



STRATEGIC PLAN 2022 - 2026

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ACRONYMS

AGA	Annual General Assembly
CBOs	Community Based Organizations
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HP/HTPs	Harmful Traditional Practices
LNAP	Liberia National Action Plan
LNP	Liberia National Police
KTK	Kvinna till Kvinna
MGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PAPD	Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRHR	Sexual Reproductive Health Rights
WACPS	Women & Children Protection Section
VLSAs	Village Loan Associations
UNCRC	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNCRPD	UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
WONGOSOL	Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Women NGOs Secretariat of Liberia is a leading organization in the Liberian CSO space from 2000 to current. WONGOSOL has worked over the past decades to advocate for the advancement of women rights gathering women to work on several thematic issues affecting them and other disadvantaged groups in Liberia. Since its establishment, WONGOSOL Secretariat has worked with the members to strengthen capacities, undertook joint advocacy actions across many areas that led to the enactment of policies and laws that promote equality for women and girls. These experiences inform our new strategy and it draws from collective reflection, consultation with stakeholders and network members premised on the draft plan developed from previous Strategic Plan of 2012-2017. The new plan comes at a time of great change within the organization and in the country as well. Internally, WONGOSOL has elected a new Board of Directors from its last Annual General Assembly and transitioned to a new Executive Director after the resignation of its late Executive Director. Externally, there have been notable changes in the operational context due to a tougher economic situation compounded with the management of a global health crisis, the COVID-19 Pandemic. Liberia has witnessed government's silence on human rights violations and unprecedented crackdown on peaceful activists and mass citizens actions thus limiting civic space.

The growing programmatic and infrastructure costs of the secretariat require an institutional response that sets priorities and ensures support is cost-effective. In view of the above, we have, in consultation with our member organizations and key partners stakeholders, crafted five strategic objectives that will help us contribute to realizing the goal of improving the state of gender equality, women's empowerment and their human rights protection. Our strategic priorities and tactics will help the organization meet such challenges effectively over the next five years and take advantage of opportunities for organizational growth and development.

Our previous strategy focused on, organizational structuring and financial accountability by electing new Board of directors through Annual General Assembly (AGA) , updating program structure , membership capacity and improved engagement, commissioning annual audit, relationship building

with relevant government institutions specifically, maintained coordination and collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Projection, Ministry of Justice (LNP-WACPS & Crimes Unit), Ministry of Health, Education, and increased visibility by re-activating WONGOSOL social media presence. The goal of the new strategy is to contribute to an improved state of human rights ensuring gender equality for the advancement of women and girls in Liberia. As such new strategy will focus on expansion of our program throughout the country and increase our support to partners organizations as well as strengthen member organizations. We will also seek to build a more coordinated women's movement and undertake joint advocacy action in a more strategic manner.

- **Strategic Priority 1:** Empowerment and Capacity Building of Members that aims to empower and strengthen membership capacity to deliver program quality for women and girls
- **Strategic Priority 2:** Coordination and Networking aims to Increase networking collaboration, coordination amongst members and other institution promoting gender equality and justice.
- **Strategic Priority 3:** Advocacy with objective to lead national advocacy with specific for rights of women, girls, People with Disabilities (PWDs) and other marginalized groups and respond to global issues that are aligned to WONGOSOL's vision and mission,
- **Strategic Priority 4:** Evidence- based Research to ensure research on key women issues is conducted, documented, to promote gender equality. We shall in addition partner with other organizations for the purposes of research, information dissemination and advocacy, leveraging our efforts across a wider target audience, and supporting the efforts of others working for human rights.
- **Strategic Priority 5:** A Strong Sustainable Network aims to strengthen institutional and financial capacities of WONGOSOL network members nationwide.

We shall implement the objectives through strategies including awareness and trainings, evidence-based advocacy, engagement with rights holders and duty bearers to create awareness of rights, and obligations, research, monitoring and reporting of human rights issues and women empowerment. We shall endeavor to energize and make visible our networks locally, regionally and internationally to increase the weight of our advocacy. Internally, we shall monitor and evaluate our work in order to learn from it. We shall maintain the flexibility to adapt to changing situations and to respond to lessons learned.

2.0 The Strategic Plan Process:

This final strategy builds on the December 2020 draft plan process which has been reviewed and validated by members and Board of Directors of the WONGOSOL in December 2021. The process involved external stakeholders within Monrovia and representation from Liberia's 15 political sub-

divisions. In the first phase during the preliminary phase, it was difficult to obtain feedback and comments from our partners due to the restrictions posed by the COVID-19. Later in December 2020, we took stock of what we had achieved as WONGOSOL, our challenges, and explored the context for our work in the years ahead. Other processes included a regional meeting at the Annual General Assembly, consultative meetings with individual member organizations, Board members, secretariat staff, about our progress, successes and challenges. During those meetings, we discussed among several issues our priorities for the years ahead. In December 2021, representatives from the Secretariat, membership and the Board reviewed the draft inputs and made a number of changes herein reflected in the revised strategy. The Secretariat planned the strategic planning meeting in consultation with the board and key partners.

2.1 Scope & Purpose

The development of this strategy coincides with the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action 2020 and 30th anniversary of the 16 days of Activism. While the Beijing Platform for Action sets out how to remove the systemic barriers that hold women back from equal participation in all areas of life, whether in public or in private, the 16 Days of Activism has focused on raising awareness on violence against women. Despite some progress, real change has been worryingly slow for the majority of women and girls in the world including Liberia. On this note, our strategy is set to address some of these challenges by contributing to an improved state of human rights ensuring gender equality for women and girls in Liberia.

The Strategic Plan 2022-2026 will guide the action of the entire WONGOSOL for the 5 years period, identifying and promoting our areas of common focus while recognizing and indeed strengthening the diversity of WONGOSOL. This Strategic Plan will inform, influence and support WONGOSOL's engagement in national-level work, driven by the specificity of the local contexts, as well as strategic priorities of the organization. Member organization of the Secretariat will take this Strategic plan into account during their planning and evaluation processes for the coming five years and contribute to one or more of our strategic priorities in accordance with their capacities. The Strategic plan will also be used by member organizations as a framework to channel their actions. In so doing, the Board of Directors will provide oversight to the implementation of the strategic plan and ensure that fundraising efforts are supported, annual reviews are undertaken to measure achievements and document lessons learned.

3.0 Gender & Power Analysis

Liberia population is estimated at 4.8 million, with approximately 50% women of which half are under the age 18. Liberia ranks 177 out of 188 countries on the Gender Inequality Index and 121 of 129 on the SDG Gender Index of 2019. Gender disparities and imbalances are common in every sphere of life in Liberia. In most cases, women are disproportionately and unfairly represented in leadership and decision-making bodies. This leads to a variety of social problems that can be associated with gender inequality and imbalance such as unequal gender relations and power relations, lack of access to basic services, economic disempowerment, low participation in decision making, lack of access to legal and judicial services as well as vulnerability to limited health services as well as the current global pandemic of COVID-19.

Gender inequality and women's marginalization in Liberia is maintained and sustained by traditional and religious perceptions of women as subordinate and men as superior. Girls and boys, women and men are socialized and culturally ascribed different and rigid roles, duties and responsibilities with regard to division of labor, access and control over resources and decision-making positions. In turn, these are transferred to schools, the community, and the workplaces. They, subsequently translate into gender inequalities, gender biases and discrimination in the society, some of which are projected in high incidences of SGBV against women and girls; persistent abuse of the rights of women; sexual abuse of the girl child; girls dropping out of school; women's excessive poverty and dependency on men; and over-burden of workload on women. All of these limit women's effective participation in society. Despite progress made since the end of the civil war, in many sectors of the Liberian society, women and girls continue to have limited access to education and health services and the formal economy. With notable few exceptions including the Presidency, women have been missing out on opportunities and participation in management and decision-making positions at all levels of the society. The limited participation of women in governance processes has contributed to a century long lack of recognition of women and girls and the reality of gender equality at all levels of society.

3.1 Women, Peace & Security

Liberia's post-war recovery is characterized by several major achievements towards sustainable peace, improvement in legal standards for the protection of women's rights and is acclaimed as a model for the engagement of women towards peace and stability. However, despite the many gains in maintaining national peace and security, the lives of many women remain insecure due to social inequalities and high levels of sexual and gender-based violence inflicted on women and girls affecting women's peace and security. The Liberia National Action Plan (LNAP) (updated) for the Implementation of UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security highlight specific actions needed to promote and advance the inclusion of women in all processes that affect their peace and security, including health, education, sexual and gender-based violence prevention, governance, and policies that support improved empowerment for women and girls.

The Anti-SGBV Roadmap 2020-2022 is the most recent policy guidance from the MGCSP, and it is a policy response to the increased/heightened cases of SGBV following restrictive measures resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. It was developed in September 2020. It outlines three strategic principles: 1) Enhanced accountability and sustainability, 2) Collective action and 3) Full engagement with local actors. These are further divided into operative principles, which call for strengthened horizontal responses through enhanced inter-agency collaboration, and improved vertical responses by turning the policies into effective programming in different sectors from social services to healthcare and justice.

The Roadmap has four thematic pillars: 1) health, 2) community engagement, 3) legal and strengthening coordination and 4) data collection for reporting, and it is expected to serve as a working tool to address all forms of SGBV within the short, medium and long term. The Roadmap describes a host of planned activities from strengthening and enforcing laws, policies and standards to prevent and respond to early marriage, FGM and other HTPs, increased access to information, protection and specialized services for women, girls and boys, and effective, accountable and well-coordinated

intersectoral SGBV leadership. The approach is aligned with the National Gender Policy, but with the addition of a detailed work programme by September 2022. In conjunction with the introduction of the Roadmap, a state of emergency was issued on September 10, 2020 and a Special Prosecutor was appointed, and a National Sex Offenders registry and a National SGBV taskforce were established.

3.2 Women's Political Participation and Leadership

Whereas in sub-Saharan Africa, the regional average of women in parliament is 25%, in Liberia, women occupy just 11 of the 103 seats in the Legislature. Overall, the percentage of women in the Legislature has steadily declined since 2006, falling to 14% in 2011, 12% in 2014, 11% in 2017 and 10% in 2021. In the Cabinet, women make up 21% (4/19). In local government, from general town chiefs to county superintendents, women account for under 6% of leadership positions.

The economic, sociological, cultural, political, and ideological barriers to women's political representation and leadership in governance are pronounced. At the heart of these barriers are unequal power relationships. There is a lack of political will to advance women's leadership, particularly among powerful men who see this as a threat to their positions and status. Having so few women elected members and among the leadership of political parties has meant that women have little influence to transform deeply patriarchal political structures. While political leaders recognize the work done by women to mobilize support at the community level, they are reluctant to put women on their lists. Additionally, traditional and religious leaders – a key constituency for aspiring politicians – often refuse to endorse female aspirants.

Another root cause of women's underrepresentation is gender discrimination and inequitable gender norms. In the wider public, gendered norms and attitudes about women's roles, "place," and position vis-à-vis men can prevent women from aspiring to public leadership roles as well as prevent the public from supporting women leaders. Women's roles as wives and mothers (still considered women's primary roles) fuel the perception that leadership in public spaces is not for them – hence, broader public support for male leaders. However, the public does not see these barriers or invisible power, so many Liberians will explain women's underrepresentation by blaming women themselves. Unfortunately, because of male dominated exclusionary politics, coupled with the threat of violence, women do choose not to engage. Therefore, the "lack of confidence" that we often point to is not something inherent in women. It comes from not being afforded the same economic and educational opportunities, being told that politics "is not their area" and therefore discouraged from developing skills, characteristics, competencies, and ambition for public leadership positions.

3.3 Women's Economic Empowerment

Low investment in women's education and employment opportunities means that women are more likely to be semi-literate or illiterate (just 34% of females over 15 are literate compared to 63% males¹) and more likely to be informally employed (91% of women are informally employed compared to 69% of men²). Among wage earners, women earn less than men, particularly because women are more likely to have low skill jobs and receive a lower pay³.

3.4 Violence Against Women and Girls

While sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is vastly underreported, sexual assault and rape are the most reported violent crimes in Liberia. In 2020, there were 2,308 cases reported to the MGCSP. Of those, 2,240 cases – 97% – were perpetrated against women and girls. Of these cases, 1,525 were rape cases, with 13–17-year-old girls being the most vulnerable age group. It should be emphasized that the reported cases do not capture the real scope of the problem, since the shame and stigma around SGBV cases, as well as high levels of impunity, most cases go unreported. 9% According to the 2019-20 LDHS, 9% of women aged 15-49 have experienced sexual violence, and 5% said that they had experienced sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey.⁴ Although we cannot generalize this statistic to the entire population, it indicates that 1 in 10 Liberian women are likely to experience sexual violence in their lifetime, and tens of thousands – potentially more than 100,000 incidents of sexual violence in a year.

Domestic violence is widespread in Liberia, with 45.6% of ever-partnered women and girls over 15 subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner.⁵ Men are often the perpetrators due to their relative power over women; acceptability of men's violence to "correct" behavior and reinforce gender roles and norms; the devaluing or objectification of women; socialization of boys/men to suppress emotions; and past experiences of violence.⁶ Sometimes psychosocial services are provided to SGBV survivors, but rarely to perpetrators.

A study that was recently carried out with the Ending Violence Against Women cluster⁷ found evidence of rapes and other forms of SGBV increasing due to the lockdown and other restrictions during the Covid-19 crisis. Other key findings included the loss of jobs and income, idleness and increased

¹ UNESCO. 2017. Literacy rate among the population aged 15 years and older. <http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/lr>

² Liberia Institute of Statistics & Geo-Information Services (LISGIS). 2017. Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2016. Statistical Abstract. Available at <https://bit.ly/3dyFfqy>

³ Ibid. p.54, 59

⁴ Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS), Ministry of Health [Liberia], and ICF. 2021. Liberia Demographic and Health Survey 2019-20. Monrovia, Liberia and Rockville, Maryland, USA.

⁵ LISGIS, Ministry of Health [Liberia], and ICF. LDHS 2019-20. p. 332.

⁶ Kaufman, Michael. 1999. "The Seven P's of Men's Violence." Toronto: Michael Kaufman; Messerschmidt, James W. 2017. "Adolescent Boys, Embodied Heteromascuinites and Sexual Violence." C.E.P.S. Journal 7 (2): 113–26

⁷ Members of the Cluster include: Oxfam, Plan International, International Rescue Committee, medica Liberia, Kvinna Til Kvinna , medica Liberia and Action Aid Liberia.

stress of losing livelihoods have resulted in more domestic sexual violence, affecting particularly girls.⁸ While the available data does not yet allow definitive conclusions, the numbers of SGBV seem to have climbed up slightly during the health crisis. The increase appears not to be drastic because of the pandemic, but the level of SGBV in general is extremely high in Liberia. According to the study findings, almost 70% of the respondents reported having experienced or witnessed SGBV before and during the pandemic. An alarming consequence of the pandemic is further deterioration of the SGBV survivors' services, pointing towards the fragility of the systems that have been built thus far.

3.5 Women rights related international frameworks

The government of Liberia has demonstrated commitment by ratifying the most important international human rights instruments that protect women and girls, amongst them the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. All of these instruments reaffirm the state's responsibility to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls as well as to actively protect against and prosecute sexual violence that amounts to crimes against humanity. These international commitments provide the context in which the national justice system should operate.

Regarding national law, domestic laws that provide for improved gender equality and protection considerations have been promulgated but not often implemented. In addition, Liberia's dual legal system affects enforcement where loop holes are exploited. The dual legal system in which Liberia operates means that women experience significant disparities in recognition of their property and custodial rights under the two legal systems, statutory and customary. This also contributes to gender and income inequality and low socio-economic status of women in rural areas compared to those in urban areas since women in rural areas are more likely to see their rights violated under the customary law.

Liberia has a number of laws which, if fully implemented, would significantly advance gender equality and women's empowerment such as the Amendment to the penal code on rape, Domestic Violence Law, Inheritance Law, the Decent Work Act, and the Land Rights and Forestry Laws. However, investments in implementation of domestic laws have been scanty and the political will for enforcement limited. As such, women still experience significant barriers due to lack of enforcement when their rights under these laws are violated.

3.6 Access to Justice

Implementation of the women friendly laws lags with limited information and awareness about its provisions and services that can be available to women and girls subjected to violence. Many sections of the various laws are yet to be fully implemented since its passage and resources for state institutions for implementation are underfunded. In Liberia, many structures to support and facilitate access to justice for women are in urban parts

⁸ Center for Population and Reproductive Health commissioned by the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) Cluster (2021): In the shadow of the pandemic: the impact of covid-19 on women and girls in Liberia.

of the country, which prohibits women in other parts of the country from accessing timely support. Where support does exist outside of urban areas, there are limited services available which are significantly under-resourced and many women are fearful to report abuse to police and to incur further abuse by their perpetrator or by their families.

While current law provides for legal protection, lack of information including accessibility (in language and literacy) remain challenges for women. The complexity of women's right laws, complicated and lengthy trial procedures, widespread corruption and delays in the justice system and the negative, patriarchal attitude of criminal justice personnel (particularly toward SGBV survivors) contribute to making it difficult for Liberian women to access justice. Victims are also discouraged from pursuing their cases due to frequent community pressure to withdraw complaints, third party interference, poor handling of case files, delay in court processes, high cost of transport to courts and lack of support. Moreover, the marked absence of female criminal justice personnel further reduces the confidence of women in the formal justice system, particularly as the male dominated judiciary has by its utterances and handling of sexual violence cases for instance has shown itself far more sympathetic to the situation of men charged under the new rape law (which the judges feel is too harsh) than to the plight of women and girls who come before the formal courts as SGBV survivors and complainants.

Lastly, the existence of a dual legal system (customary and statutory) means many women in rural communities are still subject to traditional practices and cultural beliefs which not only prohibit their access, ownership and control over resources but their access to justice and redress, including inheritance. Conviction rate for all SGBV cases is about 2-4% on an average annually as barely 25% of perpetrators are arrested.⁹

3.7 The Liberian Women's Movement

The women's peace movement contributed both to ending the war and bringing to power Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in 2006. In turn, President Sirleaf's administration was able to maintain the fragile peace. However, the unity of purpose that brought the movement together across socio-economic cleavages to demand peace, has largely broken down in the post-conflict dispensation and with the NGOization of women's movement organizations who compete over scarce resources and who diverge in terms of representation and political ideologies.

Populism continues to be the dominant form of political participation in the country – with Liberians tending to rally around personalities and not policies. This affects civic space, where citizens increasingly see the people divided into two camps – the ruling coalition and the opposition. While women's activism in Liberia has long been misconstrued as "apolitical", particularly non-partisan, this has been changing in recent years. Voices critical of Government actions or inactions in areas affecting women's rights are increasingly accused of being motivated by partisan politics. This has contributed to a shrinking of civic space in recent years, whereby the registration and operation of women's rights' organizations are being adversely affected. There is much work to be done to build solidarity across the women's movement and to strengthen partnerships between State agencies and civil society.

⁹ [impunity report - binding.pdf \(unmissions.org\)](#)

4.0 ORGANISATIONAL DESCRIPTION

About WONGOSOL

The Women NGOs Secretariat of Liberia (WONGOSOL), is a legally registered network membership organization established in 1998 with a membership of more than 100 women organizations within the 15 sub-divisions of Liberia. WONGOSOL was established with the mandate to advocate for the advancement of women's rights and has responded boldly to a range of issues WONGOSOL works in the areas of women empowerment, ending violence against women and girls, advocacy and capacity building. Since its establishment, the organization has empowered many women and girls to understand their rights and justice in every fabric of life, especially those in rural communities in Liberia. Since its inception, WONGOSOL has created a platform and a space for women participation and empowerment in issues affecting them, as well as built the capacity of women to harness resources and present their independent views on issues and policies directly affecting them.

4.1 WHO ARE WE?

WONGOSOL is a non-governmental, non- discriminatory and secular women-based organization established as an organ to coordinate the activities of women organizations in Liberia since 1998. WONGOSOL as an umbrella organization, has its members working across several sectors including, governance and peacebuilding, human rights, agriculture and food security livelihoods, advocacy, women and gender empowerment, sexual reproductive health and rights, water sanitation and hygiene, health promotion and education among others. Our membership categories within the 15 counties encompass Community Based Organization (CBOs), Faith-Based organizations and Non- Governmental Organizations (NGOs). We are called to build the capacity of women NGOs and CBOs to promote sustainable peace and security.

4.2 Strategic Plan 2017-2020

Within our previous strategic plan, we achieved the following:

- Strengthened our governance processes through the conduct of the Annual General Assembly (AGA), election of new Board of Directors and carried out institutional audit
- Contributed to policy reviews and legal frameworks (such the Domestic violence bill) for the advancement of women's rights
- Presented the proposed program structure to the AGA
- Improved and increased engagements through capacity building with the membership including sending member organizations on international functions

- Improved coordination and collaboration with our key partners including the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Projection, Ministry of Justice (WACPS & Crimes Unite), Ministry of Health Education etc
- Increased our visibility through the re-activation of social media account

4.3 Values, Vision, and Mission

Our Vision

"A just and equitable society where women & girls human rights and dignity are promoted, respected and gender equality achieved

Our Mission

Committed to empowering women and girls, strengthen network members' & promote the freedom and human rights of women and girls and other marginalized groups

Our Core Values

- Transparency
- Accountability
- Integrity
- Equal opportunity
- Mutual respect
- Democracy
- Empowerment

What Our Values means to us:

- **Transparency:** Unless confidentiality is required, WONGOSOL ensures that stakeholders and the people and communities we serve are fully aware of WONGOSOL's actions, management and financial situation.
- **Accountability:** WONGOSOL is accessible and openly accountable, positioning itself where people know WONGOSOL's responsibilities, and are able to ask for explanations, and give feedback on their experiences of the Secretariat.
- **Integrity:** WONGOSOL ensures that integrity underpins all of its operations. WONGOSOL strives to always conduct its work with honesty and trustworthiness, upholding ethical principles and holding to strong moral uprightness. This means doing the right thing even when no one is watching.
- **Equal Opportunity:** WONGOSOL treats individuals or groups of individuals fairly and equally, specific to their needs. WONGOSOL does not discriminate against its members or employees on the grounds of age, sex, nationality, tribe, ethnicity, place of origin, political opinion, race, color, disability, occupation, or on any other status. Even when focused on a specific marginalized group, WONGOSOL does not contravene this principle by limiting benefits to only that group.
- **Mutual Respect:** All relationships internally and externally to WONGOSOL ensures mutual respect, every partner, member, stakeholder and staff are valued for who they are and what they bring to the table. People will only be seen by their unique contributions, recognizing and understanding differences, and celebrating diversity –capitalizing on all that we have in common.
- **Democracy** – WONGOSOL upholds democratic principles in our work, ensures participation and inclusiveness of women, girls and other marginalized groups in decision making processes for a free and responsible society.
- **Empowerment:** WONGOSOL promotes self-determination in people, especially women and girls and in communities. Enables them to represent their interests in a responsible and self-determined way, acting on their own authority. WONGOSOL ensures women and girls becomes stronger and more confident, especially in controlling their life and claiming their rights.

Our strategic Niche: WONGOSOL is an icon of women and girls' human rights protection in Liberia, and a recognized umbrella network organization of women CSOs/CBOs addressing diverse human rights and economic issues from a perspective of capacity building, advocacy and lobbying for inclusive law and policy. With the advantages of experience and credibility, WONGOSOL continues to hold a high public profile in advocacy for human rights in national, regional and international arenas. WONGOSOL is the largest women umbrella organization in Liberia that maintains a large number of diverse network members and has staff, with diverse expertise and capacity. Through its human rights awareness-raising, strategic advocacy, lobbying power and interventions, it has consistently provided the platform and empowered women and girls to speak out and claim their rights while at the same time challenging and as needed, lobbying duty bearers to meet their obligations.

Networks and partnerships: WONGOSOL works in partnership with like-minded organizations in addition to its network members to complement and strengthen its advocacy work and support a unified voice behind shared goals, for greater impact. At the national level, the Women NGOs Secretariat of Liberia is a steering committee member of the Elections Coordination Committee ECC, Working Group on Land Rights for Liberia, Steering Committee member on the implementation of 1325 National Action Plan, Women Human Rights Defenders, Solidarity for African Women's

Rights (SOAWR). Regionally, the WONGOSOL is an active member of the Working Group on Women, Youth, Peace and Security in West Africa and the Sahel and with global networks.

4.4 Setting WONGOSOL Liberia's Strategic Trajectory

Strategic Overview

In the next five years, WONGOSOL's strategic trajectory will focus on strengthening membership capacity to deliver program quality at both the programmatic and institutional levels (for itself and membership). The organization will continue to work in the all 15 counties supporting its membership base. To enhance its strategic leverage in Liberia, the organization will pay attention to national level process and tap into other areas to bring more visibility to its work.

In so doing, over the next five years, WONGOSOL, its partners and members will expand its programs by mobilizing resources for its members and program staff in relevant areas. The organization will deepen and broaden its relationships with its membership and potential partners through networking.

4.5 SWOT Analysis

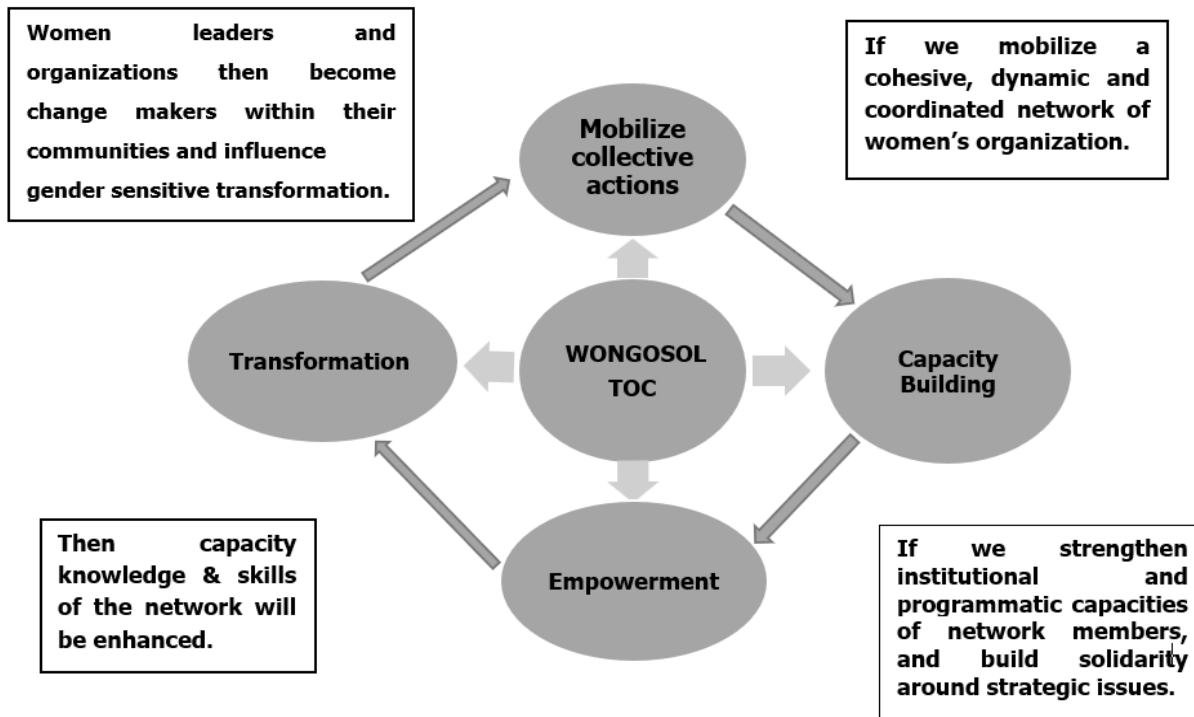
SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
- Wider coverage through its membership base - Commitment to the women's agenda - Part of regional and national networks - Recognition by national, international and government partners - Office space - Presence of well experience staff within the team.	- Fewer technical program staff at the secretariat - Financial skills need improvement - Adhoc advocacy strategy - Limited mobilization capacity - Limited technical staff dedicated to resource mobilization - Low staff retention - Lack of continued funding for staff salaries - Unclear processes for partners/membership selection for partnering on activities - Low implementation of past strategic plan - Weak communication strategies - Inadequate M & E and reporting system and processes	- Donor interest in our work remains relevant - Passage of new law/policies eg. the amendment to election law, Land rights and community forest laws, - Revised National Action XX - Cooperation with Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection - Cooperation with the Women's Legislative Caucus - Election period opens avenue for lobbying	- Unhealthy competition amongst NGOS - Poor coordination of line ministries. - Fragility of the peace situation - Pandemic – health and gendered impact could erode gains made previously around women's rights - Negative trend in the economic - Lack of funding for sustainable actions - Short-term grants/funding - Slow accreditation processes for

	- Limited communication with membership in rural areas - Donor dependency - Unstainable county offices		women organizations clearances - Deplorable roads could affect program delivery
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4.5.1 THEORY OF CHANGE:

WONGOSOL is committed to building the leadership of women led organizations for the benefit of the communities. To ensure the protection of women's and girls' human rights through improved quality services, direct participation of a cohesive, dynamic and coordinated network of women's organization is crucial in influencing and changing social norms, attitudes, behaviors and laws which violate women's and girls' collective human rights. In so doing, we seek to build the capacities of our women leaders while increasing our ability to mobilize and collectively act towards advancing women and girls rights. Women then become changemakers in their communities, effectively leading influencing gender sensitive tranformatory actions.



4.6 Program Interventions

WONGOSOL will contribute to empowering women and girls, promote women's leadership and participation, strengthen safety and security, accelerate women's economic empowerment and advance reforms of policy and laws in Liberia through the following strategies:

4.6.1 Strategic Priority One: Empowerment and Capacity Building of Members

Objective: To empower and strengthen membership capacity to deliver program quality for women and girls

WONGOSOL considers women empowerment as a significant process and strategy to increasing their political, social and economic rights therefore we will work towards achieving this. The organizational membership mapping and evaluation will be conducted with purpose for institutional strengthening, which this objective lends itself. Particularly with the current shrinking civic space and escalating attacks against human rights activists and human rights organizations, the safety and security of members will be a priority. We plan to undertake the following to realize this objective:

- I. We will work to establish a robust monitoring system and mentorship of network members
- II. We shall improve on membership mobilization to support the organizational course, and facilitate existence of an effective and competent Board of Directors through active and regular meetings.
- III. We shall also seek to improve the safety and security of our network members and people we serve and how we manage risk in general by instituting annual risk analysis and seek professional advice on risk management. We shall engage services of safety experts to build the capacity of our member organizations on personal safety and security management.
- IV. This will be ensured by carrying out assessment of membership capacities, designed tailored made trainings and resource mobilization.

4.6.2 Strategic Priority Two: Coordination and Networking

Objective: Increased networking collaboration, coordination amongst members and other institution promoting gender equality and for the advancement of women's right.

WONGOSOL strength is with its network members therefore networking and coordination is very major to the Secretariat. We will work to improve our coordination and networking within our membership at both national and regional levels on key issues and support our membership for collective change through the following means:

- I. We will build on existing efforts to increase our coverage and relationship with our membership.
- II. Our team will closely work with network members and partners to develop joint project proposals and offer trainings to network members on fundraising.
- III. We will also offer organizational development service to member and enforce annual due payment to further strength the secretariat. To this end, we will hold periodic meetings, events and develop creative communication methods to remain in touch with our members and update our database on a regular basis.
- IV. Additionally, we will profile our women leaders as a strategic way as part of the branding
- V. Annual retreat will create safe space for women and strengthen solidarity and networking.

4.6.3 Strategic Priority Three: Advocate for Women & Girls Rights

Objective: To lead national advocacy for women, girls and marginalized groups and respond to global issues that are aligned to WONGOSOL's vision and mission.

WONGOSOL considers the advancement of women rights through the creating of an enabling environment where women human rights are promoted. Our advocacy is aimed reforms of policies and laws and creating programs for the achievement of gender equality.

- I. We will develop an advocacy strategy that will serve a roadmap for our strategic intervention.
- II. We will also innovate our awareness raising and lead campaigns based on issues and engage government and other key stakeholders for policy action.
- III. We will advocate for adherence of civil and political rights, rule of law and access to justice for women and girls through engagement with law makers and other duty bearers.
- IV. We will continue to advocate for women and girls to participate in democratic processes and ensure elections are free and fair.

4.6.4 Strategic Priority Four: Integrate gender analysis and Evidence- based Research into Program

Objective: Ensure gender analysis and research on key women issues is conducted, documented, to promote inform advocacy for gender equality

Research Knowledge production and management are key components of this Strategy. The Secretariat will remain responsible for producing products and providing assistance to the member organizations on research, learning and tool development where required. The Secretariat will integrate gender analysis and evidence-based research in its program through the approaches:

- I. We will improve our quality of research through evidence building and documentation of women issues in Liberia. We will strengthen gender analysis in our research to be achieved by identifying key issues for example; (situation of girls' safety in schools, lack of access to finance facing women and girls) and exploring such issues to inform our understanding and knowledge.
- II. Pending on the issues that will be identified, we will develop policy briefs or issue papers based on data generated from the evidence research carry out.
- III. The secretariat will outsource technical assistance where necessary based on the scope of the research or knowledge production.

4.6.5 Strategic Priority Five: A Strong, Sustainable and Functional Secretariat

Objective: To strengthen institutional and financial capacities of WONGOSOL

To improve the effectiveness of the Secretariat in delivering its mandate, we will ensure that the secretariat governance and management structures, systems and procedures are operationalized. We also ensure that resources (financial, human) are well managed and supported. As sustainability

is paramount to WONGOSOL's achievement of her mandate of attaining a just and equitable society. Sustainability requires sufficient and aligned organizational purpose, leadership, capacity, structure, processes and systems. Several areas here mention will lead to the achievement of this strategic priority include: organizational governance, human resource management, resource mobilization, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL), financial management systems and use of ICT.

- I. We shall enhance and sustain our resource mobilization and financial management by diversifying our fundraising approaches to mainstream fundraising functions to all staff and Board members. We shall also adopt a financial mobilization strategy, an endowment fund, social enterprise models where possible and devise a Financial Resilience Plan (FRP). We will strengthen our financial systems enhance staff financial management skills for efficient management and compliance through training, and strengthen our procurement policy, functions and practice.
- II. Improve our human resources by making ourselves and employer of choice, offering competitive packages and ensuring supportive progressive, stimulating and nurturing working environment. In this way we shall be able to recruit and maintain a diverse and competent workforce. We shall also ensure succession planning through mentorship.
- III. We shall seek to improve the safety and security of our staff, network and people we serve and how we manage risk in general by instituting regular risk analysis and seek professional advice on risk management. We shall engage services of safety experts to build the capacity of our staff and member organizations on personal safety and security management.
- IV. We shall endeavor to develop our ICT infrastructure by firstly, developing our website and enhancing our digital systems to effectively support our programs, develop information security metrics and awareness through outsourcing of funds to hire a consulting service. We shall build the capacity of our staff and network member organizations in soft skills and ICT best practices and increase adherence to ICT control and compliance by at least 50%.
- V. We shall develop our MEL policy and framework as a first step to improving the MEL system. We endeavor to as much as possible digitize our MEL system and build the capacity of our staff appropriately. We shall enhance coordination of information collected across multiple functions in program implementation, enhance reporting and maximize impact.
- VI. As regards public relations and communication, we shall actively enhance public awareness of our brand and work by investing in a communication officer. Raising public awareness of WONGOSOL's work is intended and expected to persuade the public to support our work. We shall also seek to enhance relations with our stakeholders.

5. Resource Mobilization

The Resource Mobilization (RM) Strategy is aimed at mobilizing resources for the organization to implement the Strategic Plan. The general objective of the resource mobilization strategy is to mobilize financial, equipment and materials resource ss to support the overall organizational strategy by 2026. The four strategic objectives include: to establish functional systems and structures for fundraising, to strengthen the Resource Mobilization team with adequate tools and information in order to diversify our funding base by 2026, to increase WONGOSOL's visibility within the country and at regional and international level and to engage and raise 15% of annual budget from the private sector by 2026. In order to achieve these objectives, it will be important to develop cluster specific/ thematic funding schemes and establishment of a Working Group comprising membership,

board representatives, other like-minded partner organizations with set skills that leads the fundraising efforts in addition to the commitment needed from staff and resources.

Current skills within the organization would benefit from additional skills development to help us meet the target. Also, equipment and other materials that will help it deliver on this strategy. Ensuring that these needs are met is definitely, a surest way of achieving our overall objective.

WONGOSOL believes that sustainable resource mobilization is a strategic process that is grounded in effective organization management through its creative communication/visibility /branding and also sustained through it's networking and relationship with it's partners. Our strategic plan describes both financial and human resource needed to achieve our goals. We will apply a mix approach including hold the state accountability to provide services for it's people, particular women and girls; our main beneficiaries.

Financial resources: A significant source of funding depends on donor funding. As an organization, we are keen to select donors who are interested in supporting the women's rights agenda; focusing on our vision and mission statements. Our organization will work to utilize resources in a much more efficient manner.

Networking: We will continue to hold government accountable for the provision of services to its people. On this note, we will collaborate with relevant authorities with mandates on women issues eg. MOGSCP, MOJ, MOE etc. Furthermore, private sector is slowly becoming a strategic actor to invest in women's rights as part of their development agenda. We will establish new relationship with private sector such the mobile companies for the purpose of attracting support towards the strategy. Finally, we will maintain an updated database of donors supporting women's rights agenda within Liberia and globally and make effort to maintain relationship with these partners.

6.0 Oversight of the Strategic Plan

The Annual General Assembly will have the overall responsibility for the oversight of the Implementation of Strategic Plan. This will include ensuring that the organization is focusing upon its agreed strategic priorities and those resources are allocated in this direction at the Secretariat. To this end, the Annual General Assembly will approve a five-year Implementation Plan developed for the Secretariat and oversee its progress on implementation. It may also decide to adjust strategic priorities as set out in the Strategic plan if the levels of funding required and presented in the five-year Implementation Plan is not forthcoming.

7.0 Governance and Performance Management Systems

WONGOSOL will have even more robust governance and management systems to support the effective and accountable implementation of this Strategic Plan. Our Board will adopt even more stringent standards for our own governance, and improve the effectiveness of key management systems that will strengthen the accountability of our organization. This will apply to all the member organizations (including the Secretariat) and notably will include the review of the role of Individual Members in the governance of the organization. We will also set up appropriate mechanisms of mutual accountability between the different organizations within WONGOSOL. Our approach here will consist of clarifying the roles and expectations among the different members, and establishing a simple framework for periodic reporting for all. The reporting will cover specific

thematic issues, strategic priorities, general performance and service delivery/support to different organizations, as well as progress made in the implementation of this Strategic Plan. We will review our WONGOSOL membership accreditation, adequately reflecting the requirements for strengthened governance and management standards.

7.1 Organizational Planning, Participation and Collective Action

All member organizations will actively take into account Strategic Plan 2022-2026 when developing their Plans, be they strategic or annual. In some cases, this will involve the organizations using a similar framework (e.g. the four Strategic Priorities) as the organizing framework for their own Strategic Plans, although with nationally contextual tailored priorities and activities according to their local situation. However, organizations need to retain the independence and flexibility to plan and conceptualize their work in a way that is most relevant and effective to their local context and beneficiaries.

All member organizations will be expected to contribute substantively and according to their capacities to the collective effort around at least one of the Strategic Priorities. As has been emphasized throughout this Strategy, a key strength of WONGOSOL is the diversity of its membership, which work primarily on national issues. While a key Strategic Priority of this Strategic Plan is supporting their work and developing their capacity, the contribution of members to the collective effort is also significant.

7.2 Risk Analysis and Mitigation Measures:

Type of Risk	Livelihoods	Influence on Action	Mitigation Measures
<u>Political:</u> The electioneering period (2023) will remain largely peaceful and the outcome of elections not lead to civil unrest that could cause significant disruption to the implementation of the strategy	Medium	High	Keep close relations with relevant government ministries to ensure updates are obtained
<u>Physical:</u> Bad road condition- while there is effort to improve the road condition across the country, land travel is still proven very challenging adversely affecting the timely delivery of activities especially during the rainy season. Unexpected changes in the weather pattern may derail the planning and cause unexpected delays in implementation.	Medium Medium	Medium High	Consistent review meetings to be held throughout the implementation period to monitor the strategy implementation.
<u>Economic:</u> Sufficient funding will be secured to implement the strategy in its entirety. Overall costs of procurement of goods and services escalate beyond projected levels	Medium	High	Allow for costs adjustment in the calculation of costs as per implementation plan and budget
<u>Environmental:</u> Weather conditions worsen, making it difficult to carry out field activities and impossible to transport materials and staff to field locations	Medium	High	Consider local weather data in planning of activities and preposition materials in advance.
<u>Social:</u> Communities inhibited from participation by local customs and beliefs	Medium	Medium	Consider local norms in planning and involve beneficiaries in planning.