COPA

STRATEGIC PLAN 2015 - 2019

CONTENTS

ABREVIATIONS 3

I. ABOUT COPA 4

VISION 5

MISSION 5

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS 6

HOW COPA GETS RESULTS 7

1) Presence in communities 7

2) Lean staff and Experts 7

3) Networking and Partnerships 8

II. COPA STRATEGIC PLAN 2015 - 2019 9

STRATEGIC APPROACH 10

1) Capacity building 10

2) Action learning: 11

III. OPERATIONAL CONTEXT 11

IV. STRENGTH, OPPORTUNITY, ASPIRATIONS AND RESULTS (SOAR) ANALYSIS 12

V. TARGET GROUPS 14

VI. THEMATIC PRIORITIES 14

1) Women and leadership: 15

2) Trauma healing and Management: 16

3) Peacebuilding & Conflict Transformation: 17

4) Research, Documentation and Learning 23

VII. MONITORING AND EVALUATION 25

ABREVIATIONS

AU	-	African Union
COPA	-	Coalition for Peace in Africa
CSO	-	Civil Society Organizations
IGAD	-	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
MERL	-	Monitoring Evaluation Reporting and Learning
NGOs	-	Non Governmental Organizations
PBCT	-	Peace Building and Conflict Transformation
TOT	-	Training of Trainers
UK	-	United Kingdom
UN	-	United Nations
USAID	-	United States Agency for International Development
UNSCR	-	United Nations Security Council Resolution
CEDAW	-	Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women

I. ABOUT COPA

The Coalition for Peace in Africa (COPA) is a network of peace builders 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.

COPA began as a network of Africa peace builders in 1996 with the major motivation on the prevention of the escalation of violent conflicts in Africa. Since then, we have continued to advance the strategic interests of the founding peace practitioners and perpetuated the fortitude of reducing the impact of violence on grassroots level communities in various parts of Africa

Since then, COPA has endeavoured to build capacities of African peace practitioners particularly women in conflict areas so as to enhance their effectiveness in responding to peace and security situations.

COPA illustrates Africa's dedication to increasing peacebuilding capacities. We have achieved this by offering tailor-made peacebuilding and conflict transformation (PBCT) trainings which connect people with skills and experience in PBCT with those who need additional preparation in the same field. We also carry out research and publications on best practices on policy advocacy, human rights, and peacebuilding initiatives.

In Kenya where COPA is based, our projects have focussed on practitioners living and working in the western and northern part of the country in North Rift valley, Mt. Elgon, Trans-Nzoia, Somali and Karamoja clusters. Specifically in these areas, COPA targets women implementing peace building projects with exclusive training of trainers courses aimed at enhancing their knowledge and skills to transmit and replicate what they know to the wider community.

The organization's Women Empowerment Programme 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 enhancing their skills and knowledge in leadership so that they can occupy substantial positions that inform policies while also influencing practice.

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.

CORE VALUES

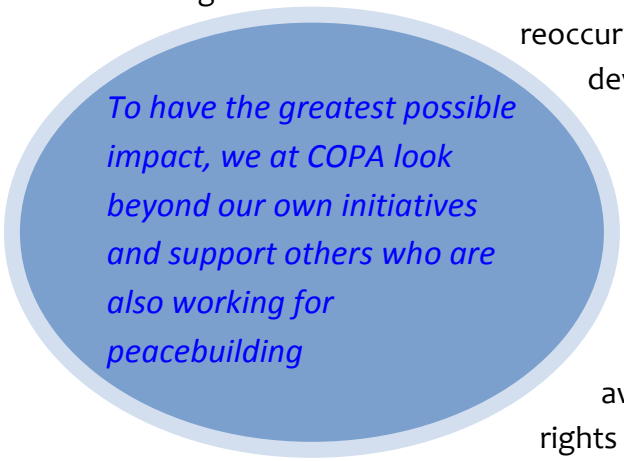
- **PASSION:** We have the passion to explore more and that is contained in a good idea. This is also driven by our willingness to learn
- **ACCOMPANIMENT:** We believe in accompanying our partners and also in being accompanied by those who partner with us
- **INTEGRITY:** We attach great value to individual staff integrity and in dealing with others in all aspects of our work
- **EQUALITY:** We will strive to promote equality in all aspects of our work and in dealing with different gender groups that we work with.
- **HONESTY AND TRANSPARENCY:** We value and promote honesty and transparency in all our endeavours
- **ACCOUNTABILITY:** We attach great value to accountability to our stakeholders, amongst ourselves, and all other partners working with COPA.
- **NON VIOLENCE:** We promote peace and conflict transformation through non violent initiatives

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

To further our mission of building capacities of conflict transformation and peacebuilding practitioners, COPA will seek to achieve three main goals over the next five years.

1) **Create spaces for people affected by conflict to dialogue and initiate trauma healing and reconciliation**

   COPA will focus efforts where individuals and community groups can make a meaningful difference in consensus building, trauma awareness and preventing the reoccurrence of violent conflicts. This requires us to develop a nuanced understanding of conflict dynamics where we are working and appropriate partners and networks to engage with. COPA will focus on empowering women to participate in peacebuilding and political leadership (governance). It will also focus on enhancing awareness and protection of women human rights at the grassroots and national levels. We will also seek to do develop a directory of groups and individuals undertaking trauma healing as a peacebuilding aspect in Eastern Africa and the Horn of Africa.



2) **Become Africa's leading training resource for civil society organizations, governments agencies, intergovernmental bodies and individuals seeking to enhance skills and promote effective strategies for conflict transformation and peacebuilding**

   To have the greatest possible impact, COPA looks beyond our own initiatives and supports others who are also working for peacebuilding. COPA will therefore provide relevant, transformational training resources to Africa-wide range of partners working to transform or reduce violent conflicts. We will support nongovernmental organizations, governments, intergovernmental agencies and individuals strengthen existing peace processes and help design new ones. Together with partners, we will revamp these trainings to suit the emerging opportunities and aspirations. Already an exemplary partner in this respect, COPA's dream is to train many more people and create a critical mass of people able to build a culture of peace in Africa. We will offer

a variety and quality training resource including workshops and online courses with the effect of lifting COPA to high levels of global peacebuilding training experience.

3) Promote Reflection, Learning and Sharing of experiences

COPA has a lean staff and relies on networks of partners both at local community level for implementation of projects and at national and international level for support on resource mobilization

COPA was founded as a network of mutual support among Africa's peace practitioners and to popularize peacebuilding skills and tools in affected communities. The aim was to promote peace by capacitating communities and leaders so they can implement culturally appropriate and inclusive solutions for sustainable peace. With two decades in existence, we have gained worthwhile experience in peacebuilding programming and must gather lessons from those experiences and share with Africa and the world. It is particularly vital to ensure that budding generations of young African peace practitioners build their expertise on existing knowledge. COPA is committed through action learning to provide this knowledge in publications. In addition to publications, COPA will organize symposiums and conferences and demonstrate to organizations and individuals in peace and conflict resolution, those theories, methods and techniques which are appropriate to various Africa's context.

HOW COPA GETS RESULTS

1) Presence in communities

COPA maintains a presence in four countries namely Uganda, Kenya, Somalia and South Sudan giving us direct and regular contact with the people who are best positioned to achieve sustainable peace. We do this by working closely with our partners in specific locations in those countries. Our staffs visit regularly to support our partners. Most of our engagements are with communities in post conflict social reconstruction and projects depend on availability of resources and desire by those communities to continue working on the project. For this reason, COPA aspires to build the capacities of those partners to be able to continue on their own with trauma awareness and management, training on UNSCR 1325 and dialogue.

2) Lean staff and Experts

COPA staffs are courageous and well prepared for their responsibilities. We have a good understanding of the projects we undertake with partners including on women leadership in peace and governance, on mainstreaming gender in peacebuilding and on

trauma awareness and management. COPA also has a pool of reliable experts who have extensive understanding of the various conflict contexts in Africa and bring with them extensive knowledge and experience in peacebuilding, participatory research, development curricula and delivery of training, gender mainstreaming, women human rights, trauma work and in the application of international legal instruments supporting peacebuilding.

3) Networking and Partnerships

COPA has a lean staff and relies on networks of partners both at local community level for implementation of projects and at national and international level for support on resource mobilization. Some of the partners include at international level, UN Women, UNDP Kenya, Africa Union, Peace Women across the Globe Network and ACT! The local partners are located in Kenya, Uganda, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia. This partnership is built through action learning and accompanying partners on the ground where they address conflict issues. Experiences are shared through publications by COPA and by organizing symposiums on thematic areas. The publications from partnerships have been of benefit to our partners and others working on trauma in peacebuilding, women building peace and training of trainers.

II. COPA STRATEGIC PLAN 2015 - 2019

COPA strategic plan 2015 – 2019 is based on appreciative inquiry[1] with staff, board members and partners committed to the transformation of violent conflict and peacebuilding, and articulates how COPA will achieve its mission in the coming five years from 2015 to 2019.

Recognizing that a strategic plan is only as good as its execution, this plan will be accompanied by a detailed implementation schedule, a re-alignment of existing resources, a fundraising strategy and a peacebuilding monitoring and evaluation plan.

During this strategic planning process, COPA applied the Strength, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results (SOAR) approach to strategy as opposed to Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threats (SWOT) analysis used before. Because of our human nature, SWOT analysis tends to dwell disproportionately on our weaknesses and threats and most times ending up concentrating on what we do wrong and thereby amplifying the negative. Above SWOT analysis, COPA is committed to dwelling on our strengths, aspirations and opportunities towards building a positive peace approach in Africa. SOAR approach to strategy development definitely provides us with this direction.

The approach begins with strategic inquiry and emphasizes on strength, opportunities, aspirations and results and encourages relationship building and hence very relevant for peacebuilding planning. During this inquiry COPA's greatest **s**trengths and **o**pportunities were discovered and explored among the staff. The staffs were invited to share their **a**spirations and co-construct their most preferred future. Staff spent time visioning and co-constructing the preferred future. This provided a transformation point in which values informing COPA's vision and mission statement were affirmed. Long-term objectives and strategic alternatives and recommendations were presented. The staff then innovatively suggested the thematic

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[1] As a high engagement, strengths based approach to organizational change; Appreciative Inquiry (AI) represents an exciting alternative to traditional strategic planning. When the planning process engages everyone from the CEO to the newest recruit in aligning strengths of the organization with opportunities, aspirations and desired results, resistance to change is minimized and the energy and commitment required to turn goals into action is generated

priorities and activities to best achieve the desired future. Thereafter they decided on the priorities to inspire the achievement of measurable **r**esults.

The meeting held with staff and questionnaires sent to the board members and partners sought an inquiry -- using unconditional positive questions to discover the organization's core values, vision, strengths, and potential opportunities. COPA staff, board members and partners therefore reflected into their strengths of the past and how these have been constructed with an eye towards creating the change COPA desires. That change is reflected in this strategic plan.

STRATEGIC APPROACH

For the period 2015-2019 COPA has selected two main strategies through which we will pursue our goal and purpose: Capacity building is through training and action learning which will embrace research and documentation. The strategies are complementary to each other and will be used to work on COPA's thematic priorities. It is envisaged that these two strategies will facilitate internal learning within COPA and external influencing on the African context. Action learning will bring out the needs assessment for which knowledge and skills training are a response. Further research and documentation will provide knowledge exchange with key partners and other external stakeholders. This will be in addition to the content for revamping training modules.

Our open courses are advertised and run throughout the year and attract a variety of people mainly from African countries working for governments, civil society organizations, Africa Union and the United Nations

1) Capacity building

COPA's strength is drawn from holistic training programme and linkages with regional organizations at the horn of Africa. This allows the organization to draw resources across Africa as well as to mobilize practitioners and organizations across the continent in peacebuilding work. COPA's expertise in capacity building combines elements of peacebuilding, women empowerment and human rights. Our trainings and courses remain core to our mission and have been impressive to many in recent years. This approach reflects responsiveness to context – both country context where trainings are focused geographically and also thematic focus where discourses within peacebuilding have been changing. Our niche is in the tailor made trainings and other professional courses. The tailor made courses are on request basis and target homogenous groups.

Our open courses are advertised and run throughout the year and attract a variety of people mainly from African countries working for governments, civil society organizations, Africa Union and the United nations. Most of the courses last for one week and include; Policy and Practice; Gendering Human Security, Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation (focusing on CEDAW and UNSCR 1325); Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning (MERL); Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation (PBCT); Training of trainers in PBCT.

In addition to publications, COPA will organize symposiums and conferences and demonstrate to organizations and individuals in peace and conflict resolution, those theories, methods and techniques which are appropriate to various Africa's

2) Action learning:

The Action Learning at COPA comprises of commissioned studies to documents lessons accruing from specific peacebuilding initiatives. The approach plays a central role in gathering, connecting and articulating the knowledge generated by partners and networks. This is done through documentation mainly publishing and disseminating. Action learning also provides knowledge for design and implementation of more effective conflict transformation strategies and training modules. COPA has in the past used knowledge such as key tools to effectively engage with UN Women, AU standby force and the Horn of Africa region state actors respectively, women involvement in peacebuilding, training on civilian missions and trauma awareness and management.

III. OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

There are many violent conflicts going on in Africa today. Similarly there are many peacebuilding initiatives that are accompanying these conflicts. Whether in violent conflict or in post conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding stage, the unwavering resolve by Africa's population to create a better life is evident. Over the past two decades, peacebuilding efforts emerged to support post conflict situations in among other countries Sierra Leone and Liberia in West Africa, Central African Republic in Central Africa, Burundi South Sudan and Rwanda in East Africa as well as Angola and Mozambique in Southern Africa. Some of these contexts have however fallen back to war while others continue to be threatened by tensions arising from weak democracies and underdevelopment. Demands for tools and skills to address violence continue to grow as communities search for ways to address and heal past hurt as well as increase their skills at preventing and transforming conflicts.

The growing number of peacebuilding and conflict transformation initiatives in Sub-Saharan Africa over the past decade, however, is worth celebrating. Initiative have attempted to be as context specific as possible, driven by conflict analysis, external support, grassroots communities' resilience and improved state and civil society collaboration. The ultimate measure of progress, however, is the sustained social relations of people. Africa's current emerging conflicts intervention initiatives from most countries have however, not done as much as it should to improve quality of conflict prevention systems, trauma awareness and healing, women leadership in peacebuilding and documentation of success stories.

Violent conflicts are rampant in Africa than elsewhere: it takes more efforts in peacebuilding training to build a mass of resource persons with skills to lift their communities from the cycle of violence. Efforts by United Nations and Africa Union on peacekeeping and peacemaking need to be augmented by training supported by civil society's initiatives. Contrary to Albert Einstein's observation that 'peace cannot be kept by force it can only be achieved by understanding,' much of Africa's peace efforts have been concentrated in conflict suppression such as emphasis on peace agreements at top level followed by governance institutional reforms and democratic elections that have little effect on bottom level grassroots areas, where the majority of Africa's divided poor live in perpetual polarization.

'Peace cannot be kept by force. It can only be achieved by understanding'….Albert Einstein

Inclusive efforts in peacebuilding holds the key to changing this picture, along with diversification in conflict transformation approaches and priorities, the sharing of success stories of people building peace and the accumulation of a skilled trainers and mediators available for bottom, middle and top level peacebuilding . Well-designed peacebuilding and conflict transformation programmes can shield vulnerable communities from recurring violent conflict and the cycle of violence

IV. STRENGTH, OPPORTUNITY, ASPIRATIONS AND RESULTS (SOAR) ANALYSIS

In our strategic planning process, we deliberately focused on our strengths and opportunities so that we can grow them until they crowd out our weaknesses and threats.

Strength, Opportunity, Aspirations and Results (SOAR) analysis matrix

STRENGTHS **(What are our greatest resources at COPA)**	**OPPORTUNITIES** **(What are the best possible peacebuilding opportunities for COPA)**
- The data base of resource materials for peacebuilding. - The number of good partnership that COPA have with other organizations and stakeholders at large - Human Resource at COPA is a great resource in its self. - Technical skills in terms of provision of peace building training to stakeholders is a great resource. - Continental contacts - Pool of Experts - A continental network and coalitions working together. - A peaceful continent - Stretched outreach - Improved service delivery - Reduced conflicts in Africa - Strong peacebuilding and training philosophy	- Working with civil society organizations in war affected Countries such as South Sudan, Congo, Somalia, Central African Republic etc - Trauma awareness and healing - Peacebuilding and conflict transformation - Training of trainers - Partnership and networking - Reduced cases of violent conflicts - Relative peace - Increased number of peace practitioners and stakeholders - Increased knowledge on peace and conflict transformation Greater space for citizen engagement in most African countries – can be harnessed - Currently space for civil society at AU and REC level – COPA could take some of this space if there is a clear angle
ASPIRATIONS **(What is our preferred future COPA/partners)**	**RESULTS** (What are the measurable results)
- COPA to work with AU, USAID, UN WOMEN, USAID, CIDA and government agencies for it to fully sell its mission and vision - More focused/targeted trainings and building of a network of peers who can act together to effect change at national/regional/continental levels	- To increase the number of participant in all trainings - To ensure that its project recommendations are implemented like resolution 1325. - MoU with COPA is formalized and COPA takes part in African Union Peacebuilding work - More financial support with UN Women secured - Grassroots voices for peace heard in policy forums at different levels

V. TARGET GROUPS

COPA works in different parts of Africa and gather groups from different social, religious, political, and economic background. COPA target groups include both program beneficiaries and strategic partners. In its thematic priorities, COPA works directly with communities affected by conflict as well as organizations involved in conflict resolution and peace building.

Program Beneficiaries

COPA works primarily but not exclusively with women and youth aged 16 to 34. This is done through a participatory approach in community dialogue, research, trauma awareness and conflict transformation trainings. During this strategic period COPA plans to target the following local, national and regional organizations;

- Capacity building organizations
- Development and relief workers
- Faith based institutions
- Human rights workers
- Humanitarian relief organizations
- Organizations working with women in conflict areas
- Organizations working with youth in conflict areas
- Peacebuilding organizations
- Policy makers from international and governmental organizations
- Religious personnel
- Researchers
- Academic institutions

VI. THEMATIC PRIORITIES

COPA strives to focus its work around specific thematic areas as a way of: 1) ensuring COPA's work is content-driven; 2) ensuring COPA's work is focused and 3) ensuring COPA staff and partners work together around shared priorities. The themes for the period covering 2015 - 2019 have been selected based on COPA's achievements so far and on consideration of the network's niche and added value. The core thematic working areas of COPA for 2015-2019 will be Women in leadership, Research, Documentation and Learning, Trauma healing and management and peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation. The strategies described above

Well-designed peacebuilding and conflict transformation programmes can shield vulnerable communities from recurring violent conflicts and the cycle of violence

illustrate COPA's approaches while these thematic priorities provide the content of COPA's work. While capacity building strategy will provide the basis for all other work around the four themes, Action Learning strategy will generate and share knowledge on each thematic priority through designated research and documentation. The resulting knowledge products will strengthen the practices of partners and be used by COPA as part of the content of their capacity building aimed at improving peacebuilding in Africa and beyond. Increasing skills for women to be able to initiate and sustain leadership in peacebuilding is therefore inevitable

1)Women and leadership:

Women comprise the majority of population in many countries in Africa. However, when it comes to representation in political processes, women comprise the least numbers. This state of affairs can be attributed to patriarchal cultures in which priorities in leadership, education and economic opportunities are given to the men. The Women Empowerment Programme aims at building capacities of women in leadership so that they can effectively participate and contribute to peacebuilding and political processes in their areas.

COPA's experience working with individual women and women's organizations show that a lot more success can be achieved in peacebuilding if women received additional support in skills enhancement

This priority seeks to synergize activities in the areas of advocacy, capacity building and documentation of best practices, which will ultimately make women better equipped to raise their voice in conflict situations, contribute effectively to the resolution of violent conflicts and building of sustainable peace. COPA's experience working with individual women and women organizations show that a lot more success can be achieved if women received additional support in skills enhancement. Through this programme, COPA in partnership with the UN Women Kenya office implemented the '*Anchoring the Participation of Women in Peacebuilding Processes using UNSCR 1325 project*' and also undertook a 5-day training programme on '*Gendering Human Security, Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation*' for practitioners from the Horn and Eastern Africa regions.

Under this priority, projects will focus on empowering women to participate in peacebuilding and political leadership (governance). It will also focus on enhancing

awareness and protection of women human rights at the grassroots and national levels. Key to this priority will include;

- Five days annual training on Gendering Human Security, Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation training.
- A baseline survey at the beginning of the year in Uganda, Ethiopia and Kenya to further determine the current issues affecting women and identify how they can be incorporated in the women empowerment programmes.
- Fundraising support to reach out to South Sudan, Sudan and Somalia on women peace leadership

2) Trauma healing, Management and Resilience:

One of the major impacts of violence is the psychological trauma experienced by the communities of victims and perpetrators. History shows that when communities experience trauma and do not get justice, they internalize it waiting for an opportunity to revenge. This unresolved anguish can pass on from generations to generations and become the seed of new violence decades after the initial trauma. Much of the violence that plagues humanity is a direct or indirect result of unresolved trauma that is acted out in repeated unsuccessful attempts to re-establish a sense of empowerment[2]. This experience of trauma is felt both at the individual level and at that of the community. The inability of an individual or a community to overcome the experiences of trauma makes long term community reconciliation and development nearly impossible. Individuals and communities must have the opportunity of overcoming their grief and loss to ensure that they can move on to be positively productive in society.

History shows that when communities experience trauma and do not get justice, they internalize it waiting for an opportunity to revenge

The trauma healing and management priority aims to focus on the emotional and relational needs of those affected to restore a sense of community and harmony. This focus is vital for the restoration of long term peace and appeases communities who fear a repeat of violence.

COPA, along with other peace organizations, launched training of community leaders in trauma awareness to serve those who are in camps and perpetrator communities in Kenya

after the elections violence of 2008. The effort has provided support to trauma awareness and continue to facilitate healing and restoration of broken communities.

In this priority COPA will;

- Seek to develop a directory of groups and individuals undertaking trauma healing as a peacebuilding aspect in Eastern Africa and Horn of Africa. The directory will contain information on the skills, the gaps as well as the common trends in the practice.
- Research will be undertaken to determine how trauma healing initiatives have been built into processes of peacebuilding initiatives in the Horn and Eastern Africa regions. The result will inform the content of the annual training on 'Breaking Cycles of Violence.' This thematic priority will build on the following efforts so far;
    - A trauma awareness manual with African approaches has been developed and a partner organization has translated it into Somalia language
    - A local partner-Somali Youth for Peace and Development Network has been identified to partner with COPA in such trauma healing projects
    - Development of a 5 day training on breaking cycles of violence; linking trauma healing, peacebuilding and development

3) Peacebuilding & Conflict Transformation:

The objective of peacebuilding at COPA as Gilligan[3] said is to reassemble the foundations of peace and provide the tools for building on those foundations something which is more than just the absence of war[4]. Unlike peacemaking and peacekeeping which may not go beyond establishing negative peace, the objective of peacebuilding is positive peace achieved by addressing the underlying causes of conflict including economic despair, social justice and political oppression[5]. COPA has a long history of contributing to the improvement of the delivery of peacebuilding and conflict transformation programs in Africa by offering courses and programs for peace practitioners working in conflict areas and the requests for these courses are overwhelming. As Ronald

'Peace is not absence of conflict… it is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means' - Ronald Reagan

[3] James Gilligan, Violence: our deadly epidemic and its causes: Preventing violence

[4] United Nations (2000) *Comprehensive Review of the Whole Question of Peacekeeping Operations in All Aspects ('Brahimi Report')*, New York: General Assembly and Security Council

[5] Boutros-Ghali, B. (1992) *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacebuilding and Peace-Keeping, Report of the Secretary General.* New York: United Nations

Reagan once said, 'Peace is not absence of conflict; it is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means'.

Through action learning, COPA identifies gaps in peacebuilding and conflict transformation intervention and designs projects and training courses to respond to the needs in these gaps. COPA's grassroots initiatives are engaging women and youth with dialogue and providing them with opportunities and safe political spaces for inter-ethnic dialogue and restoration of broken relationships. Key initiatives in this priority area include;

Thematic Training Workshops/Courses

Thematic workshops address the training needs of people who want to focus on conflicts transformation and have limited time available due to other commitments. These courses emphasize culturally sensitive and sustainable responses to national and regional conflicts. The courses are interactive employing a wide variety of participative approaches to learning including role-playing, simulations, small group discussions, and case studies. Thematic courses also use appropriate videos in conflict transformation and peace building.

Ultimately, as the groups of trainees accumulate each year, COPA's aim is to contribute to the birthing of a critical mass of people who can substantially contribute to harnessing of sustainable peace in their areas

One of our core activities and programmes as COPA is capacity building;, a recognizable activity that COPA has been doing since inception with the aim of building capacities of African peace practitioners so that they can be a resource to each other, their communities and their organizations. Ultimately, as the groups of trainees accumulate each year, COPA's aim is to contribute to the birthing of a critical mass of people who can substantially contribute to harnessing of sustainable peace in their areas. .

COPA has over the years managed to put together a highly effective group or resource persons to deliver the trainings. In the last year, participants to the trainings were drawn from various countries in Africa namely: Uganda, Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, Zimbabwe, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Africa, Lebanon, Nigeria and Kenya. Trainings that were conducted in the year include:

Strengthening Policy and Practice[6]

This course is run jointly with Responding to Conflict (RTC), a COPA partner based in the UK. The overall objective of the course is to provide skills in developing constructive organizational and programmatic policies. It is also planned to set a platform to draw from best practices, lessons learnt and to examine the interface between policy and practice for more effective approaches in peacebuilding, development and post-conflict reconstruction. It is expected that the participants attending the course will be able to;

- Deepen their understanding of peacebuilding from a conflict transformation perspective as it applies to their work
- Apply appropriate conflict analysis to their own organizational situations
- Explore the relationship between organizational policy and practice in situations of instability, conflict or violence
- Examine issues relating to aid and conflict in order to develop conflict sensitive policies for organizations
- Consider the key policy and practice issues relating to the prevention of violent conflict and of peacebuilding
- Strengthen participant's competencies to contribute proactively to the development of appropriate policies and best practices in their organizations/institutions for working in environments affected by conflict or violence

Gendering human security, conflict transformation and peacebuilding[7]

This training aims at developing a better understanding of gender and violence prevention in post conflict transitions with emphasis on how women participation can be enhanced. The focus is on the international legal instruments that support gender based violence prevention and enhancing the participation of women in peacebuilding processes such as CEDAW and UNSCR 1325. The course also provides a link of these instruments to human security paradigm as the framework for gendered peacebuilding and conflict transformation. It is expected that the participants attending the course will be able to;

- Identify forms of violence against women beyond direct violence to structural and cultural

[6] Previously the course has attracted practitioners from Kenya, Ethiopia, DRC, Uganda, Liberia, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan representing the Church of Uganda, United Nations Mission in Liberia, Association of Christian Resource Organization Serving Sudan (ACROSS), Civil Peace Service, Research, Community & Organizational Development Associates (RECODA), Observatory of Conflict & Violence Prevention, Social Justice and Peace, Sudan Peace & Development

[7] In the past two years that the course has been in existence, participants came from UNDP Kenya, UNMISS, UNFIL, Tearfund South Sudan, NCA Burundi, SFCG Burundi, SPDP Sudan, PD South Sudan and End Impunity-South Sudan

- Discuss the implications of UNSCR 1325 and the consequent resolutions on peacebuilding within the participants contexts
- Describe the linkages in CEDAW to Human Security and Peacebuilding
- Demonstrate the relevance of human security paradigm as an integrated approach to designing conflict transformation and peacebuilding
- Analyze their contexts, envision sustainable peace and draw plans for their conflict transformation and peacebuilding framework.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning (MERL) in peacebuilding practice [8]

COPA will continue to offer training on Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning (MERL). MERL is an integral part of every intervention whether in development, peacebuilding, humanitarian assistance or livelihood support. When systematically done, MERL makes it easy to articulate a project's theory of change, determine if the implementation schedule is still on course and determine if desired results are being achieved. It also enables programme staff to easily draw lessons from what is working and recommend appropriate measures. Though MERL is beneficial, many organizations and project staffs shy away from it particularly because many see it as technical in nature, others find it to be time consuming while others fear negative appraisals either because the projects failed to produce visible results or those results were not achieved within the project cycle. In spite of this, it is important for project staff to be equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills that would in turn allow them to effectively engage in MERL. It is expected that the participants attending the course will be able to;

Though MERL is beneficial, many organizations and project staffs shy away from it particularly because many see it as technical in nature, others find it to be time consuming while others fear negative appraisals either because the projects failed to produce visible results or those results were not achieved within the project cycle

- Gain an understanding of MERL from a peacebuilding perspective
- Demonstrate the use of various contextual tools of analysis applied in MERL
- Identify the different MERL tools used in the peacebuilding practice
- Build their understanding of a project's Theory of Change
- Enhance their skills in developing a learning agenda for their projects

[8] This course has in the past years attracted participants from Ejo Youth Echo – Rwanda, Vision Jeunesse Nouvelle (VJN), Aegis Trust – Rwanda, Never Again Rwanda, Kenya Red Cross Society, Islamic Relief Organization – Sudan

Training of trainers in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation[9]

'*Training of Trainers in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation*' is an annual event that targets practitioners who would like to build their skills and knowledge on designing, facilitating and evaluating trainings. Those who attend are drawn from government agencies, international and national NGOs. Through this activity, COPA aims at fulfilling her mandate of ensuring that the continent has a critical number of people who can be a resource to their organizations and to their communities. This is achieved by enhancing the participants' instructional skills to transmit the knowledge gained to their wider congregation. COPA will be running this training annually in the next planning period. It is expected that the participants attending the course will be able to;

Many people engaging with peacebuilding in Africa continue to express the need to have additional preparation in the requisite knowledge and skills to help them improve on the delivery of their programs or simply acquire interpersonal skills for conflict transformation

- Gain skills in understanding needs assessments of organizations and beneficiary groups
- Practice adult learning skills and explore the roles of a facilitator/trainer
- Improve their communication skills that enhance inclusion and respect
- Enhance skills in designing a training curriculum
- Explore how learning for change takes place and evaluating a training programme

[9] In the past practitioners who attended the course came from Kenya, Sudan, DRC, South Sudan and Nigeria and they represented the Nuer Peace Council, Emergency Relief, Rehabilitation & Development Agency (ERRADA),Mubadiroon, Life & Peace Institute, VISTAS/AECOM, Panyjiar Community Development Services, Norwegian Church Aid, SOS Sahel, Bomia Development Initiative, Nuweda, International Rescue Committee, Darfur Peace & Development Initiative, The Sudanese Development Call Organization, Danish Demining Group, Independent National Electoral Commission of Nigeria, Aweli Community Women Organization, Community Peace Initiative and Voluntary Youth Philanthropists

Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation [10]

Many people engaging with peacebuilding in Africa continue to express the need to have additional preparation in the requisite knowledge and skills to help them improve on the delivery of their programs or simply acquire interpersonal skills for conflict transformation. Such training needs are out of the belief that the capacity for peacebuilding is dependent on understanding of conflict dynamics and the recognition for operating conflict response initiatives within a framework for identifying context specific peacebuilding activities. This training is an opportunity to discuss and practice of basic concepts in peacebuilding. The course has been designed to benefit peace actors interested in deepening their understanding of peacebuilding and wishing to work or are already working in post conflicts settings. It is also meant for those wishing include or strengthen conflict sensitivity in programming. Participants for the course are expected from, organizations and institutions active in the field of peacebuilding, NGOs and regional organizations, civil society actors, governments agencies and UN missions in post violent conflict reconstruction settings. It is expected that the participants attending this course will be able to;

- Deepen their knowledge and analytical skills necessary for contextualized peacebuilding
- Enhance their capacity to design effective and conflict sensitive peacebuilding projects and interventions
- Develop further skills for their work in peacebuilding missions
- Develop cross-cultural understanding and instill a greater awareness of interdependence of peacebuilding initiatives

4) Research, Documentation and Learning

COPA's Research, Documentation and Learning strategy identifies the following two areas relevant to its work on conflict issues in Africa and to the contribution to the deeper understanding of the root causes of conflicts and best response practices.

[10] Previous training attracted attendance from UN Women – Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO), American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) – Africa Regional Office – Nairobi, International Rescue Committee (IRC) – Somalia, Province of the Church of Uganda (COU), Tearfund Switzerland, Across – Sudan, Ejo Youth Echo – Rwanda, United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) – Sudan, International Rescue Committee – South Sudan, Nile Hope – Juba, South Sudan

COPA Publication

In the stated period, COPA will come up with a publication celebrating her 20 years of existence with the focus being on the impact COPA's work has had in the continent especially the training programme and the lessons learned in the course of the operations. Case studies will be done for selected alumni from different regions and some of the COPA founder members and partners. Starting from January 2016, COPA will put together a bi-annual peacebuilding magazine that will be focusing on contemporary conflict, peacebuilding and conflict resolution trends in the region for the stated period. This project will spearhead any other project based documentations arising from activities.

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The tracer study

The tracer study and action learning strategy will play a central role in gathering, connecting and articulating the knowledge generated as well as developing and disseminating collective knowledge products. The strategy will result in the design and implementation of more effective learning opportunities through the shared experiences of COPA alumni thus directly contributing to COPA purpose. In addition, the body of knowledge resulting from Action Learning will be used as one of the key tools for COPA to actively and effectively engage with the UN, AU, IGAD, EAC, civil society and state actors, thereby also contributing to COPA's Goal. Building on the scope and expertise harboured within the COPA training events and participating partners, the tracer study and action learning strategy will support and document COPA alumni experience and knowledge exchange. This will be facilitated through a number of channels, such as online tools to be designed, face-to-face meetings with COPA trainers, field visits; collaborative research projects and training workshops. It will lead to the following outputs:

- Lessons learned will also be communicated to the continental and global forums for sharing purposes. COPA's regional networks will play an important role in this communication.
- The Trace Study and Action Learning strategy will support the improvement of the content of the existing COPA courses and in designing new modules for training.

Human Security

Human security paradigm perceives ordinary citizen as a purpose for which security is formulated and not a means for achieving state security. The paradigm is an integrative framework with opportunities to analyze and respond to insecurities at individual level[11]. While state security is often based on national power and military defence, human security does not imply solely governments, but empowers individuals and communities in identifying and implementing on solutions needed to tackle the various insecurities at play. Safety for each and every citizen should be the prerequisites of both state security and human security. Interventions lacking in human security only signify a poor policies.

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COPA has had trainings in the past three years which focused on gendering human security and peacebuilding. Our experience from the training is that the course is very popular with participants working at policy level with countries in transitions in Africa and beyond. During this strategic period COPA will further our work on human security and commission a study to look at the nexus between human security and other international and national instruments which support peacebuilding and organize policy briefing activities to popularize human security approach to peacebuilding.

VII. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

COPA has an internal performance management plan with indicators to measure impact and performance of its different activities. COPA staff prepares quarterly financial and narrative reports as well as holds quarterly assessment meetings. These reports track indicators and achievement of results as well as inputs and outputs such as different program events. COPA staff, trustees and evaluation consultants also hold monitoring visits to collect feedback from beneficiaries and program partners. Evaluation is based on and not limited to the following;

- The level of participation and gender balance
- The extent to which relevant themes are covered
- Expression of satisfaction with the trainings
- Culturally and contextualized approaches to conflict
- Improved capacity to address conflict problems

[11] Pricopi, 2010

Mid way into the strategic plan period and at the end of 2018, COPA will engage an external consultant to assess the overall impact of planned activities, make concrete recommendations on the overall relevance and effectiveness of the program and suggest recommendations to influence further programming.