Coalition for Peace in Africa (COPA)

Annual Report

2012
Abbreviations

AU- African Union
IGAD-- Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
UN-United Nations
COPA-Coalition for Peace in Africa
UNAMID- United Nations African Union Mission in Darfur
JDPM- Justice, Development & Peace Movement
MONUSCO- United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC
UNMIL- United Nations Mission in Liberia
CEDAW-Convention on the Elimination of All forms Discrimination against Women
UNSCR-United Nations Security Council Resolution
FAR- Fellowship for African Relief
ACORD-Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development
UNICEF-United Nations Children`s Fund
UNDP-United Nations Development Programme
CSOs-Civil Society Organisations
MERL- Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning
DDR-Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
CCR-Centre for Conflict Resolution
PWAG-Peace Women Across the Globe
Ifa- Institute for Foreign Cultural relations
TJRC-Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission
GIZ-German Society for International Cooperation
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ABOUT COPA

The Coalition for Peace in Africa (COPA) was founded in 1996 when a group of concerned African peace practitioners drawn from conflict areas in the continent met in Kenya to exchange their insights and experiences on the prevention of the escalation of violent conflicts in the continent. This group was initially drawn from Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, South Africa and Sierra Leone. The group was convinced that they needed to offer appropriate and continuous practical support to people and organizations on the ground faced with violent conflicts and potentially volatile situations. This was to be done through trainings, mentorship, creation of linkages, conducting of exchange programmes among practitioners faced with similar conflict challenges and documentation of experiences and best practices.

Since then, COPA has endeavored to build capacities of African peace practitioners particularly those living and working in conflict areas to enhance their effectiveness in responding to peace and security situations. In the last 5 years, most COPA projects have focused on peace practitioners who wish to enhance their capacities in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacebuilding and post conflict reconstruction. In particular, within the stated period, a lot of effort has been made to reach out to women so that they too can effectively participate and contribute to local and regional peacebuilding processes. Enhancing capacities has been done through trainings, mentorship, creation of linkages, conducting of exchange programmes and documentation of practice.

Since inception some of the projects that COPA has implemented include capacity building trainings, enhancing understanding of trauma healing in peacebuilding, peace education, women empowerment, documentation of the peacebuilding practice and networking.

Vision: A continent anchored on a culture of peace, justice and equality with security and economic growth for its people.

Mission: COPA is an African network of peace builders whose purpose is to promote peace, justice, human rights and development through capacity building, advocacy, and research. Today, COPA is guided by three strategic directions. The first is to promote conflict management and peace-building initiatives through capacity building and skills training, exchange visits, mentoring and capacity enhancement. The second is to implement action research on thematic issues to understand conflict dynamics and find locally grown solutions for communities to resolve problems peacefully. The third is to enhance the capacity of local
organizations and civil society to network, to **advocate** for peace, and to carry out non-confrontational policy dialogue.

![Figure 1: Women Empowerment training participants](image)

Promoting a culture of peace in Africa

[Logo COPA]

Promoting a culture of peace in Africa
FROM THE COPA SECRETARIAT; A look at the year that was

2012 has been an eventful year for COPA with great strides being made in areas of capacity building, women empowerment, networking and documentation of experiences of peace builders who operate at the grassroots. Whereas effort was made to equally reach out to peace and development practitioners in Eastern Africa and the Horn regions, it is notable that women were specifically marked out to benefit from our programmes including those who were keen to launch their leadership careers in the political arena.

Our capacity building programme succeeded greatly in designing and facilitating both in-house and external trainings for different categories of practitioners and for the first time, a premier training on Engendering Human Security, Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation Course that targeted persons working in the gender sector was launched. Through this programme, COPA succeeded in spreading her wings further to work even more closely with policy formulating organizations such as the African Union (AU), Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and UN Partners in Uganda and Ethiopia. Within the year, we succeeded in running 8 different training programmes that directly reached out to 114 peace, development and gender practitioners from Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, Sudan, Somalia, Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Zimbabwe and Ethiopia. We are confident to say that those who benefited directly were left more empowered and confident to positively transform conflicts in their areas of operation.

The increasing need by peacebuilding organizations to assess the impact of their interventions saw a renewed interest in trainings that aim at empowering implementing officers with knowledge and skills of conducting monitoring and evaluation. Specifically, COPA designed and facilitated two such training programmes for staff members of the AU working in the Administrative and in the Peace and Security Departments.

In South Sudan and Somalia, COPA worked with IGAD partners to enhance their skills to work and effectively monitor their programme for post conflict settings. In Northern Uganda, COPA engaged with the UN Partners operating in the Northern part of the country with the aim of enhancing their understanding of the linkages between their practice and set policies.

COPA’s Women Empowerment Programmes aims at: Effecting women’s participation in peace building and political processes, Raising women peace builders profiles beyond the grassroots to national and regional levels, and finally enhancing their skills and knowledge in leadership so that they can occupy substantial positions that inform policies and influence practice. In this
programme, the focus was on building leadership skills of selected women leaders so that they could effectively engage in both peacebuilding and political processes. In Kenya, some of the women who benefited from the programme were elected in different political positions in the country.

In research and documentation, COPA focused on raising the profiles of women whose work at the grassroots has led to real change in Kenya but who in the past had received no recognition for their work by virtue of their operating from the grassroots. The documentation zeroed in on the women’s political experiences focusing on their aspirations, challenges and lessons learnt. This book ‘Women experiences, challenges & aspirations in the new political dispensation in Kenya’ can be obtained from the COPA website.

COPA remains committed to her mandate of building capacities of African peace practitioners so that they can effectively contribute to the building of sustainable peace in the continent. We are hopeful that the linkages developed in the year will greatly contribute to the shaping of the peace agenda in the continent.

Martha Ndogoto
Programmes Coordinator
Coalition for Peace in Africa (COPA)

It is not enough to win a war; it is more important to organize the peace-Aristotle
1. THE CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME

Through this programme, COPA engages in trainings and mentorship of persons living and working in conflict areas in Eastern Africa and the Horn regions with the hope of contributing to building sustainable peace in the continent through the creation of a critical mass of practitioners with the knowledge, skills and confidence to positively transform volatile situations in their localities. COPA’s trainings cover a wide range of peacebuilding themes relevant for different regions of the continent. Some of the training programmes conducted in the year focused on *Training for Trainers, Engendering Human Security, Linking Policy to Practice, Programming in Post conflict settings, Building Capacities for Peace and on Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Reporting in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation.*

By targeting practitioners within organizations, the programme further aims at strengthening and increasing the sustainability and effectiveness of peacebuilding institutions in the target regions. Further enhancing their ability to provide services, create collaborations to serve their target communities more effectively and to build and improve their knowledge of public policy and advocacy.

Within the year, this programme reached out to the following organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the training</th>
<th>Organizations represented</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Training for Trainers in Peacebuilding &amp; Conflict Transformation for IGAD Partners from South Sudan (15 participants) 17th to 21st April 2012, Nazareth, Ethiopia</td>
<td>South Sudan Peace &amp; Reconciliation Commission, South Sudan Women General Association, Women Union Central Equatorial State, Community Empowerment For Progress Organization, National Youth Union, Centre for Peace &amp; Development Studies, Ministry of Foreign Affairs &amp; International Cooperation</td>
</tr>
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**Engendering Human Security, Peacebuilding & Conflict Transformation Course** (19 Participants)

25th to 29th June & 12th to 16th November 2012, Nairobi, Kenya


**Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting & Learning in Peacebuilding** (14 participants)

6th to 10th August & 2nd to 7th September 2012, Nairobi, Kenya

African Union Staff members drawn from the Administration & the Peace & Security desks

**Capacity Building in Programming for Peace in Post Conflict Settings** (29 participants)

20th to 24th December 2012, Djibouti

Various IGAD partner organizations drawn from the government and CSOs in Somalia

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**The Training of trainers in peacebuilding and conflict transformation**; This five day training was designed to enhance skills in assessing capacity needs in a given context and conducting trainings that meet particular needs in peacebuilding contexts. In this interactive course, special emphasis was given to exploring different teaching and learning methodologies and highlighting on the most effective for adult learners. In addition, the course highlighted various logistical considerations that need to be put in place to ensure both the organization and delivery of a successful training program.

The training aimed at:

- Building capacities of participants to design effective training;
- Strengthen participants skills and capacities to conduct needs assessments of their target groups;
- Enhance the skills of participants to conduct actual training using creative methodologies;

Key areas of focus covered in the training were: *issues in training in peacebuilding and conflict transformation, fundamentals in conducting training in peacebuilding and conflict transformation contexts, planning a training, capacity assessment, theories of Adult learning, Adult learning methodologies, crafting effective teaching and learning objectives, creative methods in Adult learning, formative and summative evaluation of training and use of information communication technology in Adult learning.*
By the end of the training, a cadre of advanced trainers had been created and added to the already existing numbers in the various conflict contexts

Participant's response concerning the training

“The tutors were resourceful. Participants shared with us very rich experiences”

“As a facilitator, I will apply the skills acquired in everyday work”

Advanced Training for Trainers for IGAD partners in South Sudan: The advanced Training of Trainers course was designed to enhance skills in assessing capacity needs in South Sudan and conducting training that meets particular needs in the country's peacebuilding context.

The training brought together civil servants and civil society working in collaboration with government institutions from South Sudan. The rich mix of youth, women, members of parliament and academia provided a good platform for exchanging ideas on training strategies that have successfully been applied to positively impact on knowledge, attitudes and skills. All the trainees were nominees of the IGAD Peace and Security Division.
The training content was largely informed by the post conflict reconstruction in South Sudan and provided room for participants to conduct conflict analysis on their situations similar and identify intervention points using training.

**The Linking Policy to Practice Training for UN Partners in Northern Uganda:**

Northern Uganda has been going through some peace after more than two and a half decades of protracted violent conflict between the government and the Lords Resistance Army rebels. The peace stage in the region is marked by various reconstruction activities particularly those that are aimed at consolidating the fragile peace gains to safeguard against sliding back to war. This is not easy though especially given that most of the agreements made in bringing about the conflict have been broken or not fulfilled at all. For instance, though amnesty was promised, this has been given selectively.

It is against this background that the United Nations partners working in the region (UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, UNOHR) through the United Nations Fund for Northern Uganda organized the Linking Policy to Practice training in an effort to build partners and local organizations capacities to deliver on recovery programmes in the region and to ensure a successful post reconstruction phase. The training aimed at imparting skills and knowledge to the participants so that they would link what they were doing with policies in place or use their work to inform policies in addition to giving them insights on conception, designing and implementation of post conflict projects.

Organizations represented were implementing projects in areas of peacebuilding, human rights, gender based violence, Child rights, livelihood support, women and community empowerment, refugees rights and social reconstruction. The rich mix of backgrounds provided a multi sectoral platform for exchanging cross cutting ideas on success stories, challenges and lessons learnt in the course of project implementation as well as useful insights on the current conflict contexts and possible future trends. All the trainees were nominees of the UN Partners operating in Northern Uganda.
Engendering Human Security, Peacebuilding & Conflict Transformation Course 1&2; The training targeted gender, peacebuilding, development and human rights practitioners. It provided participants the opportunity to explore the various International Human Rights Instruments that support gendering human security, conflict transformation and peacebuilding. This included the UNSCRs (1325 &1820) and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Other areas of focus were on understanding violence against women, Linking CEDAW to human security and peacebuilding, gender mainstreaming and gendering conflict transformation around the UNSCRs. At the end of the training session, the expectation was that the participants were clear on how they could use the said instruments to advance the participation of women in peacebuilding processes as well as prevent sexual violence in times of violent conflict.
Figure 4: Participants engage in a focus group discussion

Figure 5: Participant doing a presentation
This is what some participants had to say about the training

“Learning how to include mainstreaming through gender lenses in peace building and conflict transformation in my field of work. The use of CEDAW, UNSCR 1325,1820,1888,1889 AND 1960.”

“I will apply the concepts, tools, methodologies learnt in enhancing my work.”

Figure 6: Engendering Human Security, Conflict transformation and peacebuilding participants

Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning training one and two, These 2 trainings were conducted to AU programme and administrative staff members. This was informed by a growing need within the AU Peace and Security Department to develop the capacities of her staff members in areas of Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning (MERL) so as to enable them to effectively determine the impact and the changes brought by various AU supported peacebuilding programmes in the Horn and Eastern Africa region. To achieve desired results, the main areas of focus were on understanding how and when change happens, analysis of methodologies and approaches in MERL within the peacebuilding and conflict transformation context and outcome mapping in peacebuilding.
Figure 7: MERL 1AU participants

Figure 8: A participants expressing a point during discussion
This is what participants had to say about the training:

“Understanding the principles of monitoring and evaluation ethical considerations and best practices as far as project management is concerned. It has enabled to gain in depth knowledge to review programs”

“Keep up the good work. This was a great experience, giving us in depth knowledge of M&E”

**Capacity Building in Programming for Peacebuilding in Post-Conflict settings;** The training was held at the headquarters of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in Djibouti and was part of IGAD’s agenda to support capacity building initiatives in post-conflict peace building programs in Somalia. The training aimed at building capacities of high level civil society and government delegations from Somalia to understand issues of conflict transformation; strengthen their skills and capacities to conduct context analysis of the post-conflict situation and plan and undertake relevant programs; enhancing the skills of participants to apply the learning objectives to their work using creative methodologies; and enhancing participants’ capacities to evaluate their training programs.

The key themes covered during the training include: concepts in peace building and reconciliation; core issues of the post-conflict transitions such as the challenges of reconciliation, undertaking DDR programs and security sector reform; skills required conflict resolution processes and skills required to develop analyze and evaluate peace building programming.

**2. THE WOMEN EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME**

Since inception, COPA in her programming has always placed special emphasis on women empowerment particularly given that during times of conflict, women suffer the most but when it comes to reconstruction, they are often sidelined. In the past, some specific women programmes that COPA has engaged in include:

1) **Trauma awareness and management (2008-2010).** Following the 2006-2008 Mt Elgon violence and the 2007/2008 post election violence in Kenya, COPA initiated a trauma awareness project that targeted women living and working in the North Rift and Mt Elgon with the aim of raising their understanding of trauma, providing them with knowledge and skills on how to provide psychosocial support to women and community members affected by the violence and
also on how to provide safe spaces for women who had experienced sexual violence to share their experiences. The project financially facilitated women groups to organize community trauma healing forums most of which targeted women victims. The project succeed in directly reaching out to over 1000 women some of who shared their rape experiences for the first time in the community forums and as a result many were able to receive medical support from institutions such as the Nairobi Women’s Hospital. Selected women organizations that benefited from this project include the Rural Women Peace Link, the Kopsiro Women organization for Peace and the Shalom Centre for Peace and Reconciliation in Bungoma

2) Women in peace Leadership (2009-2010). This project targeted young upcoming women peace builders from the Karamoja and Somali clusters with a series of trainings and mentorship for a period of 1.5 years. The mentorship was provided by seasoned women peace builders like the late Dekha Ibrahim. These two regions were at the time undertaking numerous peace building processes and it was important that young women were at the fore-front presenting women issues and ensuring that women needs were addressed. Some of the young women who benefitted from the project have since risen to leadership levels in their organizations and some few acquired scholarships from the Joan Kroc Centre in San Diego to document their experiences in engaging in peace processes in their regions. Key COPA partners in this project were Mercy Corps Ethiopia and the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) in Uganda.

3) Effecting the participation of Kenyan women in peace building processes (2011). This one year project aimed at ensuring that women from Kenya’s Trans-Nzoia and Mt Elgon areas were knowledgeable and skilled in peace building matters particularly on facilitating of community dialogue, negotiation, mediation, conflict early warning, UNSCR 1325 and conflict analysis. The skills and knowledge would in turn enable the women to effectively engage in the fore-mentioned processes in ways that led to desired impact. This project was motivated by the realization that though the women in these areas were engaging in peace building processes, they lacked the technical know-how of how some of these processes were conducted and were therefore not very effective in their interventions. In this project, COPA partnered with Peacenet Kenya, Community Action Network Africa and the District Peace Committees.

In 2012, COPA implemented Efecting the participation of Kenyan women in the 2013 political processes project which coincided with Kenya’s electioneering period and was aimed at raising levels of awareness on the various gains Kenyan women had made in the 2010 constitution, raising their understanding of the various political offices provided for in the constitution and the requirements for those aspiring to hold the offices and on building their capacities in leadership so that they could occupy positions that influence policy and inform practice. Areas of focus were on communication, lobbying, advocacy, UNSCR 1325, peacebuilding skills,
CEDAW and resource mobilization for campaigns. The project targeted 60 women leaders who were interested in vying for different political offices from the counties of Nakuru, Nandi and Trans-Nzoia. In this project, COPA partnered with Maendeleo ya Wanawake, Peacenet Kenya and the Rural Women Peace Link. Some of the project beneficiaries were elected to various leadership positions.

Figure 9: Effecting the participation of Kenyan women in the 2013 political processes participants

This project was informed by the fact that in Kenya the population of women is slightly over 51%. But as much as women are more than men in terms of numbers; only a small percentage of them are in leadership positions in parliament, private sectors, parastatals, civil society organizations, peacebuilding and political processes.

Kenya is largely a patriarchal society and so women are not given equal chances in development, education, politics, peacebuilding and in decision making processes. They are relegated to obscure roles where they are only seen but rarely heard and the implication has been that they do not get enough credit for their interventions.

The number of women in parliament has continued to grow in Kenya albeit slowly. This project aimed at creating healthy grounds for women to compete on equal grounds with men for various posts in the general elections that were slated for March 2013. Apart from having political leadership inclinations, the 60 women selected to participate in the project were also accomplished peacebuilders who had immensely contributed to positive conflict resolution in their localities. All the women were affiliated to organizations to ensure that whatever they gained in the project trickled down to those who were at the grassroots. And ensure that
women in Kenya are represented within all levels of decision making. The project aimed at seeing that women are able to contribute effectively to the peacebuilding and conflict transformation activities. Women from the grassroots are the mostly affected of the community and which is why our choice of women, are women leaders working or affiliated to grassroots organization; which in turn will help raise the profiles of this women. Another aim of his project was to bring out a large number of women gaining knowledge on peacebuilding and political processes for them to be able to participate and take up leadership roles in the general elections; by contesting and vying for the various posts available.

A notable outcome of this project was the publication of a journal outlining the challenges and aspirations of the women in the new political dispensation in Kenya. The women who shared their experiences touched on their own experiences as women who were affected by the post election violence 2007/2008. What the stories of these rural women demonstrated is that whether they were in Nandi, Nakuru, Uasin Gishu, Trans Nzoia or Mount Elgon, whether they were focusing on women’s empowerment, increased in their political participation or tackling GBV, the experiences, challenges and aspirations they were facing were similar.

Through the project’s community forums, the 60 project beneficiaries managed to reach out to other 800 women, men and youth at the grassroots with simplified information on political participation and peacebuilding. Participants simplified the training they received and replicated the same to the grassroots women, youth and men who attended.

Another outcome of the project was that the women formed a network in which they will use in future as a platform to share, learn and exchange ideas as they continue with their day to day lives.

This project was implemented in partnership with Peace Women Across the Globe (PWAG) and funded by Zivik programme, Institute for Foreign Cultural relations (ifa)

3. THE NETWORKING & PARTNERSHIP BUILDING PROGRAMME

COPA was established as a network to link peacebuilding practitioners from different parts of the continent through forums where they could share experiences, learn from the best practices of others and generally give moral support to those who by virtue of working in volatile areas felt cut out from everyone else. In 2012, COPA spread out her wings to work with regional policy organizations such as the AU, IGAD and UN Partners as well as with regional organizations such as GIZ, Peace Women Across the Globe and national country based
institutions such as the TJRC in Kenya. Some activities that COPA participated in under networking include;

**Promoting Women participation in peace negotiations and political processes after violent conflicts:** In January and June, COPA was invited by GIZ ‘Promoting gender Equality and women rights programme’ in Berlin Germany to provide information on how the organization could increase its support of the participation of women at peace negotiations and state building in the post-conflict regions. COPA was selected on the basis of her involvement with peace building process in the continent and also on the strength that many of her members are international actors who have already collected a lot of experiences as supporters, advisers or mediators helping women to get involved in peace building. Representatives in the first meeting were drawn from Kenya, Liberia, Burundi, Columbia, Philippines, Guatemala, Philippines, and Nepal and from international organizations like the UN Women, Peaceswiss, Berghof Peace Support and Initiative for inclusive Security. The workshop was also attended by representatives of women rights organizations, representatives from different ministries. The second workshop brought women from Afghanistan, Egypt, Caucasus, and Central-Asia.

The workshops focused on answering the questions how have women managed to become involved in peace negotiations and the implementation of peace agreements? what challenges did they face? What opportunities were open to them? what helped them to bring important gender issues on the negotiation table?

**ACTION International African Solidarity Festival:** In November, COPA was invited by ACTION, her partner in South Africa to participate in the International African Solidarity Festival that coincided with ACTION’s 10 years of operations. The festival aimed at celebrating Africa’s cultural diversity and identity! It further aimed at promoting continental and global solidarity, as well as provide an opportunity to reunite a number of the friends ACTION has worked closely with over the years.

In keeping with the conflict transformation approach of the ACTION Support Centre, this festival incorporated an opportunity to reconnect with each other as well as provide space for reflection and discussion through the facilitation of a selection of thematic workshops. A strategizing forum also culminated in the adoption of a collective action plan for strengthening our movement. There was also a cultural event to celebrate ACTION work, successes and the relationships they had been forging together.
Engagement with Kenya’s TJRC: The TJRC is one of the reform institutions that was created in Kenya under Agenda Four following the 2007/2008 post election violence and the main aim was to document the truth about various injustices in the country dating back to 1963 when the country attained independence. In October 2011, at a meeting organized by the TJRC reconciliation unit, COPA was nominated to the Reconciliation reference group to represent peace building organizations. The reference group was established in aim of helping the commission to come up with a National reconciliation agenda.

More than 30 reference group meetings, community consultations and country wide forums were conducted between April 2011 and December 2012.

COPA was in charge of the Nairobi forum which was held at the Methodist conference center from 24th – 27th Feb 2012 and which brought together 35 reconciliation stakeholders from the then 8 constituencies of Nairobi. During the meeting, participants managed to analyze the conflict situation in Nairobi, identified the courses and recommended interventions.

Generally, the reference group throughout the period, looked into issues that contributed to the inter communities distrust and hatred in Kenya such as; conflict over land, inequality, regional imbalances, impunity, lack of transparency and accountability.

All these are issues that have eroded a sense of belonging, nationhood and public trust in political and governance institutions.
At the end of its work in December 2012, the reference group furnished the commission with recommendations regarding the minority groups and indigenous people, Economic marginalization and violations of socio economic rights, Land injustice, ethnic tension and forced displacement (All these factors are fundamental in respect to reconciliation and peaceful coexistence of Kenyans).

**PFPS (Partnership for Peace and Security) and UWIANO platform:** COPA being a member of partnership for peace and security attended its Organizational capacity assessment workshop which was held at Great Rift Valley lodge from 19th – 21st November 2012.

COPA was also instrumental in PFPS Civil society pre election coordination in Eldoret and Nakuru as well as election observatory in Nairobi’s Kibera, Langata and Dagoretti constituencies. We mobilized more than 20 organizations who work closely with us in the women peace leadership programme in both Nakuru and Uasin Gishu counties.

The coordination was aimed enhancing conflict early warning and response mechanisms by popularizing the pre election SMS hotline, Linking local peace building structures with the national security structures, avoiding duplication of processes, as well as collection of data through the county tents.

### 4. THE RESEARCH & DOCUMENTATION PROGRAMME

COPA places a lot of emphasis on research and documentation as the programme opens doors to better understand the various needs of COPA’s target groups, the experiences they have gone through and also the impact COPA’s work has had. In the year, focus was placed on documenting experiences of selected Kenyan women in areas of political participation including their challenges, aspirations and lessons learned. In the book ‘Women Experiences, Challenges & Aspirations in the New Political Dispensation in Kenya’, COPA put together 18 compelling stories of women from different walks of life showing universality of challenges that women go through. It also shows the struggles that over the years women in Kenya have gone through to achieve some level of political participation. As per the book, some achievements that the Kenyan women have made include the change in the constitution to stipulate no single gender will occupy more than 2/3s of elective and appointive positions. Some of the major challenges these women have gone through include stereotyping by society which has ensured that women are sidelined from decision making and also from occupying substantive positions. Stereotyping has further ensured women have less chances of acquiring education and
property. These two helps to further alienate women when they are seeking leadership positions at whatever levels. The book further expounds on the many opportunities that Kenyan women now have under the 2010 Constitution and calls on them to rise up to the occasion and ensure they are part of the larger picture.

The 18 women who made contributions to the journal by sharing their stores have had personal experiences that cut across the communities in Kenya. What a Nandi woman is going through is also what a woman from Turkana, Coast province or any other part of the country is going through. For the women to be where they are they have had to undergo uphill tasks to have a sense of belonging and participation. Getting through male dominated areas of leadership has been sheer hard work for the few women. Women have struggled to occupy significant leadership positions at different levels in society and this has continued even in independent Kenya. Women have played important roles in peacebuilding, trauma healing and awareness and have been doing this in the background. Women often operate at the periphery and the much that they have achieved does not come out in public domain, thus hindering women voices to be heard.

The book **“Women experiences, challenges and aspirations in the new political dispensation in Kenya”** that was a case study of selected women from Trans-nzoia, Nakuru, Nandi, Uasin Gishu and Bungoma counties. Stories in this book were derived from experiences of women aspiring positions in the March 2013 General elections. A copy can be downloaded on our website

Women have been urged to bravely fight for space in political arena and other fields. Whenever a general election or by election occurs, women are encouraged to contest for the elective posts without fear. Go for higher seats which are dominated by our male counterparts. Let us compete with them.

The few opportunities given in the constitution 2010 is an eye opener for women; this creates a chance to reach the 2/3rds majority for women in all positions of leadership. Women can apply to be Chief executive officers (CEOs) in big firms or organizations, women can vie for presidency because this is not only a domain for men and can vie for other political seats that are equaled to men alone. Thanks to Hon. Martha Karua, Hon. Charity Ngilu and Nazlin Omar who have in the past vied for presidency.

Women are special in that they are planners. This they do at family level and can be done even at the national level. Women treat their families with respect and acceptance. This can be done even at the leadership level of the country.
The constitution 2010 stipulates that no single gender will be represented in any leadership position at whatever level by more than 2/3rds. With the 2013 general elections having been successful and peaceful, a large number of women have been elected as members of parliament, county ward and women representatives; Deputy Governors and senators. President Uhuru Kenyatta recently nominated 6 women as cabinet secretaries, and there is hope that more appointments of women will be made as the Jubilee government continues to constitute its government.

Stereotyping has been a major challenge to women. It has played a major role in hindering women from participating in development issues. Stereotyping has been used as a tool to marginalize women in all aspects. Very few communities in Kenya have accepted that women can also be leaders and can also be involved in community development. Most women in the rural areas are not educated. Thus they have a lot of challenges in communication and understanding what is going on around them.

High levels of poverty and unemployment also continue to hinder development amongst the women and the girl child (youth). Most women and the youth are employed as casual laborers; very few get permanent employment which helps one to have long term plans of development.

Lack of leadership and communication skills have greatly immobilized women and thus fear sets in and this hinders women from advocating for their rights as citizens. Retrogressive cultures have also played a role in women participating in political leadership and development. Women are seen as subordinates to men thus having no say in the running of the community.

Women are greatly discriminated against and so the community does not have a chance to realize that women have great potentials of leadership and conflict resolution.

5. FINANCIAL REVIEW

In 2012 Coalition for Peace in Africa (COPA) has met its objectives as it has increased its training coverage through increased resource mobilization. Our activities were funded by grants from IFA/Zivik one of our development partners and trainings which were held quarterly and contributed tremendously to the COPA income. The trainings also attracted participants from UNDP and IGAD. During the year we have been able to raise over sixteen million Kenya shillings as shown in the pie chart below. Others include the consultancies that COPA carried out during the year.

*Total Income: Ksh 16,510,469
Source of Income

*Total Expenditure: Ksh 15,158,814

Where the money went
Coalition for Peace in Africa

P.o Box 61753-00200

Dhanjay Apartments room 301 Valley Arcade/Lavington

Website: www.copafrica.org

Email: copa@copafrica.org