ability to provide comprehensive support for GYW's well-being, requiring adjustments to program strategies to address these health issues effectively.

Socio-cultural context: The socio-cultural context in the MENA region provides both opportunities and challenges for the She Leads Programme. Gender biases in language are deeply entrenched in many societies in the MENA region. The socio-cultural context in MENA is witnessing evolving attitudes towards women's roles in leadership positions. These changing perceptions provide an encouraging backdrop for the project's success. There persists a significant degree of community resistance when it comes to matters related to gender equality and related issues. This resistance can pose substantial obstacles to executing certain awareness-raising initiatives and encouraging the participation of girls and young women in various activities. Often, parents reject the idea of their daughter's engagement in these programs.

Civil society context: The She Leads project operates within a dynamic civil society context in the MENA region, where administrative challenges, vibrant civil society activism, the momentum of women's rights movements, collaborative platforms, and the visibility of women's achievements significantly influence its strategies and potential impact. The growing momentum in women's rights advocacy within the region presents an opportunity for the project to foster an enabling environment. Women's networks, associations, and organizations in the region provide a strong foundation for collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and collective action.

Technological context: The MENA region has experienced a significant digital transformation in education. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of digital learning platforms, making online education more accessible. In recent years, there has been a

noticeable increase in awareness and initiatives related to cybersecurity in the MENA region. Governments, organizations, and tech communities have recognized the growing importance of online safety, especially for vulnerable groups like girls and young women. The MENA region has seen a rise in tech-driven initiatives aimed at addressing social and environmental challenges.

Environmental context: Environmental challenges in Lebanon, such as pollution and waste management issues, can indirectly influence the She Leads program.

Internal context: The regional findings shed light on various changes within the internal context of the project. The adept handling of staff changes and organizational shifts facilitates seamless transitions, guaranteeing the uninterrupted flow of projects. The deliberate inclusion of marginalized groups like girls and young women (GYW) is aligned with the project's objectives, although it necessitates a sustained commitment to upkeep their engagement. Swiftly addressing programmatic concerns and effectively managing limited resources underscore the project's efficiency in execution. By establishing a robust framework for monitoring, evaluation, and learning, the project ensures accountability and enhances its capacity to gauge its influence. Despite external adversities, strengthened collaborations and proactive strategies have contributed to bolstering the project's resilience and overall advancement, showcasing its adaptability and determination in the face of challenges.

5.12.3 Risk analysis

On the programmatic level, the risk regarding sensitivity to GYW needs and demands on time has been increased. It became clear priorities need to be more aligned with the GYW's availability and adapt the activities to accommodate school schedules. There are no major changes in the risk assessments at the contextual level. All mentioned risks remain still valid and score similarly compared to the previous years.

Safeguarding risks remained the same as in previous years. With high possibility and impact risks posed by geo-political instability in the region.

Technological risks in terms of online digital platforms deserve attention to keep the GYW safe. Furthermore, the well-being of the GYW was emphasized when participating in events. Clarity about the expectations and health and mental well-being is a point of attention.

Organisational risks that are quite high include burnout of staff and participants engagement, lack of long-term impact of the GYW networks and platforms, misalignment with changing needs of GYW, and conflict and disagreement. Staff turnover has taken place in the past and if this remains in the future, it might need re-assessments.

5.12.4 Analysis of basket outcome indicator data

WRGE indicator 2.1: # laws, policies, and strategies blocked, adopted, or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private, and civic spheres. (link SCS2).			
Quantitative measurement			
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG013: # of governmental policies	0	1	2
WRG015: # of by-laws	0	0	8

WRGE indicator 2.2: # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private, and civic spheres, through agenda-setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.			
Quantitative measurement			
	Initial target value (2025)	Mid-term value (2023)	Adapted target value (2025)
WRG017: # of times at the national, regional, and international level	0	8	9
WRG018: # of times at the subnational level	0	5	6

5.12.5 Network-level ToC reflection

Overall, the TOC at the regional network level in the Middle East is still valid and won't undergo essential changes in strategies and assumptions. There are adaptations on the output level and in the relations between the output/outcome areas. New group structures on the regional level to strengthen the participation of GYW on the regional level were proposed to be added: male and female teachers, counselors, and university students.

Sociocultural domain: A new output was introduced at the foundation of the theory, underscoring the critical importance of building the advocacy and lobbying capacities of girls and young women. Furthermore, an assumption was incorporated regarding the necessity of addressing rural areas and involving parents to facilitate GYW's access to program activities. Another notable change involved the repositioning of "Media mainstream and digital profile and amplify voices of GYW" from the upper level to the foundational layer of the theory. This adjustment reflects the recognition that media is a primary societal actor that necessitates early attention. Additionally, an interchangeable arrow was established between this media-related output and "Safe spaces, online and offline platforms for GYW activism" to emphasize their interdependence, acknowledging that one cannot exist effectively without the other.

A direct linkage was established between these outputs and the domain of civil society, specifically "Regional women's rights organizations and influential women from different sectors with regional capacities supporting GYW." This connection underscores the importance of media and safe spaces in garnering support from civil society organizations. To streamline and clarify the overarching framework, three outputs from various layers were consolidated into a singular outcome. This central outcome represents the core objective: "Influential leaders from politics, business, and the media, along with celebrities and online communities, actively participate in fostering a positive culture of girl activism. This is achieved through engaging diverse stakeholders across the Middle East to openly endorse positive gender roles, promote girls' agency, and advance girls' rights."

Civil society domain: The consortium opted to maintain the existing framework with no major alterations. However, an addition was introduced to underscore the pivotal role of the advisory board by stating, "Building the capacity of the advisory team and providing guidance to girls and young women through activities." By emphasizing the role of this team, the consortium aims to reinforce the support structure that facilitates the engagement and empowerment of girls and young women in advocacy and activism efforts.

Institutional domain: A significant adjustment was implemented by introducing an interchangeable link between two key components that underscore the proactive role of girls and young women in shaping regional advocacy efforts. The interconnection between country-level GYW groups forms a critical foundation for their collective engagement in regional policy processes. This linkage emphasizes the importance of fostering collaboration and unity among these groups to amplify their impact and influence at the regional level. Simultaneously, the connection between these interlinked outputs and the advocacy directed towards intergovernmental institutions like the League of Arab States highlights the significance of GYW in driving regional advocacy agendas. By advocating for meaningful participation in political processes and holding regional bodies accountable, GYW contributes to evidence-based advocacy efforts that can catalyze positive change on a broader scale.

Finally, the outcome aiming for "Regional intergovernmental institutions and fora in the Middle East (...) to achieve greater political support for meaningful youth participation by 2025," has been replaced with a more focused and achievable output. The updated outcome emphasizes the attainable goal of bolstering political support and advocating for reforms that directly impact the participation of girls and young women in decision-making processes. By focusing on strengthening laws, policies, and agendas, this adjusted outcome aligns more closely with the project's scope and timeline, ensuring that it remains realistic and impactful within the allocated resources.

6 KEY CONCLUSIONS

Over the last 2.5 years, She Leads has operated in a dynamic environment marked by significant contextual developments. It navigated the intricacies and intersectional challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic as well as political instability, including the war in Ethiopia, ongoing political and economic instability in Lebanon, effects of the recent war between Israel and Hamas in the wider region, and increased violence in Mali. Heightened gender-based violence risks and the closure of universities in regions like Tigray and Amhara posed challenges to program activities. An anticipated deterioration of the security situation in Mali further complicated the humanitarian landscape. Economic challenges were observed more strongly in some countries while almost all networks faced the challenges posed by rising inflation rates. Despite these challenges, the program adapted to continue its work.

In the **socio-cultural domain**, She Leads made substantial strides in transforming traditional gender norms, emphasizing the acceptance of positive norms conducive to GYW's participation in decision-making. Collaborative strategies involved influential traditional and religious leaders denouncing discriminatory norms, engaging boys and young men as change agents, and collaborating with the media for narrative dissemination. GYW mobilization, role modeling, and community engagement have effectively challenged harmful norms, as seen in countries like Ghana, Uganda, Kenya, Sierra Leone, and Liberia. These efforts underscore the importance of promoting gender equality by altering attitudes and beliefs.

Less examples have been found so far of positive portrayal of young female leaders by the media. This seems to be an area of attention for the remainder of the program. Challenges faced in the various contexts relate mostly to resistance from community members trying to maintain the status-quo, practical limiting factors for participation of girls in activities (lack of funds, lack of time due to obligations at the household level, etc), and new prohibiting laws and policies or political interventions limiting the possibilities to advocate for GYW rights.

Meaningful GYW-led participation in decision-making processes remains a primary focus of the program. By resourcing GYW-led groups, providing capacity strengthening, and fostering networking, She Leads has empowered these groups to take on an advocacy role. For example, in Ghana, the Girls Advocacy Network (GAN) thrived with increased internal processes, expanded activities, and secured new grants. High turnover rates and dilemmas related to formal registration demand more resources, tailored support, and a broader focus on organizational development. The effective integration of GYW groups into various technical working groups in Kenya and the creation of a platform for intergenerational dialogue in Ethiopia highlights the program's impact on advocacy capacity.

The She Leads program has made significant headway in empowering GYW to influence decision-making processes and promote gender equality, both at the national and international levels.

GYW have been successfully supported in influencing decision-making processes, and fostering gender equality at both national and international levels. Youth activism rose, empowering GYW to mobilize, engage with local authorities, and protest, particularly at the subnational level. By advocating for greater representation and influencing political will, the program contributed to critical institutional changes in Sierra Leone, Ghana, and Liberia. These changes included the passage of legislation and policies promoting gender equality in Sierra Leone. The program's involvement in international and regional fora, such as the African Union and the United Nations, amplified GYW voices and allowed them to contribute significantly. A common enabling factor in most significant changes observed is also the continuation of advocacy efforts and GYW groups engaged since the Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA), the predecessor of She Leads. As it moves forward, the program aims to enhance collaboration and coordination among country networks to ensure a more sustained and impactful presence in the realm of political institutions and processes.

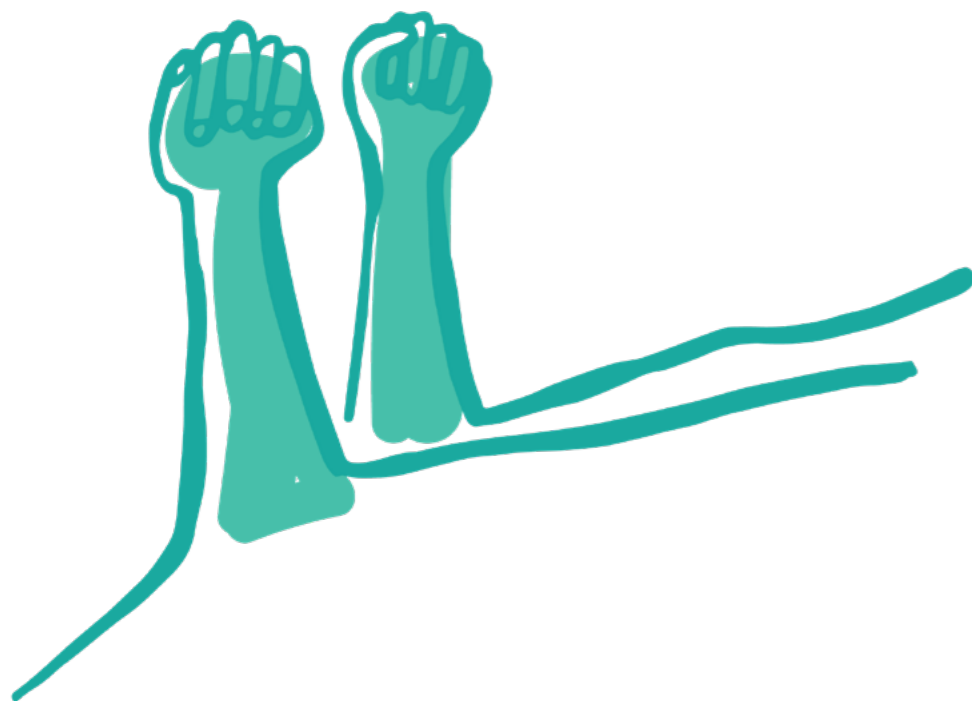
The cross-cutting indicators in the results framework measure the extent of inclusion, meaningful youth participation, safeguarding, and sustainability in the programme. In terms of inclusion, efforts were made to ensure diverse perspectives were considered, but challenges arose regarding LGBTQI+ individuals, gender compositions, age-related transitions, and minority backgrounds. These challenges underscore the need for adaptability. Meaningful youth participation was prioritized, with room for improved decision-making involvement at network levels. Safeguarding measures were implemented to protect GYW, although awareness and understanding should be further strengthened. To ensure sustainability, She Leads focused on building GYW leadership, maintaining motivation, and addressing resource and capacity challenges, all essential for the program's long-term success.

The program's Theory of Change remains largely valid but requires adjustments to account for contextual factors, the impact of social media, and the complexity of youth-led organizing. It acknowledges the importance of building a strong girls-led social movement and the influence of the women's rights movement but recognizes that shrinking civic spaces can affect social movements as well. A more focused use of the media engagement strategy is also suggested to drive societal changes effectively.

The She Leads partnership is highly valued, with participants acknowledging its contributions to mutual goals and individual objectives. However, roles and responsibilities, particularly concerning the Girls and Young Women Board (GYWB), require clarification. Enhanced information exchange and flexibility in processes, procedures, and mindsets are needed to bolster transparency, mutual accountability, and effectiveness. The partnership, characterized by robust collaboration, coordination, and networking, can further adapt to maximize its potential for the benefit of GYW.

She Leads faced safeguarding risks, particularly in the online realm, demanding protective measures for GYW advocates. Online harassment and bullying, often exposing advocates to racist and sexist language, posed serious emotional and psychological risks. The likelihood of Safeguarding and Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH) incidents, while relatively low, carries potentially devastating consequences. The MTR also highlights the need to strike a balance between the protection and empowerment of GYW while also addressing sexism, ageism, and inappropriate behavior faced by young coordinators.

In summary, the She Leads program has made notable progress in altering socio-cultural norms, promoting meaningful GYW-led participation in decision-making, and fostering GYW involvement in political institutions and processes. It has demonstrated flexibility and adaptability in dynamic landscapes, emphasizing the importance of safeguarding and sustainability. While it has achieved significant milestones, the program recognizes the need for ongoing adjustments and continued collaboration to address challenges and seize opportunities in the coming years.



7. RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents the overall recommendations at the global consortium level as agreed upon by the Global Steering Committee (GSC), based on the findings and reflections of the MTR. These recommendations are meant to orient the work of the GSC and the She Leads Desk during the next two years of the program. In accordance with our principles of decentralized decision-making and adaptive programming, each country network will reflect on the findings of its own MTR and the necessary adjustments in She Leads' strategies in 2024 and 2025. During their recent annual planning meeting, networks have developed annual plans for 2024 taking into account the MTR findings and recommendations. In the weeks following the finalisation of this MTR report, networks will continue reflecting on necessary adjustments to be made in their future plans.

The GSC has agreed on the following recommendations:

On She Leads governance, partnership, and safeguarding of GYW:

- 1. Consolidate and strengthen the Global GYW Board to make She Leads decision-making more inclusive.** The start of the Global GYW Board has not been very smooth. However, since the beginning of this year, interaction has increased and Board members have played a substantial role in the MTR. She Leads needs to implement the steps that have been agreed with the Board: extend the term of the current Board (until December 2025), ensure greater involvement of Board members in She Leads networks, have quarterly online monitoring meetings between Board and GSC, and connect Board members with GYW from other advisory boards (such as the Pan Africa GYW Advisory Board).
- 2. Support country networks' efforts to include more GYW in network-level decision-making.** As recommended by the GYW researchers, She Leads should engage more GYW in its annual monitoring (outcome harvesting) and planning meetings. To make sure their participation is meaningful, She Leads organizations need to build their PMEL capacity and support them with internet access and language barriers. Finally, She Leads needs to build connections between GYW groups supported by different She Leads organizations. The mindset of thinking in terms of 'Plan groups', 'DCI groups', 'TdH groups', or 'FEMNET groups' needs to change.
- 3. Improve the joint planning and monitoring process of She Leads networks and strengthen internal communication and mechanisms for the exchange of information between She Leads organisations.** The partnership survey findings show that there is an overall need for continued and improved communication between She Leads network members. The exchange of information on organizations' budgets, actions, results, and challenges will foster mutual accountability, realistic expectations, and the search for joint solutions to common challenges. The role and responsibilities of the network coordinators, key actors within each network, need to be strengthened.
- 4. Ensure the effective implementation of simple and clear safeguarding protocols without infringing on GYW's right to participate in international advocacy spaces.** More alignment of safeguarding protocols used by different consortium members is needed. Clear minimum standards need to be developed, in collaboration with the Global GYW

Board. These need to carefully weigh the safety risks related to GYW advocacy against the rights (and effects) of GYW advocating in international policy space, especially for young women between 18 and 24 years.

On She Leads program strategies:

- 5. Support She Leads networks in Lebanon, Mali, and Ethiopia to strategically rethink She Leads approaches.** Given the drastic deterioration of the security situation in these countries, it is necessary to critically rethink and adjust program strategies. The She Leads consortium members need to facilitate an open dialogue with all network members and GYW-led groups to identify the most appropriate strategies for supporting GYW-led organizations and advocacy. More flexibility and adaptability are needed in the planning and implementation of She Leads' interventions in these 3 countries.
- 6. Promote the exchange of ideas and good practices between She Leads networks on (alternative) cost-effective actions.** All She Leads networks are struggling with increased costs of activities due to inflation and economic decline. This is affecting planned activities and expected targets. There is an urgent need to identify efficient and effective actions that enable She Leads partners and GYW-led groups to keep as much as possible their objectives and planned reach. For example: smarter use of online participation possibilities, optimizing the collaboration between partners, and/or joint resource mobilization.
- 7. Improve She Leads' support to GYW-led groups by enhancing its relevance, flexibility, and effectiveness.** The MTR findings as well as the views presented by the Global GYW Board demonstrate that GYW-led groups need more support in developing their organization and in building their resource mobilization capacity. The modalities of She Leads support should be more flexible, better adapted to their specific needs and context, with fewer administrative requirements, and more geared towards transferring budget and programming responsibilities to the groups.
- 8. Increase the focus during the next two years on building and strengthening a social movement led by GYW.** Many supported GYW-led groups have developed themselves and have become strong, legitimate, and visible advocates for GYW political participation and leadership. In the next two years, She Leads members need to step up their collective efforts to bring GYW-led groups together, consolidate their linkages, help them to develop a strong action agenda, common identity and branding, and facilitate their interactions with others (feminist and child/youth rights) actors and networks. Contributing to the development of a social movement is, together with the previous recommendation, the best approach to ensure the sustainability of the supported groups.
- 9. Promote joint learning and exchange of good practices between all She Leads networks and GYW-led partners and groups on effective strategies of media advocacy.** The MTR revealed that the media strategies (new and old media) used by She Leads members and partners tend to focus too much on increasing our reach (disseminating the She Leads message) instead of targeting the groups and/or key policy actors whose values, attitudes and behaviors we want to change.
- 10. Ensure better alignment between local and national advocacy plans of She Leads country networks and the regional and international advocacy opportunities.** During 2023 this has already been set in motion but more efforts are needed. More fluent coordination between network members at a country level and their peers at the regional and

international level should help to ensure that recommendations coming out of international accountability mechanisms are being used by country network partners in their follow-up advocacy. Local and national priorities set by She Leads networks should orient the regional and international advocacy agenda of She Leads. Individual She Leads GYW engaged in international advocacy (cohort members) need to be better connected to the GYW-led groups operating in her own country.

On joint learning and communication:

- 11. Facilitate the co-creation, sharing, and use of knowledge on key strategies of She Leads.** Joint learning on the effects of She Leads strategies happens at the level of each network and at the global level. Although network members appreciate the global learning webinars, the outcomes of learning have not been adequately stored and made available to all She Leads organizations, including the GYW-led groups. There is a need for a simple and easily accessible knowledge management system that enables the collection, analysis, dissemination, and use of relevant information, especially on the programmatic issues (strategies) highlighted in the recommendations above.
- 12. Support She Leads networks to align their external communication strategies.** At the global level, the consortium members developed a joint communication strategy. At the country level, She Leads members and partners tend to follow their own organizational strategies and policies. This may cause friction between She Leads organizations and lead to suboptimal results in terms of She Leads visibility. Therefore, global consortium members are recommended to support the networks in developing a joint, consistent, communication strategy.



ANNEX A: EVALUATION MATRIX

Indicator	Relevant research question(s)	Methodology	Data source	Guidance on tool/analysis
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the major developments in the programme context since the baseline until June 2023? How are the changes in contexts impacting the programme implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant sections in network-level annual plans, reports, online/in person participation in a network level meeting to work on the risk analysis matrix together with the network members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Context analysis tool Refer to guidance document
Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What have been the major changes in risks faced by the programme and the mitigation strategies proposed? How are the changes in risks impacting programme implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Primary data collection at network meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant sections in network level annual plans, reports, desk review of external documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk matrix tool Guidance for filling out the risk matrix tool Refer to guidance document
# of laws, policies and strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decisionmaking processes in public, private and civic sphere.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many laws, policies and strategies were influenced by the network (quantitative number for MTR period)? How were these influenced by the network (qualitative explanation for the MTR period value)? To what extent has the network moved towards their 2025 target in terms of percentages? What are the recommendations to achieve the outcome target? Does the network need to adapt its targets/relevant assumptions/strategies in the ToC? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondary data analysis Complementary primary data through key informant interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Network monitoring reports, outcome harvesting data, light contribution analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome reporting sheet Refer to guidance document
# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many times did the network succeed in creating space (quantitative value for the MTR period)? How was this space created and if/how was it sustained (qualitative explanation)? To what extent has the network moved towards their 2025 target in terms of percentages? What are the recommendations to achieve the outcome ? Does the network need to adapt its targets/relevant assumptions/strategies in the ToC? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondary data analysis Complementary primary data through key informant interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Network monitoring reports, outcome harvesting data, light contribution analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome reporting sheet # of times indicator matrix Guidance for filling out number of times outcome indicator Refer to guidance document
Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the composition of the GYW-led groups and organizations engaged in and supported by She Leads? In terms of age, sexuality, gender identity, ethnicity, religion, educational background, area of residence, disability status etc. What are the main challenges for GYW from diverse backgrounds to participate in She Leads activities and decision-making? What recommendations do GYW have for the She Leads consortium to improve and strengthen their inclusive, safe and meaningful participation in the programme? Recommendations can be directed at global, regional/country and within country levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of primary data collected by the GYWs (matrix that assesses diversity/inclusion in She Leads; focus group discussion notes; participatory score cards) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data collected by GYWs Follow-up conversations/clarifications only if necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to guidance document
Meaningful participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the actual level of GYW participation in She Leads decision making? What are the main challenges for GYW to participate meaningfully in She Leads decision-making? Which measures have been taken by consortium members to promote meaningful participation of GYW in She Leads decision-making? How successful or unsuccessful have these measures been according to GYW? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of primary data collected by the GYWs (matrix that assesses diversity/inclusion in She Leads; focus group discussion notes; participatory score cards) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data collected by GYWs Follow-up conversations/clarifications only if necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to guidance document
Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the level of GYWs' knowledge of, access to and trust in She Leads safeguarding policies and procedures? What are the main challenges for GYW in terms of their safe participation in She Leads activities and decision-making? Which measures have been taken by consortium members to promote safeguarding of GYW in She Leads activities and decision-making? How successful or unsuccessful have these measures been according to the GYW? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of primary data collected by the GYWs (matrix that assesses diversity/inclusion in She Leads; focus group discussion notes; participatory score cards) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data collected by GYWs Follow-up conversations/clarifications only if necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to guidance document

ANNEX A: EVALUATION MATRIX

Indicator	Relevant research question(s)	Methodology	Data source	Guidance on tool/analysis
Partnership and collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent are the following partnership dimensions enabling or disabling for a partnership? (Efficiency, Effectiveness, Approach, Attitude, Competencies, Results, Productivity) To what extent are these dimensions generic or partnership specific? To what extent are these dimensions generic or context specific (Global North/Global South)? Which dimensions are most essential for “Shifting power” for the partners? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online Survey involving members of tier 1 and tier 2 partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative and Qualitative Survey data 	
Evaluation of key She Leads strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> What have been the most successful and not so successful strategies employed by the She Leads’ network actors to support the organisation and mobilisation of Girls and Young Women (GYWs)? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How have She Leads actors engaged with GYW groups? How were they selected, how was the relationship built, how was it managed? What kind of strategies (actions) have She Leads actors employed towards GYW-led groups? Among the She Leads’ strategies to promote GYW (self-)organisation and mobilisation are: the provision of financial support (resourcing), the provision of capacity support (training, coaching, organisational development support), linking and learning between groups and networking support, or a combination of these. What have been the results of the different strategies employed by She Leads actors on GYW self-organisation and mobilisation? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What are the enabling and disabling factors in the process of mobilising and organising GYWs? What have been the most successful and not so successful actions taken by the GYW groups? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What kind of actions have been taken by the GYW groups in influencing existing social gender norms through She Leads? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What kind of actions have been taken by the GYW groups to enhance the space for meaningful participation of GYW in political institutions through She Leads? What are the enabling and disabling factors in 2.1 and 2.2? How has She Leads’ support contributed to these actions? To what extent are the GYW-led groups supported by She Leads actors sustainable? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What are the main challenges faced by GYW-led groups in consolidating their structures and operations? What kind of support do the GYW groups still need in order to continue their work? Recommendations for She Leads to effectively work in the short term (until 2025) and the longer term (after 2025). To what extent do we see similarities and differences between networks and their strategies in engagement of and support to GYWs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of Secondary data available (annuals, plans, reports, monitoring data) Analysis of primary data collected through survey, FGDs and KIIs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online survey with Tier 2 and tier 3 organisations FGDs and KIIs 	

ANNEX B: MTR ACTUALS 2023

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Consolidated	Consolidated	Ethiopia		Uganda		Kenya		Mali		Ghana		Sierra Leone		Liberia		Lebanon		Jordan		MENA regional		Pan Africa regional		Global Advocacy (GAN)	
				Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
WRG012	# of laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere	29	22	1	0	3	1	4	2	3	2	3	2	3	5	3	6	4	0	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
WRG013	# of governmental policies & strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere	18	14	1	0	5	4	5	1	1	0	1	0	1	4	3	4	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
WRG014	# of private sector company policies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WRG015	# of by-laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere	311	177	256	151	5	3	10	2	0	0	6	6	3	4	26	5	4	2	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
WRG016	# of international agreements blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere;	63	32	0	0	0	8	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	17	52	15
WRG017	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building;	336	211	8	13	4	4	24	20	2	8	7	3	10	9	213	82	5	7	3	0	0	8	20	31	40	57
WRG018	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building at subnational level	283	269	9	33	8	35	25	22	2	1	10	11	0	39	222	42	4	10	3	71	0	5	0	0	0	0

ANNEX B: TARGETS FOR 2025

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Initial	Adapted	Ethiopia		Uganda		Kenya		Mali		Ghana		Sierra Leone		Liberia		Lebanon		Jordan		MENA regional		Pan Africa regional		Global Advocacy (GAN)	
				Initial	Adept	Initial	Adept	Initial	Adept	Initial	Adept	Initial	Adept	Initial	Adept	Initial	Adept	Initial	Adept	Initial	Adept	Initial	Adept	Initial	Adept	Initial	Adept
WRG012	# of laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	29	37	1	1	3	3	4	4	3	2	3	3	3	7	3	8	4	2	5	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
WRG013	# of governmental policies & strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	18	32	1	1	5	8	5	5	1	0	1	2	1	5	3	8	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
WRG014	# of private sector company policies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WRG015	# of by-laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	311	321	256	256	5	10	10	10	0	0	6	7	3	8	26	10	4	6	1	6	0	8	0	0	0	0
WRG016	# of international agreements blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	63	101	0	0	0	8	0	2	0	0	0	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	7	34	52	52
WRG017	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.	336	295	8	19	4	10	24	44	2	8	7	7	10	15	213	10	5	21	3	1	0	9	20	51	40	100
WRG018	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building at subnational level.	283	473	9	49	8	55	25	45	2	1	10	21	0	50	222	100	4	60	3	86	0	6	0	0	0	0

ANNEX C: ETHIOPIA

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Target 2025		Actual 2023		Suggested adaptation of target 2025	
			Qualitative		Qualitative		Qualitative
WRG012	# of laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	1	She Leads Ethiopia network have identified to work on the family law and it need a long term intervention to come up with the desired changes.to this end we are doing the advocacy and changes to be communicated.	0	We have gone through the revision of the law identified for revision however felt like pushing for revision is not the primary agenda for our program instead we will be focused on the enforcement of sections especially on child marriage and its practices.	1	The family law in Amhara region was the previous target however without a clearly identified section/area of intervention. Currently we will work on the enforcement of this law as we have been witnessing gaps in this especially regarding early marriage.
WRG013	# of governmental policies & strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	1	The first identified policy was the youth policy which is now under revision by Ministry of Women and Social affairs and She Leads Ethiopia is doing different lobbying towards including GYW issues in separate section.	0	We pushed on the youth policy in identifying the gaps regarding GYW issues. However due to the government time line of implementing this we are still looking for the changes to happen.	1	We have been working on the revision of the youth policy, still to continue this until the recommendations have got recognition in the policy revision.
WRG015	# of by-laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	256	In this section the consortium members are working with different community based organisations to change discriminating treatments and we have managed to include GYW issues in 160 CBO bi-laws this year.	151	She Leads Ethiopia under the different implementation areas in more than 7 districts and has 45 kebele target CBOs that have influence in the lives of GYW. In one kebele we can find 5-20 Iddirs depending on the population and the topography of the area. We will have different intervention plans to help them think of revising their by-law to enable and create a friendly space for GYW in their community engagement.	256	The bylaws targeted at local level have increased due to having additional 45 targets in some of the woredas that were not part of the initial plan and discovered during the course of implementation. With the nature of creating CBOs in any time of the year at districts we were not able to include them in our initial plans.
WRG014	# of private sector company policies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
WRG017	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.	8	The consortium has been trying to create space for all local and national level GYW led CSOs first to organise and establish themselves, identify their demands/issues, create partnership with respective CBOS and government structures. And currently we are in the process of making a joint movement building at national level hopefully to be conducted before the end of this year.	13	The created spaces include the task force meetings held each quarter in 2021, 2022 and mid year of 2023. In addition We were able to create space for the Ethiopian Young women Voice to interact with decion making bodies in government office and other women led CSO so that they were able to influnce their demands and shared experinces.	19	In the first mid year we were able to have an additional number of created spaces for the initial plan. The second mid year is also targeting 6 new spaces at national level considering the remaining years a head.
WRG018	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building at subnational level.	9	Under the She Leads Ethiopia has established one national taskforce that consisting of all government stakeholders, Youth led and focused CSOs and She Leads consortium to raise lobby and advocacy issues. Starting from the beginning of the program till this time the taskforce meets three times and discussed On GYW issues.	33	In this section the three subnational level implementing consortium members were able to open spaces for GYW csos in different public campaigning events like 16 days of activism, March 8 for a public awareness and agenda setting. Additionally local level interface meetings, consultative workshops were part of this targets.	49	We have increased the number of spaces generated at the subnational level from the initial plan in this part as well. We recently learned that although the plan was established with fewer estimates than anticipated, the actual exceeded it. As a result, we also established new targets for the next two years while taking into account the environment.

ANNEX C: UGANDA

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Target 2025		Actual 2023		Suggested adaptation of target 2025	
			Qualitative		Qualitative		Qualitative
WRG012	# of laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Succession Amendment Bill 2018; The Bill seeks to amend the Succession Act, Cap 162. The Bill addresses the gaps in succession, such as unequal distribution of property based on gender. The Employment amendment Bill 2019; Seeks to amend the 2006 Employment Act. It includes a provision addressing sexual violence and harassment in the workplace. (Waiting for Presidential Assent). The Sexual Offences Bill 2019; Bill takes care of new forms of sexual violence and exploitation such as sex tourism, indecent communication and child marriages, among others, which are not provided for in the Penal Code Act, Cap. 120. 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Succession Amendment Bill 2018; The Bill seeks to amend the Succession Act, Cap 162. The Bill addresses the gaps in succession, such as unequal distribution of property based on gender. 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We shall continue with our Engagements with the departments in charge of implementations, identify the government institutions that work with the succession amendment Act. Also Engage with Paliament to popularise the the sexual offices bill. the employment bill 2019 will be dropped.
WRG013	# of governmental policies & strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender in Education policy - the provision for re-entry into formal and non-formal vocational education institutions for young mothers. National Children's Policy (2020)-encourages children participation. School Health Policy - that provides for addressing sexual and reproductive health of GYW. Uganda National Culture Policy of 2019. National Parenting guidelines (aimed at empowering parents, the family and community structures to effectively nurture children so that they can realise their full potential). Menstrual hygiene management guidelines. Iganga district policy on disability The policy was influenced by IDIWA in 2013 to support implementation of the ordinance. However it lacks provisions for GYW with disability participation in decision making processes. 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> She Leads contributed to the adoption of the Gender in Education Policy , The National childrens policy 2020, school health Policy and Iganga District Policy. 	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the Changing context , the SL UG decide to consider 4 legal frameworks i.e Gender Policy, Employment amendment act, The youth policy, The national child policy, Child protection policy.
WRG014	# of private sector company policies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA

ANNEX C: UGANDA

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Target 2025		Actual 2023		Suggested adaptation of target 2025	
			Qualitative		Qualitative		Qualitative
WRG015	# of by-laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	5	<p>Advocacy at the local level to influence passing, adoption or implementation of by-laws in subcounties and ordinances at district level. the following are original targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Iganga has a general ordinance on persons with disability and it focuses on issues of education, health, accessibility and employment. The ordinance was aligned to the CRPD in 2013 . We intend to influence one policy on GYW with disability participation in decision making processes at all levels. Child Safeguarding Bye-law in Butansi subcounty kamuli District. Child Safeguarding bye-law in Namasagali Subcounty, Kamuli District. Child Marriage and teenage pregnancy ordinance in Buyende. Child marriage and teenage pregnancy ordinance in Kamuli districts. the ordinances were passed in 2019 but were never approved by the Solicitor General, thus the She Leads Advocacy to target their final approval. 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On 25th November 2022, the Sub County Internal Security Officer (GISO) of Bugaya Sub County passed a resolution to regulate the operation of Street dances and lodges in the Sub county. This came after the She Leads chairperson reported a case of street dance operators who were promoting nude dances at Kitukiro trading center and promoting unrestricted access to the lodges leading to abuse of girls' and children's rights. Between September and December 2022, as a result of advocacy from She Leads advocates, the local government leaders of Namasagali and Butansi drafted Sub County level Child Safeguarding By-Law which restricts children and girls from hawking goods and moving at the trading centers past 6pm. On 31st May, the LC1, and elders passed a resolution to regulate late night markets to protect girls from engaging in the late night market after GYWs, male champions and local/religious identified it as a major risk leading to child marriages, teenage pregnancies and child labour. This change is as a result of SL at community level with local leaders. 	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SL consortium Uganda Plans to work towards the adoption of the PWD KCCA ordinance, KCCA Child protection Ordinance, Ornanace on prevention of child marriage and Teenage pregance in Kamuli and Buyende, Karamoja; District ordinance on alcoholism, Child protection ordinance in Napak, District ordinance on education in Moroto. Iganga PWD ordinance, Iganga district policy on Disability. Child protection ordinance in Bugiri.
WRG016	# of international agreements blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0	NA	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GYW participated in the improvemnet of the global Resolution of Child,Early and Focused marriages by the UN, contributed to the adoption of issues presented during the UPR process, made the Voices thob heard during the CSW engagements, contributed to the adoption of the Enviroment policy during the UN water conference. At AU level SL Uganda through regional Partners has contibuted to the Improvement of the Maputo protocol, the CRC ,The IGAD youth Policy and the EAC SRHR policy. 	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> She leads Uganda will continue to work with the UN Cohort , Climate change Cohort and Global Advocacy Network and the Pan Africa Regional Programme to achieve in blocking and adopting international policies.
WRG017	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The consortium has been trying to create space for all local and national level GYW led CSOs first to organise and establish themselves, identify their demands/issues, create partnership with respective CBOS and government structures. And currently we are in the process of making a joint movement building at national level hopefully to be conducted before the end of this year. 	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The created spaces include the task force meetings held each quarter in 2021, 2022 and mid year of 2023. In addition We were able to create space for the Ethiopian Yound women Voice to interact with decion making bodies in government office and other women led CSO so that they were able to influence their demands and shared experinces. 	19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the first mid year we were able to have an additional number of created spaces for the initial plan. The second mid year is also targeting 6 new spaces at national level considering the remaining years a head.
WRG018	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building at subnational level	9	<p>Under the She Leads Ethiopia has established one national taskforce that consisting of all government stakeholders, Youth led and focused CSOs and She Leads consortium to raise lobby and advocacy issues. Starting from the beginning of the program till this time the taskforce meets three times and discussed On GYW issues.</p>	33	<p>In this section the three subnational level implementing consortium members were able to open spaces for GYW csos in different public campaigning events like 16 days of activism, March 8 for a public awareness and agenda setting. Additionally local level interface meetings, consultative workshops were part of this targets.</p>	49	<p>We have increased the number of spaces generated at the subnational level from the initial plan in this part as well. We recently learned that although the plan was established with fewer estimates than anticipated, the actual exceeded it. As a result, we also established new targets for the next two years while taking into account the environment.</p>

ANNEX C: MALI

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Target 2025		Actual 2023		Suggested adaptation of target 2025	
			Qualitative		Qualitative		Qualitative
WRG012	# of laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> La loi n° 2015-052/ du 18 décembre 2015 est la loi portant mesures de promotion du genre dans l'accès aux fonctions nominatives et électives. La loi n° 02 - 044 / du 24 juin 2002 relative à la santé de la reproduction prend en compte toutes les mesures préventives, curatives et promotionnelles visant à améliorer la prise en charge des groupes vulnérables que sont les femmes. Les enfants, les jeunes adultes afin de réduire la mortalité et la morbidité maternelles, les nourrissons et ainsi promouvoir le bien-être de tous les individus. Le nouveau code viole gravement certaines obligations internationales du Mali, inscrites dans la Convention des Nations Unies sur l'élimination de toutes les formes de discrimination à l'égard des femmes (CEDAW), ratifiée en 1985, et dans le Protocole à la Charte africaine des droits de l'homme et des peuples relatif aux droits de la femme, ratifié en 2005. Cependant, les organisations de la société civile et certaines ONG internationales continuent de se battre pour faire évoluer ce texte. L'adoption de l'avant projet de lois VBG. 	2	La loi n° 2015-052: Forum, Formation des femmes des partis politiques (formation, information et sensibilisation). loi n° 02 - 044 / du 24 juin 2002: l'élaboration des outils de mesures des engagements du gouvernement. L'adoption de la quatrième constitution. Loi électorale du 22 Juin 2022	4	<p>Pour la suite du programme, le réseau travaillera sur les deux lois précédemment citées afin de:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pour la loi 052, veiller au respect de l'application. Pour la loi 02-044/ du 24 Juin 2002 relative à la santé de la reproduction, le réseau contribuera à l'amélioration de cette loi pour une relecture. En plus de cela, le réseau contribuera à diffuser les contenus des lois renforcées telles que la nouvelle constitution qui est une grande avancée en matière de promotion du genre au Mali et la loi électorale qui appuie également la loi 052.
WRG013	# of governmental policies & strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adoption de l'avant-projet de loi relatif à la prévention et à la répression des violences à caractère sexiste et à l'aide aux victimes. 	0	L'avant projet de loi sur les VBG avec la situation politique instable du pays, les leaders religieux ont toujours une réticence face à cette loi car elle inclut non seulement les mutilations génitales féminines et le viol conjugal. Les leaders religieux ayant une force en termes d'influence pensent également que cette loi conduirait à la promotion de l'homosexualité. Le réseau continuera les efforts de plaidoyers et de sensibilisation auprès des autorités compétentes pour un changement positif et une loi en faveur de l'abandon des violences basées sur le genre.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fournir des efforts (session Plaidoyer auprès des institutions, pour parvenir à l'adoption).
WRG014	# of private sector company policies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0	NA	0	NA	0	Le réseau ne prévoit pas d'entreprendre des actions en lien avec cet indicateur.
WRG015	# of by-laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
WRG016	# of international agreements blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0	NA	0	NA	1	Le réseau prévoit de travailler sur le protocole de Maputo afin de faciliter l'harmonisation des textes nationaux. Pour ce faire le réseau entend organiser un forum.

ANNEX C: MALI

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Target 2025		Actual 2023		Suggested adaptation of target 2025	
		Qualitative	Qualitative	Qualitative	Qualitative		
WRG017	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Le premier etait en lien avec la participation des filles et jeunes femmes a la vie politique. C'était un espace de plaidoyer pour les GYW et les a permis d'adresser des recommandations aux autorités de la transition a travers leurs representations presentes. La seconde etait par rapport aux prises de pouvoir des GYW dans le cadre de la celebration de la journée internationale de la fille ou les GYW ont occupe des postes decisionnels et animes des panels intergenerationnels. Les discussions etaient avec les leaders religieux et les maires/gouverneurs par rapport a la promotion et le role des GYW dans le developpement de la communaute. 	8	<p>(Forum sur le document de positionnement sur les reformes politique sensible au genre) International:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 plan inter (participation forum international des organisation, la celebration de la journée internationale de la jeunesse au sahel le 16 aout 2023; Participation au cohorte de formation de union africaine). Femnet 5 (Participation forum Women 7 au japon, Festival des filles et jeunes femmes, Participation au forum Girls in crisis; production d'article hunger crisis dans le sahel; Production d'un communique sur les W7) Le reseau a eu plus d'opportunités. Les GYW ont ete selectionnees pour les differentes cohortes (Panafrikan Board, UN Cohort) ou elles ont eu plus d'espaces d'expression. Elles ont aussi participe a la production d'articles et animation des espaces. 	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forum W7 Document de positionnement sur l'application de la loi 052.
WRG018	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building at subnational level.	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation des Organisations de la Societe Civile dans l'elaboration des Programmes de Developpement Economique Social et Culturel(PDESC). Session de plaidoyer pour l'application de la loi 052 sur la participation politique de la femme. 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation des OSC dans l'elaboration des PDESC 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Les Osc prevoient de créer deux espaces de plaidoyer à l'endroit des institutions de la republique pour appuyer les 3 lois (loi 052, avant projet de loi sur les Violences Basees sur le Genre, loi sur la Sante de la Reproduction/ Planification Familiale).

ANNEX C: KENYA

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Target 2025		Actual 2023		Suggested adaptation of target 2025	
			Qualitative		Qualitative		Qualitative
WRG012	# of laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SGBV Policy 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community groups registration act has been passed. However, public participation act and Persons with Disabilities Bill are yet to be reviewed. Disability Bill 2023, Draft motor vehicle inspection regulations 2022, National integrated Transport Policy 2022, The University of Nairobi GBV 2023 policy and Desk, National Police Task Force 2023. 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received and launched the GBV policy - County Climate Change policy in Homabay County - Nairobi county women economic empowerment. She leads will strive to work on the following Disability Bill 2023, Draft motor vehicle inspection regulations 2022, National integrated Transport Policy 2022, National Police Task Force 2023, PADV Act Rules, The University of Nairobi GBV 2023 policy and Desk. This is because our project implementation process has GYWs who are PWDs and some of whom are anti-GBV advocates.
WRG013	# of governmental policies & strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of the youth policy strategy 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development and domestication of youth policy The project has been able to do the following: Disability Bill 2023, PADV Act Rules, Draft motor vehicle inspection regulations 2022, National integrated Transport Policy 2022, The University of Nairobi GBV 2023 policy and Desk, National Police Task Force 2023. 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensitization on gender mainstreaming policy to the new county structure.
WRG014	# of private sector company policies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0	Review of private sector workplace code of conduct	0	This was not realised. Programme not influencing within the private sector space.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project will prioritize the review of the Private sector code of conduct in Kisumu county.
WRG015	# of by-laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion and participation of GYWs in community projects. Creation of youth policing committee" 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progressively ensure that She Leads project is involved in influencing the development, review or implementation of identified set of by-laws within the county. 	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GYW have been included in ward development forums eg PMC, however this is largely due to lobbying and advocacy.
WRG016	# of international agreements blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0	Collaborations to impact international policies	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls and young women together with the United nations working group on discrimination against girls and young women co developed a report that led to the adoption of the first girls activism policy. 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls and young women together with the United nations working group on discrimination against girls and young women co developed a report that led to the adoption of the first girls activism policy. Influence the UN-HABITAT Youth Board TOR on adjusting the age limit and ensuring gender equality in the board membership.
WRG017	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building	24	Spaces for CSOs demands and positions on women's voice are mainly through the gender technical working group forums. However, during the commemoration of international days, CSO unite to present a common agenda.	20	The gender sector working groups meets on a quarterly basis for both Kisumu and Nairobi. Other forums for joint advocacy with CSOs are; international women's day and 16days of gender activism.	44	For the remaining targets, the programme will continue to support the GSWG on its mandate to hold quarterly review and reflection meetings across Nairobi and Kisumu. This will be towards safeguarding these platform as a key space for advocacy work most notably on women issues. Other advocacy platforms to be considered are commemoration of international days e.g IWD and 16days of activism.
WRG018	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building at subnational level.	25	Participation in the Development of the County Integrated Development Plans	22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CIDP 3 Advocated for Youth Friendly services at local Healthcare Health Centres which was adopted into the 2023/2024 ADP in Homabay, Advocated for Inclusion of markets during CIDP 3 which was adopted into the 2023/2024 ADP in Nairobi. The gender sector working groups meets on a quarterly basis for both Kisumu and Nairobi. Other forums for joint advocacy with CSOs are; international women's day and 16days of gender activism. 	45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CIDP 3 Advocated for Youth Friendly services at local Healthcare Health Centres which was adopted into the 2023/2024 ADP in Homabay. Advocated for Inclusion of markets during CIDP 3 which was adopted into the 2023/2024 ADP in Nairobi. Develop memos and track commitments for the CIDP and ADP budget and plans to be implemented.

ANNEX C: LIBERIA

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Target 2025		Actual 2023		Suggested adaptation of target 2025	
			Qualitative		Qualitative		Qualitative
WRG012	# of laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Consortium wants to work closely with relevant actors to effectively implement Domestic Violence Act especially as this is not being effectively implemented by the male dominated government to eliminate gender based discrimination and violence. The consortium will support the Children representatives to amend the Children's Law because of the following points: the law states that, CWCs should be established in all 15 counties in Liberia which government doesn't have such funding to carry on the process since its passage into law in 2011. The children's election in one of the provisions states that, children are to elect their representatives annually which is major challenge children of Liberia are faced therefore, calling for amendment election should be done after every two or three years. Additionally, article 7 of the children's law justifies that children should undergo cooperate punishment which is not in line with the UNCRC. The 2012-2017 Liberia National Youth Policy ended in 2017 and has since then not been revised. In 2019, there was a new policy adopted for the period of 2019-2023. She Leads Liberia will work closely with the relevant actors and ministries to promote this policy and to advocate for its implementation. 	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic violence law and national youth policy has been improved, gender parity law has been adopted, Legal and safe abortion law has passed, children's law and public health law have been blocked and the Liberia Traditional council has Banned the practice of FGM in Liberia 	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In total we aim to target 8 domestic laws related to gender parity, the Liberia Children Law, Public Health Law, and the National Youth Policy, the legal and safe abortion law has been adopted for GYW in 2023, as well as the practice of FGM has banned in 2023 on MT, and we will lobby on two more laws in the next two years. We have increased the number, because we over-achieved already the target that was set for 2025 at mid-term.
WRG013	# of governmental policies & strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Child Welfare Policy of 2019 has not been rollout due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Child Welfare Policy has addresses several critical areas for She Leads Liberia including the safeguarding of girls. The Girls Education Policy needs to be reactivated while TVET Policy needs effective implementation and enforcement which will scrutinize all TVET institutions giving equal opportunities to GYW for job empowerment, admission and internship. 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls Education policy has been adopted, substance and drug abuse policy adopted. comprehensive sexuality education policy accepted, TVET policy improved 	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 capacity building training conducted on the adoption of the Girls Education policy, substance and drug abuse policy, and comprehensive sexuality education policy accepted, including the Improved TVET policy for GYW.
WRG014	# of private sector company policies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA

ANNEX C: LIBERIA

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Target 2025		Actual 2023		Suggested adaptation of target 2025	
			Qualitative		Qualitative		Qualitative
WRG015	# of by-laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The consortium will engage community stakeholders to establish/reactivate Community bye-laws within SL project communities eradicating those negative social norms that prevent GYW for participation and draft positive social norms and promoting their inclusion in all decision making. 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By law on the rights and protection of girls and women has been implemented through our lobby. Bylaw on female participation in public and political spaces has been implemented. A bylaw has passed that bans FGM in the communities. A girl was protected from rape through our lobby on the implementation of the bylaw to protect the rights of girls and women. 5 GYW groups were given the opportunity handling youth affairs in Goba Town, Gbengbar Town, Arthington, 12th Street and Warrant Street communities according to the by-law that permits youth to be part of key decision-making processes 	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have decreased the target based on the number of by-laws that we could influence till MT (which was 5). WE believe in the next 2 years we can influence 5 more by-laws.
WRG016	# of international agreements blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
WRG017	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.	213	NA	82	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls and Young Women National Conference (3GYW in 2021, 3 in 2022), 16 Days of Activism (3 in 2022), IWD programmes (1 in 2022, 1 in 2023), International Day of the Girl (15 GYW in 2022), Child parliament in 2021, 2022 and 2023 and subsequent network formation for joint action. 	150	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We want to decrease the number of GYW engaged with Govt on Menstrual Hygiene law, 16 days of Activism, and IWD Programmes on national level, as we have so far engaged 82 GYW / CSOs in I&A (through agenda setting, influencing debates or coalition building on national level).
WRG018	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building at subnational level.	222	NA	42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GYW were able to engage local authorities through being invited for meetings, conferences etc. Some traditional/community decision making spaces also included GYW as members or discussed issues related to, She Leads 	100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will decrease the number of GYW engaged on sub-national level, based on the number we have reached so far at MT, which is 42 GYW/CSOs have been engaged in agenda setting, influencing debates or coalition building on sub-national level.

ANNEX C: MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA REGIONAL

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Target 2025		Actual 2023		Suggested adaptation of target 2025	
			Qualitative		Qualitative		Qualitative
WRG012	# of laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0		0			
WRG013	# of governmental policies & strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0		1	Influencing and improving the League of Arab States strategy on enhancing child participation through the Arab Parliament of the child	2	By collaborating with the League of Arab States (LAS) and developing a user-friendly justice manual across 22 countries, along with conducting a survey in the MENA region to assess compliance with child-friendly justice standards.. double check with DCI palestine if this is regarding policy of the league of arab states..
WRG014	# of private sector company policies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0					
WRG015	# of by-laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0		0	NA	8	By employing the framework of DCI, consisting of eight countries and a dedicated child by-law, complemented by an additional strategy formulated during the ARDD GYW Regional conference held in Lebanon. This strategy focuses on promoting representative participation among young girls and children by enhancing and updating their Child Protection Policies (CPP).
WRG016	# of international agreements blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0					
WRG017	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.	0		8	The CSOs managed to create space for GYW voices through a wide range of activities conducted in the last 2.5 years in MENA considering the project challenges, risks, and other factors. Based on the outcomes harvesting book and KIIs, the number is 8 times.	9	Through creating one regional conference
WRG018	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building at subnational level.	0		5	Girls and young women (GYW) now have improved access to spaces and platforms where they can freely express their concerns and voice their needs during public events and national seminars. This positive development allows them to participate actively in discussions and advocate for their rights, creating an environment that fosters their agency and leadership in decision-making processes. The availability of these spaces and channels has significantly enhanced the representation and visibility of GYW in various public forums, promoting gender equality and amplifying their voices in the civic sphere. 1 group each in 5 countries	6	Through creating one regional conference

ANNEX C: SIERRA LEONE

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Target 2025		Actual 2023		Suggested adaptation of target 2025	
			Qualitative		Qualitative		Qualitative
WRG012	# of laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	3	Sierra Leone's 1991 Anti-discrimination Law - Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment - Child Right Act 2007 - currently reviewing - trying to harmonise age of marriage. - Sexual Offence Act 2019	5	The network committed to work on the following laws during the period under review. 1.Adoption of the Gender Empowerment Bill; 2.Review process of the Constitution (sections referring to customary law as a source for common law)3. Review of the Child Right Act 2007.	7	At the end of the MTR Review meeting the She Leads programme, reset it targets on laws to be achieved by 2025 to 7laws - including the already 5 laws developed and 2 additional laws: Safe Motherhood Bill and the1991 Constitution to be review. The 4 laws that have been enacted will be pushed for promotion, the 3 Laws will be pushed for their enactment, that is the Child Righth Act, the 1991 Consotution of Sierra Leone and the Safe Motherhood Bill.
WRG013	# of governmental policies & strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	1	Effective implementation of the National Youth Policy adopted in 2022.	4	The National Youth Policy (2021) the adoption of this policy was succesfully influenced by Plan International and Defence for Children International, also influenced by girls and young women that are part of the She Leads.	5	The She Leads team will follow up on the implementation of the reocendation made by girls and young women that was included in the political Manifesto of the ruling part now after the 2023 elections. Also the team will continue to provide support to Youth Advisory group at the Ministry of Education so they will be able to influence govern-ment laws, polices and strtegies, finally the team will also advocacte for the Ministry of Gender by 2025 to develop a strategy for the implementation of the GEWE Act for it aim to be fully ahcived.
WRG014	# of private sector company policies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
WRG015	# of by-laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	3	In the Nothern(Bomablie, Koinadugu) of Sierra Leone where we also have the operation of the She leads program, women by default of the fact that they are not part of the poro soceity that is meant for men, are not allowed to be chief, their coustomary law says that before you become a cheif you must be part of the poro society. As a result men are the Cheifs and women are given second position which is called (Bomkapr) that means they serve as offocial wife in theory for the Cheif. In Moyamba(Fakunya Chiefdom) and some part in Bo Distrct (Baoma Cheifdom)women are not prevented for aspiring for leadership positions (Cheiftaincy to be specfic) however there is a limitation for women who are not part of the Bondo support, you can only get more support (To be voted for) if you are member of the Bondo society. In Bo District (Njerihun Chiefdom) If women wants to acequire land or property you must go through your husband, becasue they beleive that if women are poineering to buy property forthemselves without their husband it will not bring disrespect in the home. Also in Njerihun community in order for you to have voting right for Chieftaincy positions, you need to be a member of the tribal authority and for that to happen, you need to have paid tax for an average of 100 people. This require some resources and considering the financial earning power of women, most women do not get the opportunity of been TA. As a result when a woman wants to aspire to become a cheif this becomes diffcult for her to get the support to win, because the men who have the power to vote do not believe in Leadership of women and the women do not have the voting rights to support their fellow women. In conclusion most of the traditional leadership in our different Districts are tied to the different secret societies (Wondey, Bondo, Poro Gbagbani etc) if you are not a member of any of these soceity no matter how capable you are you will not be assume leaddership. As a result these are norms, values and customary laws that we need to block.	4	During the Period under review, it is worthy to note that in the North at Bombalie and Koinadugu women are still not allowed to become paramount chiefs due to the fact that they have to be part of the poro soceity or other soecieties before being recognised as eligible candidate. However there is an open coversation now for women to be secti-oncehifs, also women coming to meeting expressing their views and opinions, mammy queens having conversations with the women in her sections about issues affecting them and bringing it before the chefis at general meetings, which is very rear before now. Also now in the South the issue of Bondo soceity was an issue for women to be eliglbe for positions like section chiefs or councilorship or parliamentrains, people are nor more aware and open to vote for women and support them even if they are not part of the Bondo soceiy. The New land rght Act has created more opportunity for women to be able to acess land and properties without passing through their male siblings or relatives. The MTR findings shows that finally women are now more aware about the benifit they have if they pay their tax and also the advantage to pay their tax by them-selves instead of passing through their husbands, they now know that it serve as a foundation fro them to vote and be voted for within their communities. They are also coming up gradually to occupy places of leadership in their schools and communities at large. Issues of inheritance are becoming more favourable on the part of the women and their children+19.	8	The Network will work assiduously in 2025 to break or block the following norms; 1. Leadership of women at community and District level especially in the North and some areas in the south. 2. Participation of girls and young women in Decsion Making processes at home, school and community level 3. Voices of girls and young women in the home, school, community 4. Property Right.

ANNEX C: SIERRA LEONE

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Target 2025		Actual 2023		Suggested adaptation of target 2025	
			Qualitative		Qualitative		Qualitative
WRG016	# of international agreements blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	4	The network set to block, promote or adopt the following International agreements; United Nation Convention on the Righth of the Child (UNCRC) Maputo Protcol for Child Marriage, FGM and SRHR, African Charter on the right and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) for Child Marriage and Universal Periodic Review (UPR)	3	She Leads facilitated for GYW to put their recommenda-tions together on the Maputo Protocol, which was included in the CSO shadow report; In consultations on the CRC GYW put their key messages together on issues around justice, sexual violence, education and health and that was submitted to the Special Rapporteur of the CRC; Regarding the African Charter of the Rights and the Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), She Leads had a consultation with GYW on their input on the issue of child marriage.	4	In addition to working on the UNCRC report 2024; the African Charter of the Rights and Welfare of the Child 2024; and the Maputo Protocol, it is planned to also work on the UPR in 2024.
WRG017	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.	10	At National level the team was able to set target for influecing government 4 times for the adoption of laws and policies that will create space and oppoortunities for women's voice, agency, leadership and representation. Finally the network also set to influence the agenda of government 6 times to put girls and young women's issues in their strategic development Plans and also to influence national level debate.	9	At National Level was able to sucessfully influence gover-nment for the adoption and promotion of the following laws; Review of the Child Right Act; Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act; Land Right Act, Education Act and Cyber Crime Act. In addition the Network was also able to sucessfully influenced the Review of the National Youth Policy 2021; Radical inclusion Policy; they were also able suceed to influence the Ministry of Education to establish the Youth advisory Group. Finally they also suceeded in getting the Sierra Leone People's Political Party to include the views and opinion of girls and young women into their Mnafiesto and Top 5 priority to address as a government.	15	We put the target at 15 for 2025, as in 2.5 years we already achievd a number of 10. It is realistic to assure times. On purpose we keep it do-able and a bit low, in order to be sure to achieve the target number,. me that in the coming 2.5 years we can do 5 mo.
WRG018	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative partici-pation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building at subnational level.	0	The Network did not have any specifc target on how they are going to influence stakeholders in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decisi-on-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building at subnational level.	39	2 times (WF in Tonkolilie, Port Loko influenced GEWE Bill, they held consultation with Community stakeholders in both District to get their support on the bill for it to become law. 3 times .DCI and Plan in Bo, Makeni, Kenema was able to influenced community stakeholders to give their input on the reviewed of Child Act and also engged children to get their input and submit to government); 2 times (WF did popularisation in Pujehun and Kambia about GEWE Bill). 2 times, Plan Influencing of district councils on registration for GYW groups and to give GYW the opportunity to partici-pate in cuncil meetings Moyamba, Koinadugu, and DCI-SL 1 times in Bombalie District.	50	The network has set their target for 50 after the MTR review, already the She leads partners have been able to influence the creation of space at community level and District Level a total of 39 times so for the coming 2.5 years they will be able to hit the target of 50.

ANNEX C: PAN AFRICA REGIONAL

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Target 2025		Actual 2023		Suggested adaptation of target 2025	
			Qualitative		Qualitative		Qualitative
WRG016	# of international agreements blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	7	The Pan African programme focuses on the Africa Regional agreements and policies to influence. This could be through Pan African institutions such as the African Union, ACHPR, ACERWC, African Conference of Ministers of Gender & Women Affairs, AU Department of Gender, AU Office of the Youth Envoy and the RECs (EAC and ECOWAS), will adopt concrete measures to increase meaningful participation of GYW and improve member states' accountability towards GYW rights. The target is: 6 policies, 1 strategy. Maputo protocol, ACHPR, CRC, CEDAW, ACRWC, IGAD Youth Policy Strategy of protection of GYW on digital space.	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The participation of GYW at the regional level remains often tokenistic, event-based and ad hoc rather than meaningful. GYW participation remains at best lip service and at worst, contentious. In particular, when 'girl participation' is promoted, some Member States push back by arguing that they are too young to be able to fully participate in decision-making. GYW participants are still largely dependent on adults and the support of adult-led organisations in reaching regional and international influencing spaces. Due to the fact that girls and young women are not identified by international and regional human rights frameworks as a specific stakeholder or target group, they are often less visible. In almost all countries, basic freedoms of speech, peaceful assembly and association are not being respected. 	34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECOWAS Gender Policy and Strategy The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child Gender Parity Bill Affirmative Action Bill Public Health Law Gender and Women's Empowerment Bill Nairobi Economic Empowerment Policy National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence
WRG017	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.	20	Support to CSOs to enhance the engagement of GYW with formal decision-makers at AU and RECs (EAC, IGAD) relevant fora to advocate for the creation of GYWs' meaningful participation.	31	There are a large number of youth-led and youth-focused CSOs and networks working at the regional level. Many are limited due to their resources or due to their connections with institutions. Some adult-led organizations integrate the voices of GYW well, while others focus on other issues and are therefore limited to working on issues related to GYW.	51	Strategies used and demands/positions presented Key strategies employed by the She Leads programmes according to the key informants engaged during the evaluation were presentation of policy briefs, media influencing and advocacy, supporting GYW to participate in policy forums for collective action and activism and building movements with like-minded CSOs to present common policy statement positions. The key demands and positions presented focused on pushing decisions concerning gender equality, enhancing implementation of regional human rights instruments, addressing challenges affecting girls and women at border areas, combatting sexual exploitation of children and advancing protection and engagement of children in the digital spaces.

ANNEX C: GLOBAL ADVOCACY NETWORK

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Target 2025		Actual 2023		Suggested adaptation of target 2025	
			Qualitative		Qualitative		Qualitative
WRG016	# of international agreements blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	52	CSW concluding observations, UPR recommendations, Reports of UN experts, Human Rights council resolutions, VNR reports, UPR recommendations. Annually the International programme will influence the different UN bodies and monitoring mechanisms. There are several sessions a year the programme has the opportunity to influence. We will target to influence 2 Human Rights Resolutions, 2 outcomes related to CSW including the Outcome doc, 1 UN Third Committee resolution, each year). Besides this we will aim to influence at least 1 CRC outcome document, 1 CEDAW outcome document, 2 UPR recommendations and 2 UN expert reports.	15	Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression report ('21) ILO Convention 190 ratification ('21) UPR Sierra Leone recommendations ('21) CSW66 Agreed Conclusions ('22) HRC policy on girl activism ('22) UNGA resolution on healthy environment ('22) HLPF Ministerial Declaration('22) UNGA resolution UN Youth Office ('22) Stakeholder engagement mechanism AU-EU summit ('22) UPR Ghana stakeholder summary report ('22) UPR Uganda recommendations ('22) Expansion mandate Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women ('22) Special Rapporteur Sexual Exploitation of Children thematic report ('22) Durban Call to Action ('22) CSW67 Agreed Conclusions('23)	52	We have decided not to change this ambitious target because we feel confident after the first years of implementation we are able to strategize and influence even more. We have strong connections with the countries and especially youth in the countries, thanks to the system of youth cohorts. Besides this we will work more on the thematic experts at UN level, the UN special mandate holders and share the findings and messages from the She Leads youth led organisations with them. And we will keep working on the accountability mechanisms and the treaty bodies at the UN level, such as: CEDAW Netherlands (25), UPR - Liberia (25), Sierra Leone (25), Lebanon (25), Kenya (24), Ethiopia (24), Jordan 2023, CRC Ghana, Ethiopia, Uganda (24-25), VNR - Uganda (24) CSW - Poverty - 10 monitoring bodies Special Rapporteur - Events that are of importance in 2024: Events for 2024 to focus on as GAN Human Rights Council 2024 (several sessions) Equal Measures research report launch on data driven advocacy September Summit of the Future High Level Political Forum (DCI) UN Special Mandate holders on Environment, Climate, Freedom of Expression, Ending Violence against Children
WRG017	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As International Programme we focus on the international processes to create space. There are international process we will support CSOs on to influence at, such as national monitoring processes including the UN Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review, the UN SDG Voluntary National Review Processes and the High Level forum related to that at UN New York level and the human rights monitoring processes that relate to treaty bodies such as the CRC and CEDAW. 	57	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agenda setting (GYW advocates being invited to speak at global fora) 34 Adopting argumentation (Eg. Lobbying for inclusion of specific recommendations, such as at CSW67. Uganda UPR recommendations. References in Special Rapporteur reports,) 14 Inclusion in decision meeting (eg. GYW from She Leads as a part of Sierra Leone delegation at CSW67; Kenyan youth delegation in 2024) 9 	100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laid the foundation in the last 2 years and we will build on that in different spaces (CSW, UPR, HRC, Women Deliver), Being a coalition the advantage is that we are able to access processes despite the shrinking spaces.
WRG018	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building at subnational level.	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA

ANNEX C: GHANA

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Target 2025		Actual 2023		Suggested adaptation of target 2025	
			Qualitative		Qualitative		Qualitative
WRG012	# of laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	3	Reform laws in the Ghanaian 1992 constitution to enhance freedom of association by GYW-led groups, the effective implementation of the Right to Information Act and the passage of the Affirmative Action Bill.	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The effective implementation of the Right to Information Act allows CSOs and GYWs to get information needed for their advocacy. Progressive steps towards the passage of the Affirmative Action Bill: The National Champions of Change of the She Leads Project held a press conference on 12th May 2022 calling for the passage of the Affirmative Action Bill into law after the champions were trained on legal literacy. Following the press conference, the Ghana's Speaker of Parliament demanded the immediate submission of the Affirmative Action Bill to Parliament in whatever form during Parliamentary sitting on 25th May 2022. Ministry for Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) has resubmitted the Affirmative Action (Gender Equality) Bill to cabinet for consideration on Tuesday, 21st March 2023. Ms Lariba Zuweira Abudu, Minister for MoGCSP shared in a statement that, the resubmission would enable the consideration of the Bill to ensure it was laid before Parliament for approval. Find attached news link (https://www.ghanabusinessnews.com/2023/03/29/affirmative-action-bill-resubmitted-to-cabinet-for-consideration-gender-minister/). 	3	The She Leads consortium will target only 1 law to be adopted which is the Passage of Affirmative Action Bill. There will be continuous advocacy and lobbying by the She Leads consortium towards the passage of the Affirmative Action Bill. Also, the She Leads consortium will continue to advocate for the freedom of association by GYW-led groups, however, we have no power to change the 1992 constitution.
WRG013	# of governmental policies & strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	1	To launch the National Commission for NGOs.	0	This indicator was not realized by the consortium.	2	The She Leads consortium will monitor two governmental strategic policies namely: Strategic Framework on Child Marriage and Operational Plan on Child and Family Welfare Policy to see how effective it is being implemented and suggest ways for improvement of these policies.
WRG014	# of private sector company policies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
WRG016	# of international agreements blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
WRG017	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.	7	Number of times She Leads consortium will succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building at the national and international level.	3	<p>Increased participation and influence of girls in international institutions: She Leads Project created spaces for GYWs and CSOs to jointly monitor government performance on girls' rights. Such platforms included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sixty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW67). Plan International Board Governance Meeting in Belgium. UPR report: 4 recommendations were selected by the UN High Commission on Human Rights and included in the Stakeholders' summary submission on Ghana by the UN General Assembly Human Rights Council on 31st October, 2022. 	7	No change in target set.

ANNEX C: GHANA

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Target 2025		Actual 2023		Suggested adaptation of target 2025	
			Qualitative		Qualitative		Qualitative
WRG018	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building at subnational level.	10	Number of times She Leads consortium will succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building at the subnational level.	11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adult-led CSOs engage GYW in their advocacy actions: NETRIGHT included She Leads GYW organizations in a national Young Feminists conference to empower GYW to build capacity strengthening for GYW-led organizations and activism. 2. Adult-led CSOs creating space to engage GYWs: Two recognized adult-led CSO coalitions/networks (NETRIGHT and WILDAF) pledged to register She Leads GYW groups/organizations as members of their coalitions. NETRIGHT and WILDAF together have registered 18 She Leads GYW organizations as members of their networks in 2023 with a one year waiver of registration fees from WILDAF. 3. Adult CSOs directly funded 7 GYW Groups and these GYW-led organisations are leading their own activism. 4. Adult CSOs targetted MMDAs to include GYWs in their district level meetings which have agreed to and included She Leads GYW as active participants for their planning and review meetings. 5. Adult CSOs supported the workplans of CoCs which have resulted in the creation of spaces for girls and young women to participate in chieftaincy decision making process, the enstoolment of young women as queen mothers and the support to young women vying for positions in the upcoming 2023 unit committee and assembly elections. 6. Adult CSOs have enhanced and strengthened the capacity of GYW groups to take up male-dominated positions in schools which has helped to change the narrative 7. Adult CSOs targetted Male Champions in the lobby & advocacy of She Leads: The L&A activity has resulted in Male champions (Boys and Men champions) including debates and gender norm challenge activities to address discriminatory gender norms and stereotypes which serves as barriers to GYW participation in leadership and decision-making. 	21	As the network overachieved the initial target, they will target 10 more spaces of influence at community and regional level to create space

ANNEX C: LEBANON

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Target 2025		Actual 2023		Suggested adaptation of target 2025	
			Qualitative		Qualitative		Qualitative
WRG012	# of laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criminalizing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace Law. Setting the Age of Marriage at 18. Personal Status Law Affecting Women's Participation. Law on Cyber Harassment Crimes 	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The partners won't work on the sexual harassment in the workplace law anymore. Personal status law and setting the age of marriage at 18 (KAFA and TDH are working on these laws). Child marriage law (still ongoing). 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners will be continuing the efforts to be working for the adoption of the Personal Status law, which is led by Kafa and TdH. We will also continue to work on the child Marriage law as well. The Lebanese civil society and feminist organizations (including SL consortium), are pushing to have a law that criminalizes marriages under the age of 18. A draft law was proposed by a national organization (RDFL) and was discussed in the parliament but was not signed due to pressure coming from political parties and religious leaders. SHE LEADS will push and advocate for a law that criminalizes child marriage.
WRG013	# of governmental policies & strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	1	Women's political involvement is still limited in Lebanon, and the government lacks a strategy to enhance it. The consortium aims to advocate for a temporary parliamentary quota to boost women's political participation.	0	In Lebanon, women's political engagement is minimal, and no government strategy exists for its improvement. The consortium will advocate for a temporary parliamentary quota to enhance women's political participation.	1	Partners will strive to promote women's decision-making roles in politics at both national and local levels. However, progress might be hindered due to uncertain election prospects.
WRG014	# of private sector company policies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
WRG015	# of by-laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Law against workplace sexual harassment. Law setting marriage age at 18. Personal status law (by-laws). Law on cyber harassment crimes. Regarding Personal Status Law: This involves complex discriminatory by-laws intertwined with political and social matters. The consortium addresses this during awareness sessions and advocacy campaigns. Change is expected, but complexities in politics, society, and demographics influence progress. Notably, Lebanon lacks a unified civil code, raising concerns about the role of religious and confessional entities. 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kfarhamam Initiative: Goal was to boost women's municipal participation. Women in this program interviewed the local mayor, who encouraged village girls to run for elections. Nabatieh Initiative: Focus on cyber harassment. Participants visited schools for awareness sessions and urged municipalities to attend. They recommended setting up a hotline for reported harassment cases. 	6	<p>Done before and achieved until June 2023, additional 4 will be worked on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kafa and TdH: are going to do that in Bekaa and Beirut. Amel and Plan: South. DAA: Nabaa.
WRG016	# of international agreements blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA

ANNEX C: LEBANON

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Target 2025		Actual 2023		Suggested adaptation of target 2025	
			Qualitative		Qualitative		Qualitative
WRG017	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.	5	Through established youth groups, the consortium works to create links with existing feminist groups and build coalitions that can conduct campaigns on a national level.	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A GYW from the international girl day event met the Australian ambassador, leading to a visit to her village and empowering her and her family. Another GYW engaged with officials from the Swiss Embassy, UNWomen, and EU during the takeover. Collaboration with the National Scouts Association, involving the Minister of Education. An initiative with the Ministry of Justice and Syndicate of Lawyers, including the Attorney General of Baabda. Geneva visit: A GYW was accepted by the UN and presented She Leads Lebanon in Geneva. Another attended CSW in New York. 	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DAA (2) Plan-Amel (4) DCI (4) TdH (4). elaborate how spaces will be created
WRG018	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building at subnational level.	4	Through established youth groups, the consortium works to create links with existing feminist groups and build coalitions that can conduct campaigns on a sub national level.	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSO REFUSE invited for participation (DAA). Round table with religious and community leaders, initiatives in Sour with Laban, and collaboration with 4 Nabatieh schools (Amel). 4 initiatives and a journalist workshop (TdH). Intergenerational dialogue with 5 speakers from diverse entities, featuring arts and music (DCI). 	60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TdH & Kafa: 2 initiatives + 2 roundtable + 8 events. Kafa & Amel: 17 initiatives + 1 training for Journalists + 5 community events + 2 round tables. DCI: 8 initiatives. DAA: 6 roundtables + 6 roundtables.

ANNEX C: JORDAN

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Target 2025		Actual 2023		Suggested adaptation of target 2025	
			Qualitative		Qualitative		Qualitative
WRG012	# of laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	5		4	Children Law - targeted by She Leads but their activities there is no direct impact from She Leads - we indirectly impacted it Nationality law - changed and adapted - influenced by She Leads - this was not directly related to She Leads -	7	Our objective is to drive amendments, influence change, and activate initiatives based on the recommendations put forth by the Child Parliament. In the timeframe of 2024-2025, the Children's Parliament will engage in a thorough review and formulate recommendations that will serve as the foundation for advocating legal amendments. TDH will specific focus placed on the personal status law, with a targeted approach towards addressing domestic violence issues. Through these efforts, we seek to bring about meaningful improvements and create a legal framework that better safeguards the rights and well-being of individuals, particularly in cases of domestic violence.
WRG013	# of governmental policies & strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0		0		0	NA
WRG014	# of private sector company policies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0		0		0	
WRG015	# of by-laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	1		4	Women led organizations in forming a just and fair version of the law to lessen space shrinking if not combating it. Moreover, the current emergency and defence laws are already imposing more restrictions and restricting the work of civil society. Shama's strategic plan.	6	Our goal is to establish an internal bylaw and annual plan for the Child's Parliament, empowering its members to formulate their own regulations and yearly agenda. This initiative also encompasses the development of internal policies and the integration of gender mainstreaming principles. Additionally, within the consortium, we aspire to bring about a change in a private company's bylaw, ensuring a more gender-sensitive approach and fostering a culture of inclusivity and equality.
WRG016	# of international agreements blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.	0		0		1	The consortium will actively engage in advocating for the rights of children by collaborating with various stakeholders to ensure the proper implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). One of their key initiatives involves influencing the CRC's reflection on national laws through the incorporation of recommendations put forth by the Child Parliament. By working closely with the Child Parliament, Pwe aims to align national legal frameworks with international standards for child protection and well-being. Furthermore, we are committed to advocating for the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process, which presents an opportunity to comprehensively assess a country's human rights situation, including the rights of children. By engaging in the UPR, we seeks to spotlight issues related to child rights violations, raise awareness, and encourage necessary legal reforms.

ANNEX C: JORDAN

Outcome reporting sheet Midterm Evaluation She Leads		Target 2025		Actual 2023		Suggested adaptation of target 2025	
			Qualitative		Qualitative		Qualitative
WRG017	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building.	3	Active membership in case of networks can be defined in terms of attending minimum number of meetings, frequency of bringing in proposals, participate in decision-making, etc. leadership can either apply to CSOs and CSO networks and relates to any decision-making role in the organisation/network.	0	Reviewing the law on the rights to association has been promoted by she leads members together with other CSO's. As well as calling attention for the increasing femicide through a regionally organised strike. he CSOs managed to create space for GYW voices through a wide range of activities conducted in the last 2.5 years in Jordan, considering the project challenges, risks, and other factors. Based on the outcomes harvesting book and KIs, the number is 70 times, and this includes the 16 days of activism activities. The CSO's shama network are working on subnational level. (community based).	1	The child's parliament steering committee consisted from CSOs in Jordan working on child's rights including part of the consortium members. More coordination and joint efforts to support the child's rights and young girl leadership situation in Jordan.
WRG018	# of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building at subnational level.	3	Active membership in case of networks can be defined in terms of attending minimum number of meetings, frequency of bringing in proposals, participate in decision-making, etc. leadership can either apply to CSOs and CSO networks and relates to any decision-making role in the organisation/network.	71	16 days of activism, resourcing and creation of space for local CBOs at governorate level. some key outcomes include GYW and women's rights group resourced by Plan led and were invited in key discussions on GBV with institutions and civic spaces. GYW groups lead training sessions on the GBV and gender justice, specifically in the southern part of the country.	86	The Jordan River Foundation is committed to collaborating with both religious leaders and a group of youth to promote gender equality and women's rights. The initiative involves engaging religious leaders in specialized training centered on women's rights, enabling them to subsequently conduct awareness sessions within their communities. Simultaneously, the youth will undergo comprehensive training on women's rights, gender-based violence (GBV), and the development of community-based projects. These young individuals will then implement these initiatives across various universities and communities. Some initiatives might be implemented in some of including the JWU centers at 15 different locations, along with 5 Community-Based Organizations in Ma'an, Tafila, Jerash, Irbid, and Mafraq. The program of JWU focuses on empowering adolescents to actively participate in gender equality activities. Furthermore, the Plan and Shama's network, as well as Tdh and their partners, have contributed and will continue to the 16 days of activism by amplifying the voices and agency of girls and young women (GYW). Tdh's partners are engaged with three committees, one GYW committee in Nadi Alibda, another in Idoun, and a youth committee in Ruwwad. These committees are enhancing their capacities to effectively advocate for women's rights and amplify women's voices.

ANNEX D: PARTNERSHIP DIMENSIONS AND DISTRIBUTION OF POWER THROUGHOUT THE PARTNERSHIP CYCLE

A. Partnership Dimensions

- 1. Efficiency & Effectiveness:** organisations and their representatives in successful partnerships have a clear and shared vision of the partnership's objectives and values. They are also clear about their roles. A feeling of mutual accountability, mechanisms for regular performance review, and appropriate communication channels and mechanisms for information exchange ensure that partners hold each other to account. The buy-in of senior management enables the mobilisation of resources for the partnership. Systems for collaboration (decision-making, reflection, conflict resolution, accountability) ensure that these resources are integrated towards (joint) outputs that contribute to the joint partnership outcomes.
- 2. Approach:** in successful partnerships, partners understand and acknowledge what each partner brings to the collaboration, and appreciate that each organisation works in its own unique way. Good use is being made of individual and organisational expertise, and there is conscious and deliberate incorporation of specific strengths that organisations bring. Partners have a genuine voice at the table and their contributions, views, and opinions are respected.
- 3. Attitude & competencies:** partnerships are more successful if there is tangible evidence of each individual's and each organisation's engagement, commitment, and contribution. A basic level of trust is presupposed for collaboration mindsets to come out and for commitment and contribution to evolve. Partnership success is moreover more likely if the individuals in the partnership have the (technical and strategic) knowledge and skill sets that enable them to perform in the partnership.
- 4. Results & productivity:** successful partnerships help the constituent organisations to achieve their own (organisational level) goals, and add value to each organisation and individual involved. They moreover have the '1 + 1 = 3' effect; through joint advocacy and a common voice, the partnership is achieving wider impact and influence than each individual organisations on its own. In successful partnerships, those involved consider it very likely that the partnership will realize its shared objectives.
- 5. Resources & funding:** the availability of sufficient (financial) resources for each partner to participate in the partnership is a precondition for the success of the partnership. A lack of (access to) financial resources sabotages the mobilisation of resources for (joint) outputs and outcomes, it undermines the necessary mutual understanding, appreciation, and respect, and it inhibits organisational commitment, engagement, and contribution. This dimension includes coverage of overhead costs, terms of and access to funding.

B. Assessing distribution of power throughout the partnership cycle

In line with the Partos Power Awareness Tool, the partnership assessment distinguishes four main stages of the partnership cycle. In the (1) *Scoping & building stage*, the needs and options of the partnership are determined, and potential partners are identified. Relationships with and between partners are built, and initial mapping and planning take place. This phase usually ends in a (formal) partnership agreement. During (2) *Managing & maintaining*, partners decide on governance and structures, and deepen key engagements. Also in this phase, the organisations that form the partnership start the delivery of projects and (joint) activities. The phase of (3) *Reviewing & revising* is all about measuring results and reviewing efficiency and value. In this phase, partners revisit and revise their partnership. In the phase of (4) *Sustaining outcomes*, important decisions are made on the sharing of knowledge and experience, on scaling and increasing impact, and on the future of the partnership.



ANNEX E: ANSWERING KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS ON PARTNERSHIP ASSESSMENT.

1. Which partnership dimensions have an enabling effect on the partnership?

All dimensions seem to have an enabling effect. The most enabling dimension is Attitude & competencies. People involved in the partnership have the necessary knowledge and skills and there is ample evidence of commitment, engagement, contribution, and a basic level of trust. The goals and vision of She Leads are well aligned with those of the organisations involved.

2. Which partnership dimensions have a disabling effect on the partnership?

No dimensions seem to have a disabling effect. However, the least enabling dimension was Resources & funding. Although funding arrangements are generally clear, there are concerns that budgets are insufficient to cover the costs of implementation of activities and of overhead.

3. How do enabling dimensions differ for people and organisations in the partnership?

Some differences were observed between countries: while Liberia reflects the highest scores in most dimensions, respondents from the Netherlands score statistically significantly lower in the Efficiency & effectiveness and Approach dimensions than other countries. As for individual attributes, significant differences were observed for age, in the Resources & funding dimension, where the 55+ category scores lower than other ages. Another outstanding (although not statistically significant) difference is that strategic or technical partners score consistently below average for all dimensions. Country and regional network coordinators score significantly higher on the Approach, Attitude & competencies and Results & productivity dimensions than others.

4. How does decision-making power differ during different stages of the partnering cycle?

Throughout the entire partnering cycle, all organisations are at least consulted about decisions made. A few people feel that their organisations are not involved in decision-making, especially in the reviewing & revising stage. Decisions about starting the partnership, partner selection, and terms of programme implementation are mostly led by the Dutch partners. Members of the Board of Directors report the highest decision-making power for their organisations for the first 3 stages, while Steering Committee members report the highest scores in the sustaining outcomes stage.

5. How does decision-making power differ for people organisations in the partnership?

Organisations' decision-making power differs based on the country in which they are located. Decisions about starting the partnership, partner selection and terms of the programme implementation are mostly led by the Dutch partners – consistent with comments from respondents from programme countries that they had not been involved in decisions on the selection of partners. Another outstanding difference is that respondents involved in diplomacy (associated with the MFA and its embassies) are least involved in decision-making throughout the partnership cycle. This is consistent with the statistically significantly lower decision-making power that was observed for strategic and technical partners in almost all stages of the partnering cycle. Members of the board of directors and the steering committee score higher throughout the partnering cycle. Furthermore, in all partnership stages, people who spend more of their working time on She Leads report higher decision-making power for their organisations than those who spend less time on She Leads. Consistently, male colleagues score slightly higher on average than females. Finally, in the reviewing & revising, and sustaining outcomes stages, respondents in age groups 45-54 and 55+ review their organisations as having the most decision-making power.

6. Interactions with the MFA and embassies

Across the partnership, there is not much interaction with the MFA or embassies. Most probably, the consortium coordinator and – to a lesser degree – the Global Steering Committee and the consortium desk officers are the only ones with regular contact with the MFA, with country network coordinators interacting with the relevant embassies. Most interactions focus on exchanging and receiving information and on coordinating with other partnerships. Interactions with embassies are often experienced as demanding, timewise, and in terms of accountability requirements. The role of the MFA and embassies in the partnership is not clear, and a feeling of disconnect prevails, notably when it comes to local dynamics, changing contexts, and the need to adapt to these. There is a general desire for more (effective) contact, which could also enhance the flexibility and quality of the interactions.

She LEADS



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