



# Strategy for the Gender Responsive Mediation and Coordination Mechanism (GMCM) of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR)



Kingdom of the Netherlands

Implemented by



Presented to:  
Deutsche Gesellschaft für  
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH  
Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1-5  
65760 Eschborn, Germany

A publication of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), co-financed by the Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, through the project “Cooperation on peace, security and responsible resource governance in the Great Lakes Region of Africa”. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the ICGLR and GIZ and do not necessarily reflect the views of the DGIS or the BMZ.

Multi Country

Prepared by:

Dr. José Pascal da Rocha, GFA Team Leader

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Introduction.....	5
2	Situational Analysis .....	6
	2.1 Status.....	6
	2.2 Challenges .....	9
	2.3 Justification .....	11
	2.3.1 Continuous processes: Nairobi and Luanda.....	11
3	Strategic Vision, Goals, Objectives and Interventions .....	14
	3.1 Vision .....	14
	3.2 Goals and Objectives .....	15
	3.3 Conceptual framework.....	16
	3.4 Strategic objectives.....	17
	3.5 Strategic interventions.....	18
4	Institutional Arrangements.....	21
	4.1 Mediation Coordination Unit - Attached to the Secretariat .....	21
	4.2 Integration and Alignment Across ICGLR Structures:.....	21
	4.3 Conflict analysis .....	22
	4.4 Linkages with Decentralized Institutions.....	22
	4.5 Coordination with African Union Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) .....	22
	4.6 Additional Linkages for Effective Coordination.....	23
	4.7 Mediation coordination – Communication systems.....	25
	4.7.1 Team-level coordination .....	26
	4.7.2 Country-level coordination .....	26
	4.7.3 International-level coordination .....	26
	4.7.4 Overview of coordination architecture and decision making.....	27
	4.8 Regional integrated approach.....	27
5	Monitoring and Evaluation.....	29
	5.1 Key Elements of the Framework.....	29
	5.2 Components of the Framework .....	29
	5.3 Strategies .....	30
	5.4 Resources.....	30
	5.5 Timelines .....	31
	5.6 Reporting and Accountability.....	31
6	Looking forward.....	32
7	Annexes.....	33
	7.1 A general overview of mediation .....	34
	7.2 SOP.....	35
	7.3 Terms of Reference Pool of Mediators.....	36
	7.4 Terms of References CoP .....	37

7.5 Draft Op Budget (3 Years) .....38  
7.6 Gender Responsive Coordination Mechanism Guidance Note .....39

## ACRONYMS

AC	Advisory Council
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
AU	African Union
CAR	Central Africa Republic
CoP	Community of Practice
DES	Deputy Executive Secretary
DGG	Democracy and Good Governance
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAC	East African Community
ED&RI	Economic Development and Regional Integration
EVJM	Extended Joint Verification Mission
ES/ICGLR	Executive Secretariat of International Conference on Great Lakes Region
GMCM	Gender responsive mediation coordination mechanism
H&SI	Humanitarian and Social Issues
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
IT	Information Technology
ICGLR	International Conference on Great Lakes Region
JIFC	Joint Intelligence Fusion Center
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
LMRC	Lusaka Mwanawasa Regional Center
MCH	Mediation Coordination Hub
NAP	National Action Plan
NCM	National Coordination Mechanism
P&S	Peace and Security
PSD	Peace and Security Directorate
RIMC	Regional Interministerial Meeting
RINR	Regional Initiative on Natural Resources
RM	Regional Mechanism
RMC	Regional Mediation Council
RTF	Regional Training Facility
RSS	Republic of South Sudan
SADC	South African Development Community
SFRD	Special Fund for Reconstruction and development
ToRs	Terms of References
HR	Human Resources

## PREFACE



The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), through its Program on Peace and Security, has long been at the forefront of efforts to promote peace, security, and stability in our region. Through our mediation initiatives, we initiated and facilitated dialogue, fostered reconciliation, and contributed to conflict resolution in some of the most challenging disputes affecting our Member States. ICGLR has played a crucial role in mediating peace efforts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), most notably through its facilitation of the Nairobi Declarations of 2013, which contributed to the

surrender of the M23 rebel group and set the stage for broader stabilization efforts.

Additionally, ICGLR has been deeply engaged in Burundi's peace process, helping to ease tensions and support political dialogue during periods of instability. Our mediation interventions in the Central African Republic (CAR) and South Sudan have reinforced diplomatic efforts to end hostilities and address the humanitarian crises that often accompany protracted conflicts. Through the Joint Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism (EJVM) and Joint Intelligence Fusion Centre (JIFC), ICGLR has also provided essential conflict-monitoring mechanisms that have helped to de-escalate regional tensions. These security and intelligence specialized institutions have worked hard to mediate the tensions between DRC and Rwanda, Burundi and Rwanda, Uganda and Rwanda, South Sudan and Sudan, to name a few.

Despite these successes, we recognize that sustainable peace cannot be achieved without women's full, equal, and meaningful participation. Gender-sensitive mediation is not simply about inclusivity – it is about effectiveness. Women and marginalized groups experience conflicts differently, and their perspectives are critical in shaping solutions that address the root causes of violence and instability. Research and practice have shown that peace agreements are more likely to be implemented and endure when women play a substantive role in the process.

It is in this spirit that we have developed the Gender-Responsive Mediation Coordination Mechanism.

This mechanism aims to strengthen our ability to mainstream gender perspectives in mediation processes across the Great Lakes Region. Enhancing coordination, capacity-building, and knowledge-sharing among mediators will ensure that gender considerations are embedded in every phase of conflict resolution – from early warning and prevention to negotiation and post-

conflict reconstruction. Our goal is to create a more inclusive, more effective, and more sustainable mediation framework that reflects the diverse realities of our societies. This is timely in these circumstances of escalation of the conflict between the DRC and the M23 and its allies.

A stronger and more effective ICGLR requires mediation processes that are inclusive, representative, and grounded in gender equity. We call upon Member States, civil society organizations, regional institutions, and international partners to support and engage with this initiative. Together, we can create a peacebuilding architecture that ensures no voice is left unheard and that sustainable peace is a reality for all.

Dr Mubita Luwabelwa  
Executive Secretary,  
International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to express our sincere appreciation to the ICGLR Member States for their invaluable collaboration and insights in formulating the Gender-Responsive Mediation Coordination Mechanism (GMCM). Member States' contributions have been fundamental in crafting a robust and effective Regional Mediation Strategy.

We are also grateful to GIZ for their substantial technical and financial support throughout this initiative. Special recognition is extended to Dr. José Pascal da Rocha, Team Leader at GFA Consulting GmbH, whose expert guidance in conflict resolution and mediation has been crucial in enhancing this document. His commitment to gender responsiveness has significantly enriched the strategy's scope and potential impact.

This Regional Mediation Strategy could not have been a success without the wisdom of the ICGLR management, especially the leadership of ICGLR Executive Secretary, Ambassador João Samuel Caholo. We acknowledge the significant contributions of Mr. Jean Eudes Bisonga, Dr. Emmanuel Makumba Mali and Mr. Simon Nibizi from the Department of Peace and Security, whose collaborative efforts have markedly advanced the development of this document.

Our gratitude extends to the dedicated staff of the ICGLR Secretariat. Their diligent work, operational support, and insightful feedback have ensured that the GMCM aligns with regional priorities and fosters an atmosphere of collaboration and inclusivity among all key stakeholders.

Furthermore, we recognize the indispensable role of civil society organizations, women's networks, and youth groups. Their advocacy and grassroots perspectives are essential in shaping an approach that is deeply anchored in inclusivity and local realities.

Together, this collective endeavor promises to enhance our capacity for effective mediation, promote sustainable peace and security, and pave the way for a future where all communities in the Great Lakes Region can thrive.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to express our sincere appreciation to the ICGLR Member States for their invaluable collaboration and insights in formulating the Gender-Responsive Mediation Coordination Mechanism (GMCM). Member States' contributions have been fundamental in crafting a robust and effective Regional Mediation Strategy.

We are also grateful to GIZ for their substantial technical and financial support throughout this initiative. Special recognition is extended to Dr. José Pascal da Rocha, Team Leader at GFA Consulting GmbH, whose expert guidance in conflict resolution and mediation has been crucial in enhancing this document. His commitment to gender responsiveness has significantly enriched the strategy's scope and potential impact.

This Regional Mediation Strategy could not have been a success without the wisdom of the ICGLR management, especially the leadership of ICGLR Executive Secretary, Ambassador João Samuel Caholo. We acknowledge the significant contributions of Mr. Jean Eudes Bisonga, Dr. Emmanuel Makumba Mali and Mr. Simon Nibizi from the Department of Peace and Security, whose collaborative efforts have markedly advanced the development of this document.

Our gratitude extends to the dedicated staff of the ICGLR Secretariat. Their diligent work, operational support, and insightful feedback have ensured that the GMCM aligns with regional priorities and fosters an atmosphere of collaboration and inclusivity among all key stakeholders.

Furthermore, we recognize the indispensable role of civil society organizations, women's networks, and youth groups. Their advocacy and grassroots perspectives are essential in shaping an approach that is deeply anchored in inclusivity and local realities.

Together, this collective endeavor promises to enhance our capacity for effective mediation, promote sustainable peace and security, and pave the way for a future where all communities in the Great Lakes Region can thrive.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The strategy for the gender-responsive mediation and coordination mechanism (herein: GMCM) of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) outlines a comprehensive approach to enhance the effectiveness and inclusivity of regional mediation efforts. This mechanism seeks to address the complex socio-political challenges of the Great Lakes Region by integrating gender perspectives into all aspects of conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and governance. The strategy aligns with international frameworks, such as the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda and regional initiatives under the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA).

## CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION

The Great Lakes Region faces persistent conflicts driven by historical grievances, governance weaknesses, and resource exploitation, compounded by gender-based violence and the exclusion of women from peace processes. Mediation efforts in the region have achieved mixed results owing to fragmented approaches, insufficient capacity, and limited inclusivity. A gender-responsive coordination mechanism is deemed essential to address these gaps, improve the outcomes of peace processes, and ensure that women's voices, experiences, and leadership are included systematically.

## VISION

The vision of the GMCM is to establish a robust and inclusive framework that coordinates all mediation efforts, while taking into account the integration of gender considerations into account. It seeks to foster sustainable peace, equity, and justice by creating mechanisms in which gender equality is a core principle of the ICGLR peace and security agenda.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This strategy focuses on the following.

- To establish a robust and effective mediation coordination mechanism that can address and resolve conflicts in the Great Lakes Region through inclusive, transparent, and sustainable gender responsive mediation efforts.
- To institutionalize gender inclusion, enhance mediation effectiveness, and address gender-based challenges in conflict and peace processes.
- To ensure effective linkages between all ICGLR executive structures, decentralized institutions, and national coordination mechanisms.
- To enhance regional and local ownership and capacity for gender-responsive practices.

## KEY STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS

### 1. Institutional Development:

- Establish a Mediation Coordination Unit (MCU) within the ICGLR Secretariat to centralize gender-responsive mediation efforts.
- Develop gender-focused training programs and resource hubs.

### 2. Operational Planning:

- Integrating gender considerations into conflict analysis, strategy development, and implementation.
- Build networks of female mediators and designate gender focal points within member states.

### 3. Stakeholder Engagement:

- Strengthen partnerships with civil society, regional economic communities (RECs), and international bodies such as the African Union (AU) and the Group of Friends of Mediation (GoFM).
- Enhance inclusivity by involving women, youth, and marginalized groups in mediation processes.

### 4. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Implementing a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to track gender outcomes, assess progress, and ensure accountability.

### 5. Sustainability Planning

- Transition from start-up resources to long-term operational strategies, leveraging local capacity and regional institutions.

## INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The GMCM operates under a centralized Mediation Coordination Unit, linked to the ICGLR's executive and decentralized structures, including:

- National Coordination Mechanisms (NCMs) to localize efforts.
- Regional institutions, such as the Levy Mwanawasa Regional Center and the Regional Training Facility for technical and capacity-building support.

## **ALIGNMENT WITH REGIONAL AND GLOBAL FRAMEWORKS**

The mechanism aligns with the APSA, the AU's Silencing the Guns initiative, and global frameworks such as UNSCR 1325. It emphasizes subsidiarity and leverages regional expertise while contributing to continental strategies.

## **EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

- Robust coordination mechanism, involving all ICGLR executive structures, decentralized institutions, and national coordination mechanisms.
- Increased participation of women in mediation and decision-making roles.
- Stronger regional ownership of gender-responsive practices.
- Enhanced credibility and legitimacy of ICGLR-led peacebuilding initiatives.

This strategy underscores the necessity of collaborative, inclusive, and systematic approaches to address the complex challenges of the Great Lakes Region. It highlights the transformative potential of integrating gender perspectives into mediation efforts to build a more inclusive and sustainable peace for all stakeholders in the region.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) is an intergovernmental organization composed of 12 Member States<sup>1</sup> in the African Great Lakes Region. It was established in 2004 to address the regional dimensions of political instability and conflicts within and between these countries. Rich in natural resources and biodiversity, the African Great Lakes Region has nevertheless experienced some of the most intractable conflicts ever witnessed in Africa. It has been the site of numerous wars and cross-border conflicts in past decades, some of which remain unresolved. The violent conflicts of the 1990s, especially the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, as well as the civil wars in Burundi, starting with the assassination of President Ndadaye Melchior in 1993 and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) as of 1996 and onward, have had dramatic impacts. The reoccurring violent conflicts have resulted in indescribable suffering inflicted upon the people of the region, with traumatized citizens, hundreds of thousands of refugees, economic stagnation, and ongoing political tensions between neighboring countries as well as unemployment and under-employment, uneven wealth distribution, and above all, the loss of millions of lives.

Several initiatives have been put in place to find lasting solutions to conflicts plaguing the region. Following in the footsteps of this search for a solution, the United Nations has put in place a Strategy for Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region<sup>2</sup>. The strategy identifies the main root causes of instability, which are often linked to

- Grievances over historical legacies dating back to the post-independence period and the colonial era, including borders, which in many instances have separated ethnic communities from the instrumentalization of ethnicity by some actors for political gains.
- Exclusion of access to land, power, and resources
- Weaknesses in governance as well as limited or absent state authority in some areas, especially border areas.
- Limited access to justice or a lack of access to justice in some areas has had an impact on the protection of human rights, hampered efforts to strengthen the rule of law, fueled corruption, and contributed to impunity for the perpetrators of serious crimes, including crimes against humanity.

The conflict situation is exacerbated by

- Lack of trust among countries in the region.
- The continued activities of armed groups (also referred to as “negative forces”) in the eastern part of the DRC.
- The illegal exploitation of mineral and other natural resource trade revenues generated

<sup>1</sup> The 12 member states are: Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia

<sup>2</sup> The United Nations has indeed put in place a comprehensive Strategy for Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention, and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region. This strategy, approved by UN Secretary-General António Guterres on October 22, 2020, and launched in January 2021, was developed by the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region. It is designed to guide UN engagement in the region over a ten-year period, aligning with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: <https://ungreatlakes.unmissions.org/un-strategy-great-lakes-region>

through such activities has enabled armed groups to finance their operations, recruit combatants, including young people, and procure weapons.

- Illegal resource-related activities have a multiplier effect on other causes and drivers of instability, including socioeconomic grievances, land disputes, large-scale smuggling, weak institutions, and impunity.
- High numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons
- Existence or risk of statelessness
- Deprivation caused by extreme poverty.

Mediation efforts in the Great Lakes region have yielded mixed results. Successful initiatives often involve comprehensive agreements and strong international support, while failures are marked by a lack of follow-through, insufficient international commitment, and deeply entrenched local grievances. Effective mediation in this region requires sustained engagement, significant resources, and a deep understanding of the complex sociopolitical dynamics at play. The role of regional organizations, such as the ICGLR and the African Union, supported by international actors, remains crucial in fostering long-term peace and stability in the Great Lakes region.

Thus, there is a need to further strengthen both institutional and individual capacities in conducting mediation. Institutionalizing mediation has the advantage of being able to provide adequate analysis and responses to challenges of peace and security

## 2. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

### 2.1. STATUS

Regarding challenges to peace and security, the Great Lakes region has experienced prolonged conflict and instability. Mediation initiatives have been crucial in attempting to resolve these conflicts and promote peace. Institutionalizing mediation has the advantage of being able to provide adequate analysis and responses to challenges of peace and security. A lesson learned about roundtable exercises, organized by the ICGLR Directorate on Peace and Security in June 2022, provided critical insights, including the setup and capacity of ICGLR's mediation capacity, which can be achieved through the establishment of a gender-responsive mediation coordination mechanism (GMCM). Whereas the ICGLR already has a track record of discreet diplomacy and other peace monitoring mechanisms, one of the identified lessons concluded that in order to improve effectiveness and efficiency, all mediation or peace monitoring initiatives need to be aggregated and brought under one coordinating umbrella.

The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) is a regional intergovernmental organization comprising 12 member states in the Great Lakes region of Africa. Various instruments and institutions are part of the ICGLR framework, such as:

#### **STRUCTURAL SET-UP:**

- **Summit of Heads of State and Government:** The highest decision-making body of the ICGLR, comprising heads of state and governments of member countries. It meets regularly to set policies and provide strategic direction.
- **Troika:** The “Troika” of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) refers to a leadership structure within the organization that ensures continuity and effective coordination in its operations. The Troika is composed of three key elements: The current, out-going and in-coming chairperson. The Troika structure is an important element of the ICGLR's governance, ensuring that the organization remains effective in its mission to promote peace, security, and development in the Great Lakes Region.
- **Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee (RIMC):** Composed of ministers of foreign affairs/ or external relations from member states responsible for the ICGLR's key areas. The RIMC prepares and implements decisions made during the summit.
- **Conference Secretariat:** The executive arm of the ICGLR, responsible for the day-to-day operations and implementation of decisions. It is headed by an Executive Secretary.
- **National Coordination Mechanisms (NCMs):** Established in each member state to coordinate and implement ICGLR activities at the national level.
- **Decentralized Institutions (Art 26 (2) (d), ICGLR Pact):**
  - **Levy Mwanawasa Regional Centre on Democracy and Good Governance (LMRC);** it was established in 2011 and is mandated to conduct operational

research and analysis to contribute to policy-making processes coordinated by the Secretariat.

- **Regional Training Facility (RTF) on SGBV, Kampala;** was established in 2014 pursuant to ICGLR Protocol on Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against women and children. The mandate is to “...train and sensitize police units, judicial officers, medical officers, social workers and other categories of persons who handle cases of sexual violence.
- **Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism (EJVM), Goma;** It was launched in September 2012 in Goma and comprises of military experts from the ICGLR Member States, South Africa, MONUSCO and the AU. It monitors and carries out investigations on security incidents.
- **Joint Intelligence Fusion Centre (JIFC), Goma;** It is made up of two representatives each from the 11 Member States, and is managed by a rotating Regional Coordination Committee (RCC). It has a specific mandate focused on enhancing regional security and addressing the complex challenges of armed groups and cross-border crime, and illegal exploitation of natural resources in the Great Lakes Region, particularly in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The JIFC reports to the RCC and the Chair of the ICGLR Chiefs of Defense Staff who in turn reports to the Committee of Ministers of Defence.
- **Joint Follow-up Mechanism (JFM) on the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), Kasese;** The JFM was established on 18th February 2017 and it is a collaborative framework aimed at addressing the security threats posed by the ADF, an armed group operating in the Great Lakes Region, particularly in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Uganda. It comprises experts on counterterrorism from the DRC, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

### REGIONAL PROGRAMS<sup>3</sup>:

Here are the key regional programs of the ICGLR:

#### 1. Peace and Security

- **Joint Security Management of Common Borders Program:** This program aims to enhance the security of shared borders among member states by promoting joint patrols, intelligence sharing, and cooperation in combating cross-border crime.
- **Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Resettlement, and Reintegration (DDRRR):** This initiative focuses on the disarmament and reintegration of former combatants, particularly those involved in armed groups in the region, to promote long-term peace and stability.

---

3 <https://icglr.org/programs/>

## 2. Democracy and Good Governance

- Regional Program on Democracy and Good Governance: This program supports the strengthening of democratic institutions and processes in member states, including the promotion of free and fair elections, the rule of law, and the fight against corruption.
- Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities: This program is aimed at preventing genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity by promoting early warning mechanisms, accountability, and capacity-building within member states.

## 3. Economic Development and Regional Integration

- Regional Infrastructure Development Program: This program focuses on improving infrastructure connectivity in the Great Lakes Region, including transport, energy, and communication networks, to facilitate trade and regional integration.
- Program on Natural Resources Management: This initiative promotes the sustainable and legal exploitation of natural resources in the region, combating illegal mining and trade while ensuring that resource wealth benefits the local populations.

## 4. Humanitarian and Social Issues

- Program for the Protection of Vulnerable Groups: This program addresses the needs of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), women, children, and other vulnerable groups in the region. It includes initiatives for protection, humanitarian assistance, and social reintegration.
- Program on Gender, Women, and Children's Rights: This initiative promotes gender equality and the rights of women and children, with a focus on preventing sexual and gender-based violence and supporting survivors.

## 5. Cross-Cutting Issues

- Program on Regional Cooperation in Judicial Matters: This program enhances judicial cooperation among member states, particularly in areas such as extradition, mutual legal assistance, and enforcement of judicial decisions across borders.
- Program on Environmental Protection and Climate Change: This initiative focuses on addressing environmental challenges and the impacts of climate change in the region and promoting sustainable development and disaster risk reduction.

## 6. Youth Empowerment and Education

- Youth Empowerment Program: This program aims to engage and empower young people in the Great Lakes Region, providing them with education, vocational training, and opportunities to participate in peacebuilding and development efforts.

## 7. Regional Capacity Building

- Training and Capacity Building Program: This program supports the capacity building of government institutions, civil society, and other stakeholders in the region, enhancing their ability to implement the ICGLR protocols and regional initiatives effectively.

## 8. Regional Information and Communication

- Program on Information Management and Communication: This program focuses on improving information sharing, transparency, and communication within the region, using media and other platforms to support peacebuilding and development.

### FORA:

In addition to the aforementioned decentralized organs, the ICGLR consists of several key forums designed to facilitate dialogue, cooperation, and coordination among member states and stakeholders. These forums focus on various aspects of peace, security, democracy, development, and humanitarian issues within the Great Lakes Region.

Here is a list of the main ICGLR fora:

### 1. Parliamentary Forum:

- A platform for parliamentarians from member states to discuss and promote legislative measures that support the ICGLR's objectives. It fosters inter-parliamentary cooperation and democratic governance.

### 2. Civil Society Forum:

- Engages civil society organizations in the region to contribute to the ICGLR's initiatives. This forum ensures that the voices of non-governmental actors are heard during the decision-making process.

### 3. Youth Forum: Focusing

- on the involvement of young people in the region. This forum addresses issues such as youth empowerment, education, and employment, ensuring that the younger generation is part of the peacebuilding process.

### 4. Women's Forum:

- Dedicated to promoting gender equality and empowering women in the Great Lakes Region. It addresses issues such as women's rights, participation in governance, peacebuilding processes and protection from gender-based violence.

### 5. Private Sector Forum:

- Engages the business community in the region to foster economic development and cooperation. This forum focuses on creating a conducive environment for investment and trade among member states.

These instruments and institutions collectively aim to address the multifaceted challenges faced by the Great Lakes region, promoting lasting peace, security, stability, and development.

It is in this context that the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) employs

a multifaceted mediation strategy aimed at fostering peace, security, and stability in the region. Here are the key components of their strategy:

### **1. Regional Cooperation and Capacity Building:**

- The ICGLR emphasizes improving national and regional cooperation to address transnational crime and terrorism. This involves enacting counterterrorism legislation, enhancing security measures, and improving technological integration.

### **2. Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR):**

- The ICGLR implements comprehensive DDR programs for ex-combatants. This includes creating opportunities for demobilized individuals to reintegrate into society and supporting sustainable economic development as a peace driver.

### **3. Economic Development and Good Governance:**

- The ICGLR promotes economic cooperation and integration, transparency, anti-corruption measures, and good governance initiatives. These efforts aim to boost social and economic development, contributing to lasting peace in the region.

### **4. Non-Military Measures and Mediation:**

- The organization focuses on non-military measures, including mediation and conflict prevention strategies. The establishment of the Contact and Coordination Group's Operational Cell on non-military measures assists in neutralizing armed groups and fostering dialogue.

### **5. Women and Youth Participation:**

- The ICGLR advances the role of women and youth in mediation, peacebuilding, and conflict prevention. This is part of their broader effort to implement the Women, Peace, and Security agenda and the Youth, Peace, and Security agenda in the region.

### **6. Combating Illicit Trade and Resource Exploitation:**

- Addressing the illicit exploitation of natural resources is crucial to the ICGLR's strategy. The organization works to implement recommendations from high-level workshops to curtail the financing of armed groups through illegal resource trade.

Overall, the ICGLR's mediation strategy is comprehensive, integrating military and non-military measures, promoting regional cooperation, and ensuring the involvement of diverse societal groups in the peace process.

## **2.2. CHALLENGES**

Effective coordination in the mediation efforts of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) faces several key challenges:

## 1. Diverse Interests and Agendas:

- The member states of the ICGLR have diverse political, economic, and security interests, often leading to conflicting agendas. This diversity makes it difficult to achieve a unified approach to mediation and conflict resolution.

## 2. Weak Institutional Capacity:

- The ICGLR often lacks the necessary institutional capacity and resources to effectively coordinate mediation efforts. This includes limited funding, insufficient staffing, and inadequate infrastructure, which hamper the organization's ability to implement and sustain mediation processes.

## 3. Lack of Political Will:

- The commitment of member states to the mediation process is often inconsistent. Some governments may prioritize national interests over regional stability or may lack the political will to make necessary compromises, undermining the effectiveness of mediation efforts.

## 4. Fragmented Regional Dynamics:

- The Great Lakes region is characterized by complex and fragmented political and security dynamics. The presence of numerous armed groups, cross-border conflicts, and political instability in member states complicate the coordination of a coherent and comprehensive mediation strategy.

## 5. Limited Inclusivity:

- Effective mediation requires the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders, including civil society, opposition groups, and marginalized communities. The ICGLR has sometimes struggled to ensure broad-based participation, which can lead to agreements that lack legitimacy and support from key actors.

## 6. External Influences:

- The involvement of external actors, such as international organizations, neighboring countries, and global powers, can complicate the mediation process. These actors may have their own interests and agendas, which can clash with the objectives of the ICGLR and hinder coordination efforts.

## 7. Communication and Information Sharing:

- Effective coordination relies on timely and accurate communication and information sharing among member states and stakeholders. The ICGLR has faced challenges in establishing efficient communication channels, leading to delays and misunderstandings in the mediation process.

## 7. Trust Deficit:

- Historical grievances and mistrust among member states and within states can impede the mediation process. Building trust among conflicting parties and between the ICGLR and stakeholders is crucial for successful mediation, but this is often a slow and difficult process.

Addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort to strengthen the institutional capacity of the ICGLR, foster political will and commitment among member states, promote inclusivity, and enhance communication and trust-building measures.

Evidence of the lack of effective coordination in the mediation efforts of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) can be observed in several key areas:

### 1. Fragmented Mediation Efforts:

- The ICGLR has faced significant challenges in coordinating mediation efforts due to the complex and interconnected nature of conflicts in the region. The reliance on insider mediators, while innovative, has highlighted the difficulties in aligning various mediation strategies across different countries and conflict zones. This fragmented approach often results in inconsistent and less effective outcomes.

### 2. Security and Humanitarian Challenges:

- Persistent security issues, particularly in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, have further complicated coordination efforts. The involvement of numerous armed groups and the recurring violence exacerbate the difficulties in implementing coherent and unified mediation strategies. The lack of effective coordination is evident in the ongoing tensions and the inability to establish lasting peace despite numerous initiatives and agreements.

### 3. Limited Involvement of Civil Society:

- There is a noticeable gap in the involvement of civil society organizations, particularly women's groups, in high-level consultations and decision-making processes. This exclusion hampers the development of comprehensive and inclusive peacebuilding strategies, which are essential for addressing the root causes of conflict and fostering long-term stability. Strengthening the participation of civil society is crucial for building bridges between communities and governments and ensuring accountability.

### 4. Resource Constraints and Organizational Capacity: T

- The ICGLR's capacity to coordinate effectively is also hindered by resource constraints and organizational limitations. While there have been efforts to train mediators and improve coordination mechanisms, the scale of the challenges and the limited resources available often lead to suboptimal outcomes. This situation underscores the need for enhanced support from international partners and a more robust institutional framework within the ICGLR.

Several cases highlight these difficulties:

### **1. Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) Crisis:**

- During the political crisis in the DRC, coordination between the African Union (AU), ICGLR, and other regional bodies was problematic. Despite joint efforts, there was a lack of coherent strategy and inclusion of key opposition groups. For instance, the exclusion of the main opposition coalition, le Rassemblement, from peace talks led to the Catholic Church pulling out in protest, citing government crackdowns and violence against political activists. This undermined the credibility and effectiveness of the mediation efforts.

### **2. Armed Groups and Regional Tensions:**

- The ongoing conflict involving various armed groups in eastern DRC has been exacerbated by tensions between neighboring countries, such as Rwanda and Uganda. Despite the ICGLR's involvement, the lack of a unified and comprehensive approach has allowed these conflicts to persist, highlighting the need for more effective coordination among regional and international actors.

### **3. Humanitarian Impact:**

- The ICGLR has struggled to coordinate responses to the humanitarian crises resulting from conflicts in the region. The displacement of thousands of people, including many women and children, has been poorly managed, with insufficient protection and support mechanisms in place. This has been particularly evident in North Kivu, where local and community peacebuilding initiatives have not been adequately integrated into the broader mediation efforts.

The ICGLR's National Coordination Mechanisms (NCMs) also highlight challenges in coordination. A recent induction workshop in December 2023 aimed to address high turnover rates and improve the performance of NCMs. This effort underscores the difficulties in maintaining consistent and effective coordination across member states, which hampers the overall implementation of the ICGLR's strategic objectives.

These factors collectively illustrate the challenges and limitations faced by the ICGLR in effectively coordinating mediation efforts across the Great Lakes Region. Enhanced cooperation, increased involvement of civil society, and stronger institutional support are necessary to address these issues and improve the effectiveness of mediation initiatives.

## **2.3. JUSTIFICATION**

A better coordination mechanism is essential to address these challenges and improve the effectiveness of mediation initiatives in the Great Lakes Region. The proposed Mediation

Coordination Unit (MCU)<sup>4</sup> for the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) would offer a centralized function to monitor and coordinate efforts, ensuring:

- **Unified Strategy:** Developing a cohesive and comprehensive strategy for mediation efforts.
- **Resource Allocation:** Efficient use of resources and capacity building for mediators.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Ensuring inclusive processes that involve all relevant stakeholders.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Continuous monitoring and evaluation of mediation efforts to adapt and improve strategies.
- **Transparency and Communication:** Clear communication with the public and stakeholders to build trust and support for mediation initiatives.

Coordinated action linked to sustainable efforts to ensure peace and security in the region is evidenced throughout a series of continuous processes, such as the Nairobi and Luanda processes.

### 2.3.1. CONTINUOUS PROCESSES: NAIROBI AND LUANDA

The “Nairobi” and “Luanda” processes refer to two parallel and interrelated diplomatic efforts aimed at resolving conflicts and promoting peace and stability in the Great Lakes Region of Africa, particularly focusing on the situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)<sup>5</sup>. These processes are spearheaded by regional leaders and organizations, including the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR).

#### 2.3.1.1. THE NAIROBI PROCESS

The Nairobi Process is primarily associated with efforts led by the EAC to address the security and political crises in the eastern DRC, particularly involving armed groups like the March 23 Movement (M23) and other militias operating in the region. Key Points of the Nairobi Process:

- **Diplomatic Mediation:** Initiated by Kenya, the Nairobi Process involves diplomatic efforts to bring various armed groups in the eastern DRC to the negotiation table. Former Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta has played a key role as a facilitator and mediator in these talks<sup>6</sup>.
- **Dialogues with Armed Groups:** The process focuses on facilitating dialogues between the DRC government and various rebel groups, aiming to integrate them into the national political framework, demobilize combatants, and reintegrate them into society.

Regional Involvement<sup>7</sup>: The process involves not just Kenya but also other ICGLR member states and regional organizations like the East African Community (EAC). It represents a regional effort to stabilize the eastern DRC by addressing the root causes of conflict, including issues of

<sup>4</sup> For the purpose of the Zero Draft, the targeted unit will be called either Mediation Coordination Unit or Mediation Coordination Function. ICGLR Stakeholders to decide about the label.

<sup>5</sup> See for example: <https://www.eac.int/nairobi-process-activities/political-track/2919-the-10th-extraordinary-summit-of-the-international-conference-on-the-great-lakes-region-icglr>

<sup>6</sup> See also: <https://www.eac.int/press-releases/283-peace-security/nairobi-process>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/whatsinblue/2024/04/great-lakes-region-briefing-and-consultations-6.php>

governance, land rights, and resource control.

### 2.3.1.2. THE LUANDA PROCESS

The Luanda Process is led by Angola (in the person of its president as AU-designated mediator) and focuses on addressing the broader regional dimensions of the conflict in the eastern DRC, particularly the tense relations between the DRC and Rwanda, which have been strained by accusations of Rwandan support for rebel groups like the M23<sup>8</sup>. Key Points of the Luanda Process:

- **Bilateral Dialogue:** The process primarily involves direct dialogue between the DRC and Rwanda, mediated by Angola's President João Lourenço. It seeks to de-escalate tensions, build confidence, and foster cooperation between the two countries.
- **Coordination and Mediation:** Angola, under its AU mandate, has been playing a crucial role in mediating between the conflicting parties. The Luanda Process has facilitated dialogue, leading to agreements on ceasefire and other de-escalation measures. The roadmap also involves establishing an Ad-hoc Observation Mechanism led by an Angolan general to ensure compliance with the agreements
- **Ceasefire and Security Guarantees:** One of the main objectives of the Luanda Process is to establish a ceasefire and security guarantees along the DRC-Rwanda border, ensuring that cross-border violence does not escalate further.
- **Regional Peacekeeping:** The Luanda Process also discusses the deployment of regional forces to monitor and ensure compliance with ceasefire agreements and other security arrangements, often in coordination with existing peacekeeping missions like the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO).
- **Integration with Regional Efforts:** The Luanda Process is part of broader regional peace efforts, working in parallel with the Nairobi Process under the East African Community (EAC). While the Luanda Process focuses on diplomatic relations and specific security issues involving the DRC and Rwanda, the Nairobi Process addresses the involvement of various armed groups in the conflict.

---

8 See also: <https://icglr.org/mini-summit-on-peace-and-security-in-the-eastern-region-of-the-democratic-republic-of-the-congo-final-communique-luanda-angola-23-november-2022/>

### 2.3.1. 3. ROLE OF THE ICGLR:

The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) plays a crucial role in both processes as a regional framework for peace and stability. The ICGLR supports these processes by:

- **Providing a Platform:** The ICGLR offers a platform for dialogue and cooperation among member states, helping to coordinate the Nairobi and Luanda processes with other regional initiatives.
- **Monitoring Implementation:** The ICGLR is involved in monitoring the implementation of agreements reached through these processes, ensuring that commitments made by the parties are upheld.
- **Facilitating Regional Cooperation:** The ICGLR works to harmonize the efforts of different states and regional organizations, ensuring a comprehensive approach to resolving the conflicts in the eastern DRC and the broader Great Lakes Region.

As seen in the afore mentioned brief examples, mediation in this region requires sustained engagement, significant resources, and a deep understanding of the complex socio-political dynamics at play. By establishing a structured and coordinated approach, the ICGLR can enhance the effectiveness of mediation efforts, ultimately contributing to lasting peace and stability in the Great Lakes Region. The Mediation Coordination Unit (or Function) would have the task to support key decision-makers in mediation efforts, based on gender-responsive conflict analysis, planning, management and coordination of mediation initiatives, in close collaboration and coordination with existing institutional structures within the ICGLR.

In addition to the afore mentioned, it is essential to further strengthen and advance the Women, Peace and Security agenda, as embodied in UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and its 9 further implementation resolutions. A gender-responsive coordination mechanism within the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) is justified both normatively and practically, given the region's unique challenges and the broader global imperatives for inclusive peace and security frameworks.

Normatively, the establishment of such a mechanism aligns with international commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment in peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Instruments such as the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, and subsequent resolutions, underscore the importance of integrating gender perspectives in conflict prevention, mediation, and post-conflict reconstruction. These frameworks emphasize that sustainable peace is only achievable when women, who are often disproportionately affected by conflict, are meaningfully involved in decision-making processes. Additionally, the ICGLR's own Protocol on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children and the Declaration of the Heads of State and Government on Gender-Based Violence reflect the region's formal commitment to addressing gender disparities and ensuring women's active

participation in peace processes. A gender-responsive mechanism would institutionalize these commitments, bridging the gap between normative aspirations and operational realities.

Practically, a gender-responsive approach enhances the efficacy and inclusivity of coordination mechanisms by ensuring that the experiences, needs, and capacities of all stakeholders are accounted for. In the Great Lakes Region, women play significant but often overlooked roles in grassroots peacebuilding, community resilience, and conflict resolution. A coordination mechanism that fails to integrate gender considerations risks perpetuating exclusionary practices and overlooking critical perspectives that could enrich mediation efforts. Furthermore, addressing the pervasive gender-based violence in the region necessitates a coordinated and gender-sensitive approach that prioritizes the protection and empowerment of women and girls while holding perpetrators accountable.

Empirical evidence from conflict mediation and peacebuilding contexts globally demonstrates that processes that actively involve women are more likely to result in sustainable agreements. Women often bring different priorities to the table, emphasizing issues such as justice, reconciliation, and social welfare, which are critical for long-term stability. A gender-responsive coordination mechanism would not only enhance the ICGLR's credibility as a regional body committed to inclusivity but also improve the outcomes of its interventions by fostering holistic and sustainable approaches to peace.

In essence, a gender-responsive coordination mechanism is not merely a matter of aligning with global norms; it is an indispensable strategy for addressing the complex realities of conflict in the Great Lakes Region. By institutionalizing gender considerations, the ICGLR can ensure that its peace and security efforts are more inclusive, effective, and resilient

## 3. STRATEGIC VISION, GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND INTERVENTIONS

### 3.1. VISION

The strategy of the gender-responsive coordination mechanism within the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) is

- To establish a robust and effective mediation coordination mechanism that can address and resolve conflicts in the Great Lakes Region through inclusive, transparent, and sustainable gender responsive mediation efforts.

The vision is to create a robust, inclusive, and institutionalized framework that integrates gender perspectives into all aspects of mediation, conflict prevention, and peacebuilding. This mechanism would address existing challenges in mediation coordination by fostering inclusivity, enhancing the effectiveness of peace processes, and ensuring that gender equality becomes a core principle of the ICGLR's peace and security agenda.

This vision recognizes that mediation and coordination efforts in the Great Lakes Region often lack sufficient gender responsiveness, which undermines the ability to address the root causes and consequences of conflicts effectively. It seeks to transform the current approaches by establishing a system where women's voices, experiences, and leadership are not only recognized but also systematically incorporated at all levels of decision-making. The mechanism would aim to move beyond tokenistic representation to achieve meaningful participation of women in all stages of mediation and peacebuilding.

A gender-responsive coordination mechanism would be designed to tackle persistent challenges, including the underrepresentation of women in mediation roles, the lack of gender-disaggregated data to inform policy and interventions, and the insufficient capacity to address gender-based violence and its implications for peace processes. By institutionalizing gender-responsive practices, the mechanism would address the critical gap in current efforts that often marginalize or overlook gendered dimensions of conflict and peace.

This vision also recognizes the need for better mediation coordination across ICGLR member states and with international partners. A gender-responsive approach would facilitate a more cohesive and systematic integration of gender considerations across all stakeholders. This would include establishing clear guidelines and accountability mechanisms to ensure that mediators, policymakers, and implementers prioritize gender equity. Furthermore, the mechanism would actively engage and empower women's organizations and networks, fostering collaboration between grassroots actors and institutional mediators to strengthen the inclusivity and local ownership of peace processes.

In practical terms, the mechanism would provide training and capacity-building programs for mediators to incorporate gender perspectives, ensure the availability of gender-sensitive conflict analysis tools, and develop monitoring and evaluation systems that prioritize gender outcomes. It would also establish platforms for the meaningful participation of women, including survivors of conflict and gender-based violence, to ensure that their experiences shape the design and implementation of peace initiatives.

Ultimately, the vision for a gender-responsive coordination mechanism in the ICGLR is to create a system that not only addresses the immediate needs of conflict-affected populations but also lays the foundation for long-term, sustainable peace built on principles of inclusivity, equity, and justice. By integrating gender considerations into mediation and coordination efforts, the ICGLR would position itself as a leading example of how regional organizations can bridge normative commitments with practical, transformative action.

## **3.2. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The goals and objectives of a gender-responsive mediation mechanism in the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) are shaped by the regional realities of conflict and peacebuilding and are guided by the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the principle of subsidiarity. These frameworks emphasize the need for context-sensitive, locally driven approaches to peace and security, with a strong commitment to inclusivity and gender equity.

### **GOALS**

#### **1. Promote Gender-Inclusive Mediation:**

- The mechanism aims to institutionalize the meaningful participation of women in all stages of mediation, conflict resolution, and peace processes within the ICGLR. This involves creating opportunities for women to act as mediators, advisors, and decision-makers, ensuring their perspectives are integral to peacebuilding efforts.

#### **2. Strengthen Regional Ownership of Gender-Responsive Practices:**

- Consistent with the principle of subsidiarity, the mechanism seeks to enhance the capacity of ICGLR member states and regional institutions to integrate gender considerations into their mediation processes. This ensures that solutions are rooted in local and regional contexts while aligning with APSA's broader goals.

#### **3. Institutionalize Gender-Responsive Mediation Coordination:**

- The mechanism seeks to institutionalize regional gender-responsive mediation coordination, involving all levels of the ICGLR structures, incl. executive structures, decentralized institutions, national coordination mechanisms, designated fora, and the inclusion and participation of civil society.

#### **4. Contribute to Sustainable Peace and Security:**

- By embedding gender perspectives into mediation, the mechanism aspires to create more inclusive and sustainable peace agreements that address the needs and rights of all segments of society.

### **OBJECTIVES**

#### **1. Institutionalize Gender Responsiveness in Mediation:**

- Develop and implement policies, guidelines, and standards that ensure gender perspectives are systematically integrated into all mediation efforts within the ICGLR. This includes developing gender-sensitive tools for conflict analysis, mediation strategies, and monitoring and evaluation.

#### **2. Build the Capacity of Regional Actors:**

- Provide training and resources to mediators, policymakers, and other stakeholders in ICGLR member states to strengthen their ability to conduct gender-sensitive mediation. This includes empowering women as mediators and negotiators and building networks of women peacebuilders across the region.

#### **3. Enhance Coordination with APSA Structures:**

- Foster stronger collaboration between the ICGLR and APSA's Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), Panel of the Wise, and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to ensure coherence in gender-responsive mediation practices. This supports the principle of subsidiarity by leveraging regional expertise while aligning with continental priorities.

#### **4. Amplify Women's Voices and Representation:**

- Create platforms and mechanisms for meaningful engagement of women, particularly from conflict-affected communities, in mediation and peacebuilding processes. This involves partnering with local women's organizations and networks to ensure their experiences and priorities inform mediation efforts.

#### **5. Monitor and Address Gender-Based Violence:**

- Establish mechanisms for real-time monitoring and reporting of GBV in conflict zones, ensuring it is addressed as a central security issue in mediation efforts. This includes integrating GBV prevention and response measures into peace agreements and mediation frameworks.

#### **6. Promote Accountability and Best Practices:**

- Develop accountability mechanisms to ensure adherence to gender-responsive practices, including regular assessments of gender outcomes in mediation efforts. Additionally, document and share best practices to enhance the ICGLR's and APSA's capacities to deliver inclusive peacebuilding initiatives.

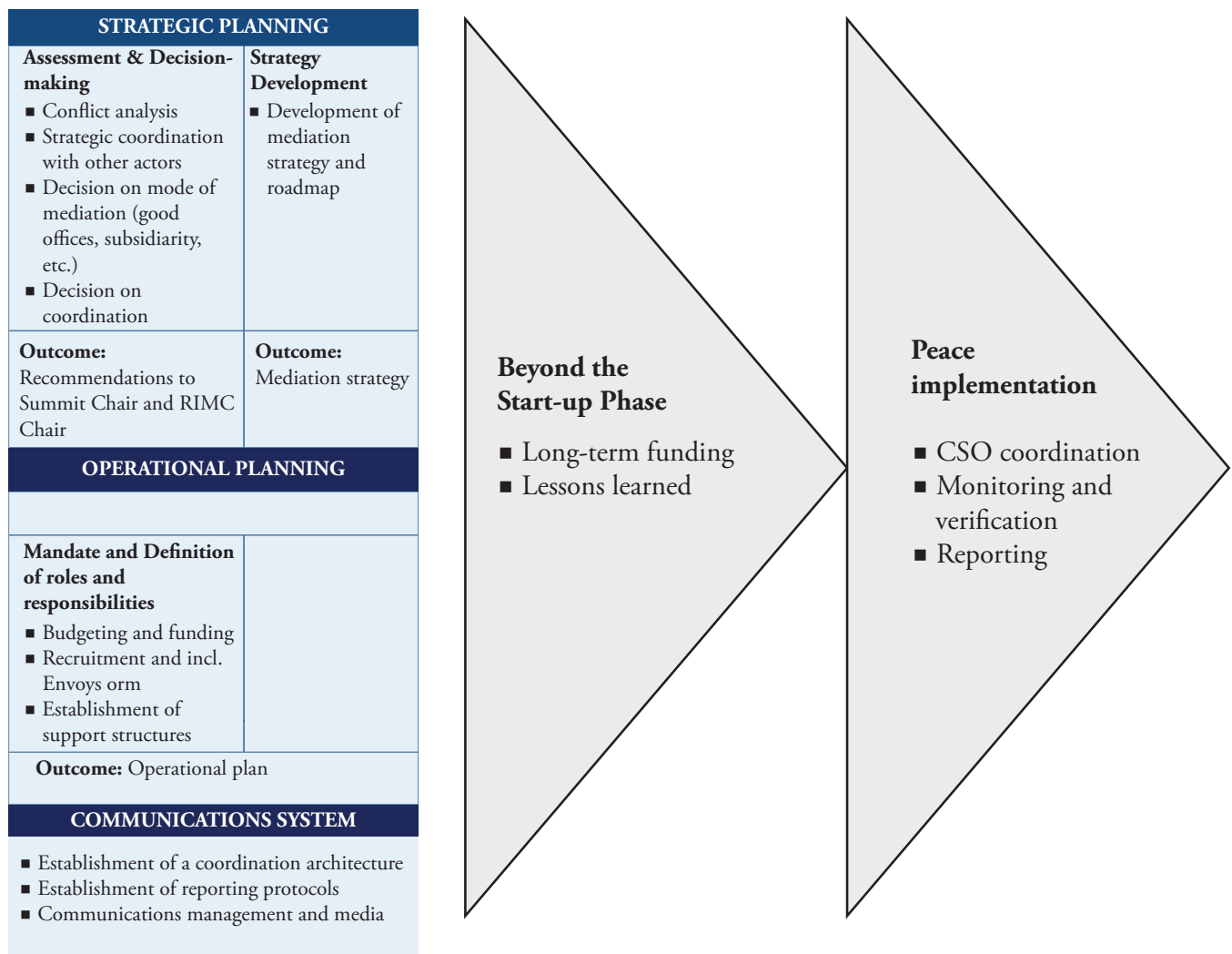
## ALIGNMENT WITH APSA AND SUBSIDIARITY

The mechanism’s design is rooted in APSA’s emphasis on human security and the African Union’s normative frameworks, including the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights and the AU Gender Strategy. It leverages the principle of subsidiarity by enhancing the ICGLR’s role as a regional mediator while fostering synergies with APSA’s continental mechanisms. This ensures that gender-responsive mediation efforts are not only contextually relevant but also aligned with Africa’s broader peace and security agenda.

### 3.3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A coordinated mediation strategy is aiming at consolidating tasks and establishing channels of communication in a vertical and horizontal manner in order to effectively implement the mediation mandate.

The coordinated mediation strategy in a schematic overview:



## 3.2. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The strategic objectives of a gender-responsive coordination mechanism in the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) are designed to institutionalize gender inclusion, enhance mediation effectiveness, and address gender-based challenges in conflict and peace processes. These objectives align with ICGLR's commitments to sustainable peace and the broader frameworks of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda.

Such strategic objectives include, but are not limited to:

### 1. Strategic planning:

- Assessment and decision-making, during which a conflict is assessed, analyzed and categorized and a decision is made on whether, how and with whom to engage is made. Involved stakeholders are EJVM, JIFC, Fora and LMRC, incl. other involved departments and the Situation Room (which covers early warning reports and signals).
- A mediation coordination unit or function coordinates the task to aggregate data, identify channels of communication and to compile a briefing note.
- Outcome: A recommendation is made to the ES in terms of actions to be taken: Either Good Offices or third-party mandated mediation intervention.
- In case of a mediation recommendation, a mediation strategy is being developed to achieve stated mediation objectives.

### 2. Operational planning:

- Identification of resources, systems and partnerships to support the mediation roadmap.
- Identification of budget and funds.
- Training Programs: Regular training for mediators, negotiators, and other stakeholders on conflict analysis, conflict resolution techniques, cultural sensitivity, and negotiation micro skills.
- Resource Hub: Creation of a repository of best practices, case studies, and tools for effective mediation<sup>9</sup>. Incorporate innovative conflict resolution techniques and digital tools into the resource hub to adapt to diverse and evolving conflict scenarios.
- Outcome: Operation plan
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): Develop and disseminate SOPs for mediation processes, including conflict assessment, strategy development, and monitoring and evaluation. Develop dynamic SOPs that are periodically reviewed and adjusted based on stakeholder feedback and emerging conflict dynamics.
- Develop a gender-responsive mediation framework, incl:
  - **Gender Focal Points:** Each ICGLR member state should designate a Gender Focal Point within their national coordination mechanism. This person would

<sup>9</sup> The setup of an online repository will be housed within the mediation function.

be responsible for ensuring that gender considerations are integrated into all mediation efforts.

- **Gender-Sensitive Training:** Provide training to mediators and peacebuilders at all levels on gender sensitivity and the importance of including women in peace processes.
- **Women's Mediation Networks:** Establish or strengthen regional networks of women mediators who can be deployed in mediation efforts across the region.
- **Gender-responsive guidance note:** Conceived as a practical tool for mediators to find entry points for women and gender equality issues into the mediation agenda. Its purpose is also to assist mediators in reviewing the composition of their own teams in order to include women and gender expertise
- **Code of Conduct:** Establish a code of conduct for mediators and participants to ensure impartiality, confidentiality, and respect for all parties.

### 3. Stakeholder engagement through coordination and communication:

- **Inclusive Participation:** Ensure the involvement of all relevant stakeholders, including de-facto states, local communities, women, youth, and marginalized groups.
- **Communication Channels:** Establish clear and effective communication channels for all parties involved in the mediation process.
- **Establish ongoing forums for dialogue** involving all stakeholders, including periodic reviews of mediation strategies with feedback from both high-level and local participants to refine approaches continually.
- **Align mediation efforts with international frameworks** such as the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, which emphasizes women's participation in peace processes and the integration of gender perspectives as well as the Youth, Peace and Security architecture.
- **Facilitate structured interactions** between conflict parties, CSOs, and other stakeholders to ensure multiple perspectives are included in the mediation process. This approach provides a platform for underrepresented groups to contribute to peacebuilding efforts.
- **Implement feedback loops and monitoring systems** that allow communities to provide input on mediation processes. This can include gender audits and impact assessments to ensure the effectiveness and inclusivity of mediation efforts.

### 4. Thinking beyond: Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Performance Metrics:** Define key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the effectiveness of mediation efforts.
- **Regular Reporting:** Implement a robust monitoring framework that focuses on both outcome and process evaluation to foster continuous improvement and adaptability.

## 3.5. STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS

The mediation process within the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) follows a structured approach that involves several departments, decision-making bodies, and regional centers. Here's a step-by-step outline of how the process generally unfolds:

### 1. Identification of Conflict and Request for Mediation

- **Conflict Identification:** Conflicts are identified through reports from member states, the ICGLR's early warning mechanisms, or external requests.
- **Request for Mediation:** A formal request for mediation can be made by the conflicting parties, a member state, or through a decision by the ICGLR Summit of Heads of State and Government or the RIMC.

### 2. Decision to Initiate Mediation

- **Organs Involved:**
  - **Summit of Heads of State and Government:** The highest decision-making body that can mandate mediation.
  - **Council of Ministers:** Reviews and endorses mediation initiatives.
  - **Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs:** May initiate discussions and recommend mediation.
- The ICGLR Secretariat works closely with the Peace and Security Department to assess the situation and consult with member states. The mandate for mediation is developed in consultation with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs or designated national coordinators of the affected states.
- The Secretariat, headed by the Executive Secretary, plays a pivotal role in drafting the mandate, identifying mediators, and coordinating the next steps, especially with the Member States through the NCMs. It ensures that the mandate aligns with the ICGLR's protocol and the broader objectives of peace and security in the region.
- **Decision Process:**
  - Prior to a formal mediation process, the ES may attempt Good Offices at its discretion.
  - Once a need for mediation is identified, the Secretariat may prepare a brief for the relevant ICGLR organs.
  - A decision is made to initiate mediation, defining the mandate, scope, and objectives of the process.
  - The ICGLR's regional centers, such as the Regional Centre for Democracy, Good Governance, Human Rights, and Civic Education and the Regional Training Facility, provide research and capacity-building support. These centers help analyze the conflict's root causes and provide training for the mediation team and stakeholders involved in the peace process.

### 3. Role of the ICGLR Secretariat

- **Coordination and Preparation:**
  - The Secretariat plays a central coordinating role, preparing necessary documentation and logistical support for the mediation process. It does so through a dedicated mediation coordination unit.
  - It liaises with Member States and conflicting parties to set up initial consultations.
- **Selection of Mediators:**
  - The Secretariat, in consultation with the Summit or Council of Ministers, may propose a mediator or mediation team. The selection is based on neutrality, expertise, and acceptance by the conflicting parties.

### 4. Involvement of Regional Centers and Special Mechanisms

- **Regional Training Facility (RTF) and Levy Mwanawasa Regional Centre for Democracy and Good Governance:**
  - These centers provide technical support, research, and capacity-building related to the mediation process.
- **Role of Regional Centers:**
  - They contribute to early warning analysis, capacity-building for mediators, and provide data and context-specific information crucial for effective mediation.
  - Centers may also assist in facilitating dialogue and confidence-building measures among conflicting parties.

### 5. Engagement with Conflicting Parties

- **Consultations and Confidence Building:**
  - Initial consultations are held with conflicting parties to understand their positions, expectations, and conditions for mediation.
  - Confidence-building measures may be introduced to create a conducive environment for dialogue.

### 6. Development of a Mediation Framework

- **Designing the Mediation Process:**
  - A framework is developed, including the agenda, modalities of negotiation, and timeline. This is done through the Peace and Security Directorate, which houses the function of the mediation coordination unit.
  - This framework is shared with and agreed upon by all parties involved.

### 7. Conducting Mediation Sessions

- **Mediation Meetings:**
  - Formal mediation sessions are held according to the agreed framework, facilitated by the appointed mediator(s).
  - The Secretariat provides logistical support and coordinates with the regional

centers as needed.

- **Role of the Mediator:**
  - The mediator facilitates dialogue, encourages compromise, and helps negotiate agreements.
- **Role of the Secretariat:**
  - The Secretariat ensures coordination among all parties, manages communications, and monitors progress. It may also work with the AU, the United Nations (UN) and the Group of Friends to coordinate broader international efforts.

## 8. Drafting and Agreement of Mediation Outcome

- **Drafting Agreement:**
  - Once a consensus is reached, the Secretariat assists in drafting the agreement with inputs from all parties.
- **Signing of the Agreement:**
  - The final agreement is signed by all parties, witnessed by relevant ICGLR organs and international partners if applicable.

## 9. Implementation and Follow-up

- **Monitoring and Implementation:**
  - The Secretariat and regional centers monitor the implementation of the agreement.
  - The Peace and Security Department works alongside the Secretariat to monitor compliance with the agreement.
  - The ICGLR Regional Centre on Democracy and Good Governance often supports the monitoring of democratic processes and post-conflict governance structures, while the ICGLR Regional Training Facility may be involved in training local actors on the ground.
- **Reporting and Evaluation:**
  - Regular reports are prepared on the progress and challenges in implementing the agreement. The Secretariat is responsible for reporting back to the ICGLR Council of Ministers and the Summit of Heads of State and Government on the progress of mediation and the implementation of agreements.
  - The ICGLR's Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism (EJVM) may also play a role in verifying ceasefire violations or border security issues, particularly in conflicts involving cross-border dynamics.
  - Evaluation of the mediation process and its outcomes is conducted to draw lessons for future engagements.
- **Coordination:**
  - The ICGLR coordinates with other regional bodies (e.g., AU, East African Community), international organizations (UN), and external donors to mobilize

additional support and ensure that mediation efforts are sustainable. The Secretariat acts as a bridge between the ICGLR and these external actors.

## Departments Involved

- **1. ICGLR Secretariat:** Central coordinating body for mediation.
- **2. Office of the Executive Secretary:** Provides leadership and oversight.
- **3. Situation Room, JIIFC, EJVM, LMRC:** Engages in conflict analysis and early warning.
- **4. Regional Training Facility (RTF) and Levy Mwanawasa Regional Centre for Democracy and Good Governance:** Provide research, training, and technical support.

## Decision-Making Process

- The Summit of Heads of State and Government and the Council of Ministers (RIMC) are the primary decision-making bodies that mandate mediation processes.
- The Secretariat implements the decisions and coordinates the mediation activities.

## Role of the ICGLR Secretariat

- Acts as the central coordinating body.
- Provides logistical and technical support.
- Facilitates communication between conflicting parties and ICGLR bodies.
- Assists in drafting agreements and monitoring implementation.

## Role of Regional Centers

- Provide data, research, and technical expertise.
- Support the mediation process through capacity-building and training.
- Assist in implementing and monitoring agreements.

## 4. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

### 4.1. MEDIATION COORDINATION UNIT - ATTACHED TO THE SECRETARIAT

To ensure effective linkages between all ICGLR executive structures, decentralized institutions, and national coordination mechanisms, a robust Mediation Coordination Mechanism (MCM) can be developed. Here's how this could be structured with a focus on gender-responsive mediation:

### 4.2. INTEGRATION AND ALIGNMENT ACROSS ICGLR STRUCTURES:

#### a. Reporting lines:

The Deputy Executive Secretary and Senior Programme Manager to coordinate the GMCM unit and will receive support from the Peace and Security, Gender Women and Children, and Democracy and Good Governance Programmes. The Unit will provide technical and secretarial support to the Mediator;

#### b. Central Coordination Hub:

A Mediation Coordination Unit (MCU) can be established within the ICGLR Secretariat, serving as the central node connecting all structures. This hub would coordinate communication, data sharing, and strategic alignment between the executive structures (such as the Summit of Heads of State and Government and the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee), decentralized institutions (such as the Regional Fora), and national coordination mechanisms (NCMs).

#### c. Cross-Sectoral Working Groups:

Establish cross-sectoral working groups within the MCU to address specific thematic issues, including gender inclusivity. These groups should have representatives from all relevant ICGLR structures, ensuring that gender perspectives and mediation strategies are integrated at every level.

#### d. Digital Communication Platform:

Develop a digital platform/dashboard to facilitate real-time communication and data sharing between the MCH, decentralized institutions, and NCMs. This platform should include a gender-focused mediation resource center, offering tools, guidelines, and training materials.

## 4.3. CONFLICT ANALYSIS

### a. Gender-responsive conflict analysis:

With support from Situation Room, JIFC, Program on Gender, Women and Children, EJVM and LMRC, all ICGLR engagement should be conducted through a thorough and cyclical assessment of the situation. Conflict analysis is seeking to identify the conflict dynamics, history, main actors, root causes and opportunities and risks for resolution, including a mapping of other organizations which may already be involved in peacemaking efforts. Regardless of the mode of subsequent engagement – whether the deployment of one staff member on a short visit or the launch a planning process for the conduct of official mediation initiatives – it is imperative that all forms of engagement be grounded in a sound analysis of the conflict. All relevant desk officers, managers, decentralized institutions as well as fora, CSOs and attached think tanks should be involved.

### b. National Gender Focal Points:

Establish Gender Focal Points within each NCM. These focal points would be responsible for ensuring that gender considerations are integrated into national mediation strategies and for liaising with the Gender Advisor at the MCU. Alternatively, foster linkages between NCM and available local gender expertise.

### c. Capacity-building and Gender-Inclusive Mediation Training:

Roll out a regional training program on gender-inclusive mediation, targeting mediators at all levels. This program should be developed in partnership with the African Union’s Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation (FemWise-Africa) and other relevant institutions.

### d. Maintain a roster of accredited and professional mediators

## 4.4. LINKAGES WITH DECENTRALIZED INSTITUTIONS

### a. Regional Fora Collaboration:

Encourage regular collaboration between the ICGLR’s Regional Fora (such as the Forum of Parliaments, Youth Forum, and Women Forum) and the MCU. These fora should be engaged in developing and implementing mediation strategies, ensuring grassroots perspectives are incorporated.

### b. Local Mediation Networks:

Support the creation of local mediation networks within member states, connected to the Regional Fora. These networks should be gender-balanced and work closely with the NCMs to ensure

local mediation efforts are aligned with regional strategies.

## **4.5. COORDINATION WITH AFRICAN UNION PEACE AND SECURITY ARCHITECTURE (APSA)**

### **a. Joint Task Forces:**

Create Joint Task Forces involving the ICGLR and AU's Peace and Security Council (PSC) to coordinate mediation efforts in the Great Lakes Region. These task forces should focus on ensuring that mediation efforts are consistent with the broader objectives of the APSA.

### **b. Regular Reporting and Feedback Mechanism:**

Establish a mechanism for regular reporting and feedback between the ICGLR MCU and the AU PSC. This would ensure that ICGLR mediation efforts are continuously aligned with the APSA, and that lessons learned at the regional level can inform continental strategies.

### **c. Collaboration with AU Special Envoys:**

Collaborate closely with the AU's Special Envoys, particularly those focused on gender, to enhance the effectiveness of mediation efforts. This collaboration can help ensure that gender-inclusive strategies are mainstreamed across all levels of mediation.

## **4.6. ADDITIONAL LINKAGES FOR EFFECTIVE COORDINATION**

### **a. Partnerships with Civil Society:**

Develop partnerships with civil society organizations (CSOs) specializing in peacebuilding and gender issues. CSOs can provide critical insights, mobilize communities, and ensure that mediation efforts are rooted in local realities.

### **b. Engagement with Regional Economic Communities (RECs):**

Strengthen cooperation with RECs such as the East African Community (EAC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to ensure that regional mediation efforts are harmonized and that there is no duplication of efforts.

### **c. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework:**

Implement a robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework that tracks the effectiveness of mediation efforts, including gender inclusivity. This framework should be developed in collaboration with AU monitoring bodies to ensure coherence with the APSA.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p><b>Centralized Coordination</b></p> <p>A MCU can ensure consistent and unified mediation strategies across the region.</p>	<p><b>Potential for Bureaucratic Delays</b></p> <p>Being attached to the Secretariat, the MCU may face bureaucratic delays and slow decision-making processes.</p>
<p><b>Resource Allocation</b></p> <p>Pooling resources at a central office can improve efficiency and ensure that adequate resources are available for mediation efforts.</p>	<p><b>Risk of Over-centralization</b></p> <p>Over-centralization can lead to a lack of responsiveness to local conditions and needs.</p>
<p><b>Enhanced Communication</b></p> <p>An MCH can streamline communication between national and regional bodies, ensuring that all stakeholders are informed and engaged.</p>	<p><b>Potential for Limited Flexibility</b></p> <p>The centralized structure may struggle to adapt quickly to rapidly changing situations on the ground.</p>
<p><b>Expertise and Capacity Building</b></p> <p>Centralizing mediation expertise allows for better training, capacity building, and deployment of skilled mediators.</p>	<p><b>Dependency on Secretariat Support</b></p> <p>The effectiveness of the MCU may be heavily dependent on the overall capacity and efficiency of the ICGLR Secretariat.</p>
<p><b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b></p> <p>A dedicated MCU can establish robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the effectiveness of mediation efforts.</p>	<p><b>High Operational Costs</b></p> <p>Establishing and maintaining a centralized office can be costly, requiring significant financial and human resources.</p>
<p><b>Strategic Oversight and Guidance</b></p> <p>The MCU can provide strategic oversight and guidance to ensure that mediation initiatives are aligned with regional objectives.</p>	<p><b>Potential Duplication of Efforts</b></p> <p>There is a risk of duplicating efforts with existing national and international mediation mechanisms.</p>
<p><b>Institutional Memory and Continuity</b></p> <p>A centralized office can maintain institutional memory, ensuring continuity and learning from past mediation efforts.</p>	<p><b>Risk of Political Interference</b></p> <p>Being attached to a political body like the ICGLR Secretariat might expose the MCU to political pressures and interference.</p>
<p><b>Stakeholder Engagement and Inclusivity</b></p> <p>The MCU can facilitate broader stakeholder engagement, ensuring that diverse voices are included in mediation processes.</p>	<p><b>Challenges in Ensuring Local Ownership</b></p> <p>Ensuring local ownership and buy-in from all member states may be challenging, particularly if the MCU is seen as externally imposed.</p>

## MEDIATION COORDINATION - LEAD AND SUPPORT COMPONENTS

PHASE		TASK	LEAD COMPONENT	SUPPORT
<b>STRATEGIC PLANNING</b>	Assessment and decision- making	Monitoring of conflicts	Situation room	EJVM, JIFC, FORA, LMRC
		Conflict analysis	Mediation unit	All
		Assessment of engagement options	Mediation unit	ES, All programs
		Liaison and coordination with other actors, including selection of lead mediator	ES	NCMs, Peace and Security Directorate
		Determination of mode of engagement	ES	Mediation unit, de-centralized organs
	Strategy development	Development of mediation strategy	ES, Lead mediator, NCMs	Mediation unit, Peace and Security Directorate
		Endorsement of mediation strategy	Summit, RIMC	ES
<b>OPERATIONAL PLANNING</b>	Identification of resources required to support strategy (staff functions, operational needs, security)	Lead mediator	ES, LMRC, Peace and Security, Good governance, Women and Gender	
	Cost estimates and budgeting	ES	All programs, NCMs	
	Identification of sources of funding	ES/Focal Point for donor relations		
	Decision on support structure	ES, Mediation unit	NCMs	
	Identification of suitable candidates, including envoys	ES, NCMs	Mediation unit	
	Selection of candidates, including envoys	ES, NCMs	Mediation unit	
	Issuance of contracts	ES		
	In-briefing of staff	ES, NCMs	Mediation unit	
	Travel arrangements	ES		

PHASE	TASK	LEAD COMPONENT	SUPPORT
<b>OPERATIONAL PLANNING (continued)</b>	Local transport, communications and IT equipment, office facilities and other operational requirements	Support structure	ES
	Arrival in-country with authorities and partners	NCMs	Fora, CSO
<b>COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS</b>	Design and establishment of coordination architecture at local and regional level	Mediation team	NCMs, Mediation unit
	Establishment of reporting system	Mediation team	ES, Mediation unit
	Communications strategy	Mediation team, ES, NCMs	Mediation unit
	Monitoring of development and liaison	ES, NCMs	Mediation unit
	Strategic guidance, including revision of mediation strategy	ES, RIMC	Mediation unit
	Liaison with Member States	ES, NCMs	
<b>BEYOND THE START-UP PHASE</b>	Planning for the long term and shift to long-term funding	ES, NCMs	All Programs
	Lesson learning and capture of institutional experience	ES, Peace and Security Directorate	

#### 4.7 MEDIATION COORDINATION - COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

The number of actors involved in mediation endeavors requires the establishment of a sound coordination system. This maximizes unity of effort among all actors (local and international), whose different comparative advantages can be mobilized in support of a process. The ICGLR has unique structure, incl. decentralized organs and institutions, allowing for the management of such coordinated systems at all levels.

The establishment of coordination systems inevitably raises questions as to which actors should be included and how. While each situation is different, it is advisable to take into account the existing roles and capabilities of different actors to ensure that their networks and influence are adequately leveraged.

Involving local actors from the start has often proved to be critical to the success of an engagement

by ensuring local inputs to strategy development as well as ownership – and therefore support – for the process in the long run.

#### **4.7.1. TEAM-LEVEL COORDINATION**

Due to the complex nature of mediation efforts, various institutional actors are involved in the set-up of a mediation initiative, starting with programs to decentralized organs to the Fora. The proposed coordination unit is designed to aggregate and exchange information in a timely manner, monitor progress with the mediation strategy, ensure program-level communication and coordinate efforts to support the lead mediator (incl. capacity-building, reporting and knowledge management). The range of activities at the level of the coordination unit is not limited to analysis or knowledge management only, but is a proactive and systemic initiative, involving joint monitoring and analysis of the conflict; joint visits to the country in conflict by the leadership of the organizations; participation by the staff of each mission in the activities of the other mission; public action to demonstrate unity between the organizations, such as joint press conferences; establishment of mechanisms and processes.

#### **4.7.2. COUNTRY-LEVEL COORDINATION**

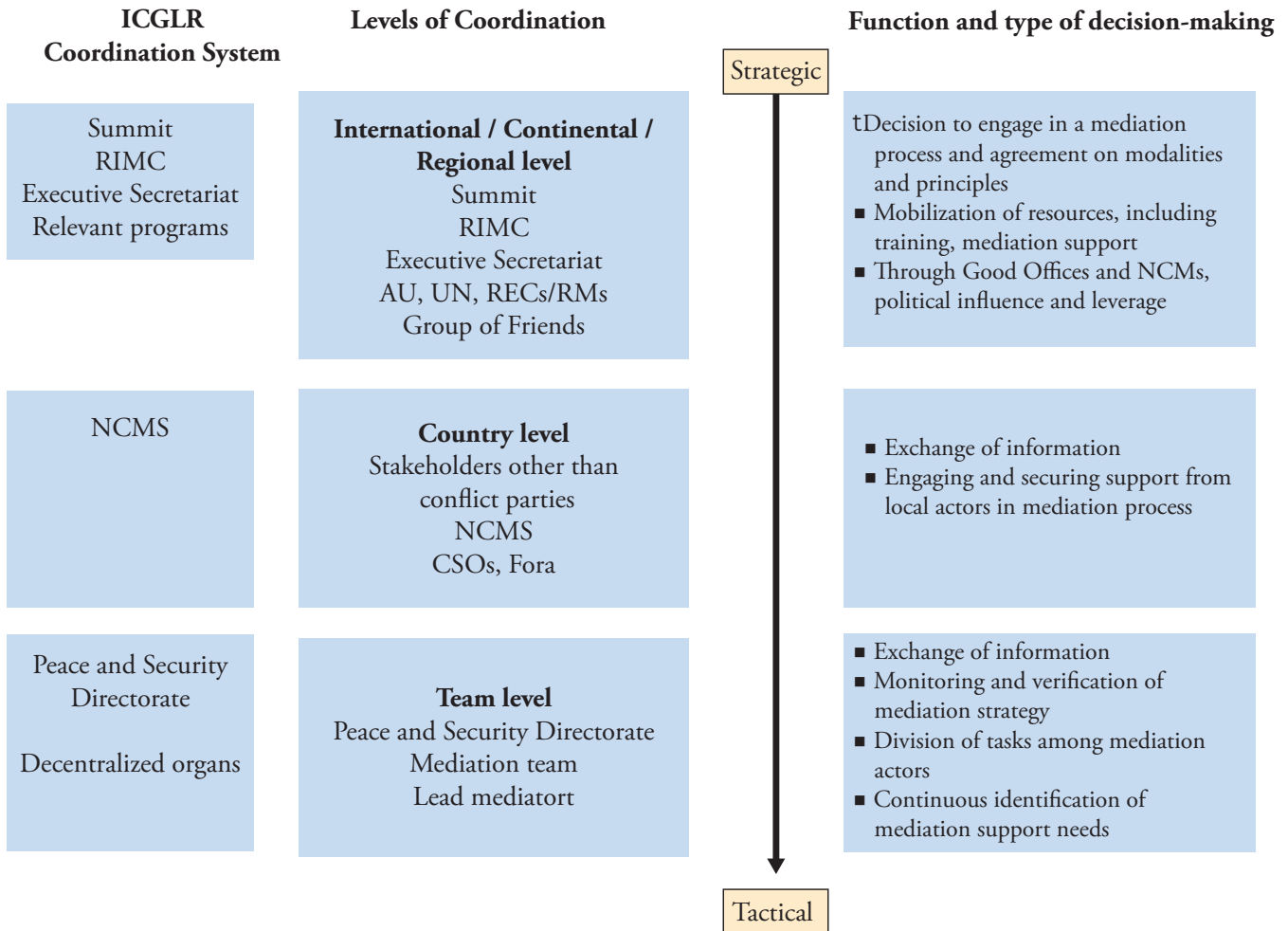
Through the NCMs, country-level coordination structures are used to engage Member States and local actors other than parties as well as local representatives of international actors such as other Governments or international institutions. Depending on the design of the mediation process (mediation strategy), coordination structures can be established to bring other local stakeholders around a mediation process. If a mediation process includes only political actors, for example, a “consultative forum” of civil society organizations including women’s organizations could be established to keep other local stakeholders informed of the process, seek their inputs and secure their buy-in for an eventual outcome.

#### **4.7.3. INTERNATIONAL-LEVEL COORDINATION**

The design of an international coordination structure should take into account existing mechanisms (for example, regional contact groups, liaison with other RECs/RMs as well as with the AU) as well as the risks and opportunities offered by different options. Reaching out and involving the Group of Friends is crucial as it can be used to share information, keep diplomatic partners abreast of developments, seek international endorsement of strategies and leverage the influence – individually or collectively – of powerful diplomatic allies. Another advantage of such a group is their ability to mobilize major foreign donors, which can offer a helpful source of leverage or financial support for the implementation of a peace agreement.

For the mediation activity to succeed, close liaison with regional and subregional coordination structures, through the means of decentralized organs as well as the ICGLR Fora, is critical to ensure the alignment of neighboring states to a conflict area behind a mediation strategy.

#### 4.7.4. OVERVIEW OF COORDINATION ARCHITECTURE AND DECISION MAKING



#### 4.8. REGIONAL INTEGRATED APPROACH

The gender-responsive mediation coordination mechanism of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) would adopt a collaborative and integrative approach to ensure its efforts align with and complement the broader peace and security architecture. Its coordination would leverage existing structures within the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), foster partnerships with regional economic communities (RECs), regional mechanisms (RMs), the African Union (AU), and the Group of Friends of Mediation (GoFM). This collaboration would be built on principles of subsidiarity, complementarity, and shared responsibility, ensuring coherence and avoiding duplication of efforts.

##### 1. Collaboration with Regional Economic Communities (RECs)

RECs such as the East African Community (EAC), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) are key stakeholders in the Great Lakes Region. The ICGLR mechanism would:

- **Harmonize Gender Policies:** Work with RECs to align gender-responsive mediation practices with their existing gender and peacebuilding frameworks, ensuring regional consistency.
- **Capacity Sharing:** Organize joint training programs and share tools and resources for gender-sensitive conflict analysis and mediation.
- **Conflict-Specific Coordination:** Collaborate on specific conflicts that overlap jurisdictions, pooling expertise and ensuring that gender issues are addressed comprehensively.

## 2. Engagement with Regional Mechanisms (RMs)

Regional mechanisms, including the ICGLR’s Regional Initiative on Sexual Violence and the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism (EJVM), play critical roles in peace and security. The gender-responsive mechanism would:

- **Leverage Existing Expertise:** Integrate the work of ICGLR mechanisms that focus on gender-based violence (GBV) and conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) into mediation processes.
- **Enhance Reporting and Monitoring:** Use RMs’ monitoring frameworks to gather gender-disaggregated data and real-time reports on GBV in conflict zones, informing mediation strategies.
- **Strengthen Grassroots Engagement:** Work with local networks through these mechanisms to ensure that women’s voices and needs are reflected in mediation processes.

## 3. Partnership with the African Union (AU)

As the custodian of the African Peace and Security Architecture, the AU provides overarching guidance and support for regional mediation efforts. The ICGLR mechanism would:

- **Align with Continental Norms:** Ensure that its mediation efforts are consistent with the AU Gender Strategy and the African Union’s policies on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS), including the AU Master Roadmap of Silencing the Guns.
- **Access Continental Resources:** Utilize the expertise of the AU’s Panel of the Wise and FemWise-Africa to enhance gender inclusion in mediation teams.
- **Strengthen Multi-Level Coordination:** Serve as a regional implementation arm of AU initiatives, allowing the AU to focus on its continental mandate while the ICGLR provides localized, context-sensitive gender-responsive solutions.

## 4. Collaboration with the Group of Friends of Mediation (GoFM)

The GoFM, a coalition of states and organizations promoting mediation globally, offers technical expertise, advocacy, and resources. The ICGLR mechanism would:

- **Mobilize Technical Expertise:** Partner with the GoFM to access best practices, training modules, and mediation toolkits focused on gender inclusivity.
- **Advocate for Gender-Responsive Mediation:** Collaborate on advocacy campaigns to

promote the inclusion of women and gender considerations in mediation at regional and international levels.

- Leverage Funding and Support: Engage with the GoFM to secure financial and technical support for its initiatives, particularly for capacity-building and grassroots engagement programs.

## 5. Coordination Framework

The ICGLR gender-responsive mechanism would establish a multi-layered coordination framework to ensure seamless collaboration:

- Regular Consultative Meetings: Convene periodic meetings with RECs, RMs, the AU, and GoFM to share updates, align strategies, and address emerging challenges.
- Joint Task Forces: Create task forces on specific issues, such as GBV or women's participation in mediation, involving representatives from all stakeholders.
- Information Sharing Platforms: Develop digital platforms for sharing gender-disaggregated data, early warning alerts, and best practices to inform gender-sensitive mediation.
- Monitoring and Reporting: Collaborate on monitoring frameworks to assess the gender responsiveness of mediation efforts and ensure accountability.

## 6. Strategic Outcomes

- This collaborative approach ensures that the ICGLR's gender-responsive mediation coordination mechanism:
- Maximizes Synergies: Leverages the strengths of diverse actors while reducing duplication and fragmentation.
- Enhances Credibility: Demonstrates alignment with regional, continental, and global standards, boosting the legitimacy of ICGLR-led initiatives.
- Delivers Comprehensive Solutions: Addresses the multi-faceted gender dimensions of conflict through coordinated and holistic interventions.

By working collaboratively with these partners, the ICGLR's gender-responsive mechanism can effectively advance inclusive peace processes that reflect the diverse needs and experiences of all stakeholders in the Great Lakes Region.

## 5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

A robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework for the gender-responsive coordination mechanism of the ICGLR would focus on tracking progress, assessing effectiveness, and ensuring accountability for gender-responsive practices in mediation and peacebuilding. The framework would be built around clear objectives, measurable indicators, participatory methods, and adaptable tools to address the complexities of the Great Lakes Region's conflict dynamics.

### 5.1. KEY ELEMENTS OF THE FRAMEWORK

#### 1. Objectives

- Measure the impact of gender-responsive interventions in mediation and peacebuilding.
- Ensure accountability for gender commitments in ICGLR and member states' peace processes.
- Identify gaps and opportunities to strengthen gender inclusion.
- Provide evidence-based insights to inform decision-making and policy development

#### 2. Principles

- **Inclusivity:** Engage diverse stakeholders, including women, local communities, and civil society.
- **Transparency:** Ensure open communication of findings to build trust and accountability.
- **Adaptability:** Allow adjustments to reflect changing conflict dynamics and lessons learned.
- **Sustainability:** Focus on long-term outcomes and system-level changes.

#### 3. Focus Areas

- **Effective coordination:** All level of ICGLR executive structures and key decision-makers are addressed and involved in the decision-making of an intervention.
- **Effective mediation:** The coordinated mediation efforts led to a stabilization of conflict dynamics and tensions have been reduced and violent conflict mitigated.
- **Participation:** Women's representation in mediation teams and peace processes.
- **Protection:** Responses to gender-based violence (GBV) and violence affecting young boys and girls in conflict zones.
- **Prevention:** Integration of gender-sensitive early warning/fast response systems.
- **Recovery and Reintegration:** Gender-sensitive post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation measures.

## 5.2. COMPONENTS OF THE FRAMEWORK

### 1. Indicators

- Develop qualitative and quantitative indicators aligned with the framework's focus areas. Examples include:
  - Decision-making time between communicate and mediator deployment.
  - Percentage of women in mediation teams and negotiation delegations.
  - Provisions addressing GBV in peace agreements.
  - Number of capacity-building programs and participants trained on gender-sensitive mediation.
  - Perceptions of inclusivity and effectiveness among stakeholders.

### 2. Baseline Assessments

Conduct baseline studies to establish reference points for gender inclusion and GBV prevalence in the region. These assessments would inform indicator development and provide benchmarks for measuring progress.

### 3. Data Collection Tools

- Surveys and Questionnaires: Capture stakeholder perspectives on gender responsiveness in mediation.
- Interviews and Focus Groups: Gather qualitative insights from women leaders, mediators, and affected communities.
- Conflict Monitoring Systems: Use gender-sensitive early warning systems to collect disaggregated data.

### 4. Reporting and Analysis

- Regular reports (quarterly, biannual, annual) summarizing progress, challenges, and recommendations.
- Benchmarking of mediation interventions.
- Gender audits of peace agreements and mediation processes.

## 5.3. STRATEGIES

### 1. Stakeholder Engagement

- Collaborate with women's organizations, civil society, and local communities to gather insights and ensure accountability.
- Partner with regional and international actors, including the African Union, RECs, and the Group of Friends of Mediation, for technical expertise and resource mobilization.

## 2. Capacity Building

- Train ICGLR staff and member state representatives on gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation techniques.
- Develop training programs for mediators to enhance their understanding of M&E practices.

## 3. Feedback Mechanisms

- Establish regular feedback loops between the ICGLR, mediation teams, and affected communities to refine gender-responsive strategies.

## 4. Digital and Technological Integration

- Use digital tools for real-time data collection, including mobile apps and online platforms, to enhance the efficiency and accuracy of monitoring efforts.

## 5.4. RESOURCES

### 1. Human Resources

- A dedicated M&E team within the ICGLR Secretariat with expertise in gender-sensitive evaluation.
- Regional focal points in member states to coordinate data collection and reporting.

### 2. Financial Resources

- Allocate specific funding for M&E activities, including training, data collection, and reporting.
- Mobilize resources from international partners, such as the Group of Friends of Mediation, donor agencies, and regional economic communities.

### 3. Technical Resources

- Gender-sensitive data collection and analysis tools.
- Training manuals and toolkits on gender-responsive M&E practices.

### 4. Partnership Resources

- Leverage partnerships with regional and international organizations for technical assistance, capacity building, and funding.

## 5.5. TIMELINES

The framework would be implemented in phases to ensure comprehensive coverage and flexibility:

### Phase 1: Framework Development (0-6 Months)

- Define objectives, indicators, and data collection tools.
- Conduct baseline assessments and stakeholder consultations.

## **Phase 2: Pilot Implementation (6-18 Months)**

- Test the framework in one or two mediation processes or member states.
- Refine tools and methodologies based on pilot findings.

## **Phase 3: Full Implementation (18-36 Months)**

- Roll out the framework across all ICGLR mediation initiatives.
- Establish regular reporting cycles and feedback mechanisms.

## **Phase 4: Review and Adaptation (36+ Months)**

- Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the framework's effectiveness.
- Adjust strategies, indicators, and tools as needed to reflect evolving conflict dynamics and priorities.

## **5.6. REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

### **1. Regular Reports**

- Publish periodic reports highlighting progress, challenges, and recommendations.
- Share findings with ICGLR member states, partners, and stakeholders.

### **2. Accountability Mechanisms**

- Establish a review committee to ensure compliance with gender-responsive objectives.
- Incorporate M&E findings into ICGLR's decision-making processes and policy adjustments.

### **3. Public Communication**

- Share successes and lessons learned through public platforms to build momentum for gender inclusion.

## 6. LOOKING FORWARD

The start-up phase comes to a close when a mode of engagement has been selected, a mediation strategy developed, funding has been secured, a mediation team has been staffed, and mandate implementation has begun. At this point, the focus should shift to the identification of longer-term options for the sustainment of the mediation processes. As operations often rely on temporary resources in the start-up phase, such as staff deployed from executive structures or temporary start-up funding, it is important to start considering longer-term options as soon as possible. These options range from making extended use of decentralized organs and institutions to monitor progress to building local capacity for conflict resolution and management.

Plans for the long-term management of operations should also include provisions for the periodic review of mediation strategies, including regular reflections on whether the mediation effort should continue. This should be assessed in relation to the objectives identified at the launch of the operation as well as the impact of the mediation on the conflict.

Other elements include capturing of lessons learned and institutional memory. This can be done through thorough After-Action Review and analysis of the mediation process (for example through LMRC) and mediator debriefing options.

## 7. ANNEXES

# 1. A GENERAL OVERVIEW OF MEDIATION

Achieving peace, ceasing the violence, and bringing formerly belligerent parties to talk about a common future is a difficult task. One way to get parties in armed conflicts to talk again is through the means of mediation. It is a means of ending the violence through the intervention of a mandated and legitimate third party, while at the same time making the concerted effort to resolve the underlying issues to the conflict. Typically, these mediators are 'outside' a conflict and seek to open communication, to broker a dialogue, generate viable options, and agree on workable and durable agreements between belligerents. At this point, and because violent conflicts are usually engaging many parties on many levels at the same time, we can distinguish between two types of mediators. On the one hand, we have the official mediator, either a state or a high-ranking individual, mandated by an international organization (such as the United Nations through a Security Council Resolution) or a regional security mechanism (such as the African Union or the European Union). On the other hand, we have the unofficial third party, also called insider or neutral mediator, such as an NGO, an academic body, the Church or a private person of high social ranking and acceptance, who may seek to facilitate contacts, promote confidence, advocate buy-in, and engage in dialogue.

Mediation takes place on the international level, when and if (1) the conflict in question takes a regional or international dimension, (2) the UN Security Council has been seized and issued a mandate to a third party to bring an end to the conflict, or (3) two or more states are involved in providing assistance to ending the violence.

## 1.1. WHAT IS MEDIATION?

Parties in dispute often need the support of a third party in facilitating the conflict management process when they have become so caught up in their differences that they are no longer able to find constructive ways forward. A third party is a person or group of people who assists individuals and groups to negotiate and successfully reach agreement. The third party is generally referred to as the facilitator or mediator.

Facilitator is a more general term, which can be applied to anybody who guides group processes (discussions, meetings, workshops). A mediator is specialized in conflict management processes. The most common way to reach a mutually acceptable agreement is through informal decision-making, which can involve negotiation and/or mediation:

- Negotiation is a bargaining relationship among the opposing parties. Negotiations are voluntary and require that all parties are willing to consider the others' interests and needs. If negotiations are hard to start or have reached an impasse, the conflict parties may need assistance from a third party.
- Mediation is the process whereby an acceptable third party who has limited or no

authoritative decision-making power assists the principle parties in a conflict to resolve their dispute through promoting conciliation and facilitating negotiations. As with negotiation, mediation leaves the decision-making power primarily in the hands of the conflict parties. They enter into a voluntary agreement, which they themselves, and not the mediator, implement.

The assumption behind a third party's involvement is that a mediator will, to some extent, be able to:

- help the parties to examine their interests and needs;
- help them to negotiate an exchange of viewpoints;
- assist them in redefining their relationship in a way that is mutually satisfactory.

As consensus building is based on voluntary agreements, enforcement depends solely on the willingness of all parties to comply with an agreement. A mediator has no power to force the parties to resolve their differences or to make decisions for the parties. The mediator's success therefore depends on how far it is possible to overcome the tendency to view conflicts as interactions in which one side wins and the other loses.

The challenge for the mediator is to make all the stakeholders recognize conflict as a shared exercise in problem solving, with potential gains for all those involved. He or she does so by using so-called micro-skills<sup>10</sup>.

## 1.2. MICRO-SKILLS IN MEDIATION

In order to be effective at guiding negotiations, the conflict parties must be at the centre of the mediator's concerns. This requires attention to rapport and communications, as well as strong "people skills". Here are some crucial micro-skills for an effective mediator:

- **Active Listening:** Mediators must listen attentively to understand each party's concerns and validate their feelings. This builds trust and opens up communication.
- **Reframing:** The mediator helps parties see the issues differently, which can reduce conflict and open the door to new solutions.
- **Facilitating Dialogue:** Mediators encourage open and respectful communication between the parties, asking probing questions and clarifying statements to ensure mutual understanding.
- **Caucusing:** The mediator may meet with each party separately (in caucuses) to explore their positions in a more confidential setting, helping them to articulate their needs and consider compromises.
- **Brainstorming:** Encouraging parties to generate a wide range of possible solutions without immediate judgment, allowing creative and unexpected solutions to emerge.

<sup>10</sup> For more, see Fisher, R., Ury, W., & Patton, B. (1991). *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*. Penguin Books; Moore, C. W. (2014). *The Mediation Process: Practical Strategies for Resolving Conflict* (4th ed.). Jossey-Bass.; Menkel-Meadow, C., & Wheeler, M. (2004). *What's Fair: Ethics for Negotiators*. Jossey-Bass.; Lewicki, R. J., Saunders, D. M., & Barry, B. (2015). *Negotiation* (7th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.; Boulle, L. (2011). *Mediation: Principles, Process, Practice* (3rd ed.). LexisNexis Butterworths; Khadiagala, G.M. (2007). *Meddlers or Mediators? African Interveners in Civil Conflicts in Eastern Africa*.

- **Reality Testing:** Mediators help parties consider the practicality and implications of proposed solutions, ensuring that agreements are realistic and sustainable

Oftentimes, mediation is just the continuation of an existing negotiation process, facilitated by a respected third party. Therefore, negotiation techniques are at the core of an effectively mediated process. Some of these techniques are:

- **Interest-Based Negotiation:** Focuses on the underlying interests of the parties rather than their initial positions. The goal is to find solutions that satisfy the core needs of all involved.
- **Distributive Negotiation:** Involves dividing a fixed amount of resources, often resulting in a win-lose scenario. This is common in situations where resources are limited, and each party seeks to maximize their share.
- **Integrative Negotiation:** Seeks to create value or “expand the pie” by finding solutions that benefit all parties, thus achieving a win-win outcome.
- **BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement):** Understanding one’s BATNA helps parties evaluate offers realistically and avoid accepting a deal worse than their alternative options.
- **Concession Strategies:** Involves making strategic concessions to move the negotiation forward while ensuring that critical interests are protected.

### 1.3. THE PROCESS OF MEDIATION

- Mediation is a process-oriented endeavor. Effective mediation involves careful process design, which includes:
- **Pre-Mediation Preparation:** Gathering background information, setting the agenda, and agreeing on ground rules.
- **Opening Session:** Establishing the mediator’s role, the process, and ensuring that all parties are committed to participating in good faith.
- **Joint Discussion:** Facilitating an open discussion where parties present their views and concerns.
- **Private Caucuses (if needed):** Conducting private sessions with each party to explore their interests and alternatives.
- **Negotiation:** Guiding the parties through structured negotiation, using the techniques mentioned above.
- **Agreement Writing:** Documenting the agreed-upon solutions in clear, precise terms to avoid future misunderstandings.
- **Follow-Up:** Ensuring that the agreement is implemented as planned, which may involve subsequent meetings or check-ins.

## 1.4. MEDIATORS' VALUES AND BEHAVIORS

- Mediators are guided by a set of core values and behaviors that are essential for effective practice:
- Empathy: Understanding and appreciating the emotions and perspectives of all parties.
- Empowerment: Helping parties feel that they have control over the outcome and that their voices are heard.
- Non-Judgmental: Mediators do not pass judgment on the parties or their issues; instead, they focus on facilitating a fair process.
- Communication: Clear, effective communication is vital, both in explaining the process and in guiding discussions.
- Problem-Solving Orientation: Mediators are solution-focused, helping parties move from conflict to resolution.
- Voluntary: Mediation remains a voluntary conflict management process. Parties' consent is important and remains a critical element for autonomy and decision-making.

## 1.5. BEST PRACTICES IN MEDIATION

Mediation is guided by some best practices. Some of these practices pertain to the principles of mediation while others refer to social and cultural values.

Some best practice when it comes to principles are:

- Impartiality: Mediators must remain neutral, avoiding any appearance of bias or favoritism.
- Confidentiality: Maintaining confidentiality is crucial to creating a safe environment where parties feel free to discuss sensitive issues.
- Patience: Mediation can be a slow process, and mediators must be patient, allowing the process to unfold naturally without rushing the parties.
- Flexibility: While structure is important, mediators must be flexible, adapting the process to the needs of the parties and the situation.
- Ethical Conduct: Mediators should adhere to high ethical standards, including honesty, integrity, and respect for all parties.

Depending on the type of conflict and on social and cultural values, consensual negotiations can be assisted by either of the following agents:

An internal person, or insider: Most communities have people who act as mediators to help resolve local conflicts. Such mediators are trusted and respected by the individuals and groups. Such mediators are trusted and respected by the individuals and groups owing to their social status, experience or special knowledge. They can be part of the immediate social network (e.g. a village leader or elder) or independent, such as a religious or political leader who is traditionally

asked to help mediate between two communities.

An external person, or outsider: This is usually a person trained to provide impartial assistance to conflicting parties in designing negotiation strategies. Acting as a mediator requires experience and training in conflict management methods, and good communication skills.

## 1.6. THE ROLE OF A MEDIATOR

The responsibility for both designing solutions and reaching agreement remains with the stakeholders involved. A mediator manages the process, but is not involved in the content of the negotiations. To assist parties in the process, the mediator may take a variety of roles and functions. These vary considerably, depending on the nature of the conflict and the approachability and nature of the parties involved. These roles include:

- the opener of communication channels, who initiates communication if it breaks down or facilitates better communication if the parties are already talking, including clarifying misunderstandings and avoiding polarization and escalation;
- the legitimizer, who helps all parties to recognize that the rights of others are part of the negotiations;
- the process facilitator, who provides procedural assistance to communication, often including formally chairing meetings. When providing procedural assistance, mediators do not involve themselves in the actual issues (the things under dispute) and do not suggest solutions;
- the problem explorer, who enables people in dispute to examine a problem from a variety of viewpoints; the agent of balance (or reality), who questions and challenges parties with extreme or unrealistic goals, and through this helps build a reasonable, achievable agreement;
- the networker, who offers procedural assistance and links the conflict parties to outside experts and resources (e.g. technical experts, lawyers, decision-makers) that may enable them to draw up acceptable settlement options.

The role of the mediator depends on social-cultural values. In particular, it depends on whether the culture in which the mediator is working tends more towards direct or non-direct dealing. The mediator can be either of the following:

- A trusted leader (non-direct dealing) is likely to be a local. The ability to work with conflicting parties in order effectively to support collaboration requires trust. For many, trust develops only when there is a pre-existing relationship – kinship or family, and positive past interactions. The key point is trust, not neutrality; trust that despite any personal relationship with any of the parties, the mediator will strive to find a way forward that is in the interests of all the parties involved.
- A neutral process manager (direct dealing) is likely to be an outsider. Process managers

are trained to provide impartial assistance to conflicting parties in designing their negotiation strategy. Acting as a mediator requires experience and training in conflict management methods, and good communication skills.

Mediators in conflict management should always carefully examine local mediation practices, their effectiveness and how they could be strengthened. In general, mediators try to find a balance between being neutral (toward the process) and impartial (in relation to the parties) and strives to be an honest broker for all sides. Impartiality refers to the absence of bias or preference in favor of one or more negotiating parties, their interests or their options. Neutrality means that a third party is not connected to and has not had a prior relationship with any of the disputants.

# STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

GENDER RESPONSIVE MEDIATION COORDINATION MECHANISM

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Guidelines and Draft Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the Mediation Coordination Mechanism of the ICGLR.....		3
Key Legal Documents and Protocols: .....		3
Specific Protocols within the Pact:.....		3
Guidelines and Framework.....		5
Article 1: Introduction .....		5
Article 2: Foundational Principles .....		5
Article 3: Use of Mediation.....		5
Article 4: Legal Instruments and Protocols .....		5
Article 5: Mediation Processes and Procedures.....		7
SOPs .....		8
1. Introduction.....		8
What does mediation entail? .....		8
ICGLR Peace and Security Architecture.....		10
1. Purpose and Scope .....		10
2. Definitions .....		11
3. Roles and Responsibilities.....		11
4. Preparation Phase.....		12
5. Coordination with ICGLR Decentralized Organs .....		13
6. Planning Phase.....		13
7. Implementation Phase .....		14
8. Outcome Phase .....		14
9. Reporting and Documentation.....		15
10. Review and Revision .....		16
11. Coordination and Complementarity .....		16
Joint Initiatives:.....		16
Coordination with the Group of Friends of Mediation.....		17
Interlinkages Between Peace and Security Infrastructure and Women and Youth Fora ..		17
References: .....		18

# GUIDELINES AND DRAFT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPS) FOR THE MEDIATION COORDINATION MECHANISM OF THE ICGLR

SOPs are designed to guide the establishment and operation of a Gender-Responsive Mediation Coordination Mechanism. Adherence to these procedures will help ensure that all mediation efforts are inclusive, equitable, and effective in addressing the needs and rights of all genders. Mediation being a conflict resolution approach within a wider peace and security architecture, it is grounded in the legal and normative framework of the ICGLR.

The legal foundations for the ICGLR (International Conference on the Great Lakes Region) peace and security architecture are embedded in several key documents and protocols. These documents outline the mandates, structures, and functions of the various components of the ICGLR peace and security architecture.

Here is a detailed overview of these legal foundations:

## 1. KEY LEGAL DOCUMENTS AND PROTOCOLS:

### 1. Dar-es-Salaam Declaration (2004)

- This declaration laid the groundwork for the establishment of the ICGLR. It addresses the root causes of conflicts in the Great Lakes Region and emphasizes the need for collective efforts in promoting peace, security, democracy, and development.

### 2. Pact on Security, Stability, and Development in the Great Lakes Region (2006)

- The Pact is a comprehensive legal framework that consolidates the commitments of member states to implement the Dar-es-Salaam Declaration. It includes several protocols, each focusing on different aspects of peace and security.

## 2. SPECIFIC PROTOCOLS WITHIN THE PACT:

### 1. Protocol on Non-Aggression and Mutual Defense in the Great Lakes Region

- Article 4: Establishes the principles of non-aggression and mutual defense among member states.
- Article 5: Outlines the mechanisms for collective defense and response to aggression.

### 2. Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance

- Article 6: Promotes the principles of democracy, rule of law, and good governance.
- Article 7: Establishes mechanisms for monitoring and supporting democratic processes in member states.

### 3. Protocol on Judicial Cooperation

- Article 8: Facilitates cooperation in legal and judicial matters to combat transnational crimes.
- Article 9: Establishes mechanisms for extradition and mutual legal assistance.

### 4. Protocol on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, War Crimes, and Crimes Against Humanity and All Forms of Discrimination

- Article 10: Commits member states to prevent and punish acts of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.
- Article 11: Establishes cooperation mechanisms for the investigation and prosecution of these crimes.

### 5. Protocol on the Protection and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons

- Article 12: Provides for the protection and assistance of internally displaced persons (IDPs).
- Article 13: Outlines the rights of IDPs and the responsibilities of member states in ensuring their protection.

### 5. Institutional Structures:

- Art 22 ff: Refers to the establishment of institutions, such as: Summit, RIMC, Conference Secretariat, National Coordination Mechanisms and the Collaborative mechanisms and other specific structures or forums

## 3. GUIDELINES AND FRAMEWORK

### ARTICLE 1: INTRODUCTION

- Purpose: To establish a normative framework for mediation coordination within the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR).
- Scope: This framework applies to all mediation and conflict resolution activities undertaken by the ICGLR and its Member States.

### ARTICLE 2: FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

- Peace and Security: Ensuring peace and security within the Great Lakes Region.
- Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity: Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of member states.
- Human Rights: Promotion and protection of human rights as fundamental to sustainable peace.
- Inclusivity: Inclusive participation of all relevant stakeholders, including women and marginalized groups, in the mediation process.
- Impartiality: Neutrality and impartiality in all mediation efforts.

### ARTICLE 3: USE OF MEDIATION

- Conflict Prevention and Resolution: Mediation shall be utilized as a primary tool for preventing, managing, and resolving conflicts within and between Member States and between Member states and armed groups.
- Consent of Parties: Mediation processes shall only be initiated with the consent of the conflicting parties.
- Appointment of Mediators: Mediators shall be appointed based on their expertise, neutrality, and the specific needs of the conflict situation.

### ARTICLE 4: LEGAL INSTRUMENTS AND PROTOCOLS

#### 1. ICGLR Pact on Security, Stability, and Development (herein: The Pact):

The foundational document that establishes the legal basis for ICGLR's peace and security mandate.

- Article 28 of the Pact: Emphasizes the commitment of Member States to peaceful conflict resolution and the use of mediation.
- Protocol on Non-Aggression and Mutual Defense:
  - Article 5 (a), (c), (d) : States that any dispute which cannot be settled peacefully among member states shall be referred to an extra-ordinary Summit for appropriate action
- Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance:
  - Article 6: Encourages member states to institutionalize national mediation systems and collaborate with regional efforts

#### 2. ICGLR Integrated Approach to conflict prevention, management and resolution

The ICGLR's initiatives and protocols collectively aim to prevent and resolve conflicts by addressing their root causes, promoting human rights, ensuring security, and fostering development:

- Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region (2006): While not a protocol, this overarching pact includes several protocols and programs that touch on conflict prevention, management, and resolution. It emphasizes the importance of peace, security, democracy, and good governance in achieving sustainable development.
- Protocol on Non-Aggression and Mutual Defence (Pact, Art 5, 2006): This protocol addresses conflict prevention and management by obligating member states to refrain from acts of aggression against each other and to cooperate in defense matters. It provides a framework for collective security and mutual defense among member states.
- Protocol on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, War Crimes, and Crimes Against Humanity and all forms of Discrimination (Pact, Art. 8, 2006): This protocol includes elements of conflict prevention by focusing on preventing and addressing severe violations of human rights, which are often precursors to conflict.

- Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (Pact, Art 6, 2006): This protocol highlights the role of democratic governance in preventing conflicts. It promotes principles of good governance, rule of law, and respect for human rights as essential for preventing conflicts.
- Protocol on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence Against Women and Children (Pact, Art 11, 2006)
- Programme of Action for Peace and Security (Pact, Art. 17, 2006)
- Programme of Action for Democracy and Good Governance (Pact, Art. 18, 2006)
- Programme of Action on Humanitarian, Social and Environmental Issues (Pact, Art 20, 2006)
- Peaceful Settlement of Disputes (Pact, Art. 28, 2006)
- Dar-es-Salam Declaration, Priority Policy Options and Guiding Principles on Peace and Security, Democracy and Good Governance, Humanitarian and Social Issues (Declaration, 2004).

## **ARTICLE 5: MEDIATION PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES**

### **1. Initiation of Mediation:**

- Mediation may be initiated upon the request of a Member State, a decision by the ICGLR Heads of State and Government Summit, or the recommendation or consultation of the Chairperson or of the ICGLR Secretariat.
- The ICGLR Secretariat shall facilitate the initial contact and consent between disputing parties and potential mediators.

### **2. Appointment of Mediators:**

- Mediators shall be appointed by the ICGLR Heads of State and Government Summit, based on recommendations from the Chairperson, the ICGLR Secretariat and relevant experts.
- Criteria for selection shall include experience, neutrality, understanding of the local context, and demonstrated mediation skills.

### **3. Mediation Support:**

- The ICGLR Secretariat shall provide logistical, technical, and financial support to mediators throughout the mediation process.
- A mediation support team, comprising experts in relevant fields, shall be established to assist the mediator.
- The Group of Friends shall provide further technical and implementation support.

# SOP<sup>11</sup>S

## 1. INTRODUCTION

These SOPs aim to provide a structured approach to mediation coordination within the ICGLR framework, ensuring consistency, efficiency, and effectiveness in managing mediation processes in the Great Lakes Region.

## 2. WHAT DOES MEDIATION ENTAIL?

At a basic level, mediation is about bringing two or more parties together with the goal of preventing, managing or resolving conflict through negotiations. Indeed, mediation has been defined as a process whereby a third party assists two or more parties with their consent to prevent, manage and resolve a conflict by helping them to develop mutually acceptable agreements. Mediation is therefore a form of peaceful intervention by an intermediary in a conflict situation, contingent on the acceptance by conflict parties, with the stated purpose of contributing towards its abatement or resolution. Yet, it is vital to reflect further on mediation as concept, as structured and professionalised practice. First, following international best practice, it is crucial to note that mediation is a structured undertaking, understood as an extension and elaboration of the negotiation process. Indeed, mediation can be seen, at least structurally, as the continuation of negotiation by other means. It is important to note that mediation is a structured undertaking rather than a series of ad-hoc engagements. In this sense, mediation involves the intervention by credible and competent intermediaries who assist the parties in working towards a negotiated settlement on substantive issues through persuasion, the control of information, the suggestion, of alternatives and in some cases the application of leverage. Mediation therefore aims at enabling parties in conflict to reach agreements they find satisfactory and are willing to implement. Mediation is a process, following specific phases and stages pertinent to the dynamics of the conflict and the nature of the parties. It is driven by principles, such as procedural (consent, confidentiality, voluntary) and a functionality (mandate, neutrality and impartiality of mediators). Mediation is not a stand alone activity, but part and parcel of a wider web of conflict management and resolution strategies, such as diplomacy, peacekeeping, dialogue, etc. At the multilateral level, it is part of a concerted effort, based on the principles of comparative advantage and subsidiarity.

In order to align mediation interventions across all tracks and relevant departments, the SOPs lay the foundation for a coordinated decision-making process.

The following SOPs rely on the currently valid ICGLR peace and security architecture and decision-making processes.

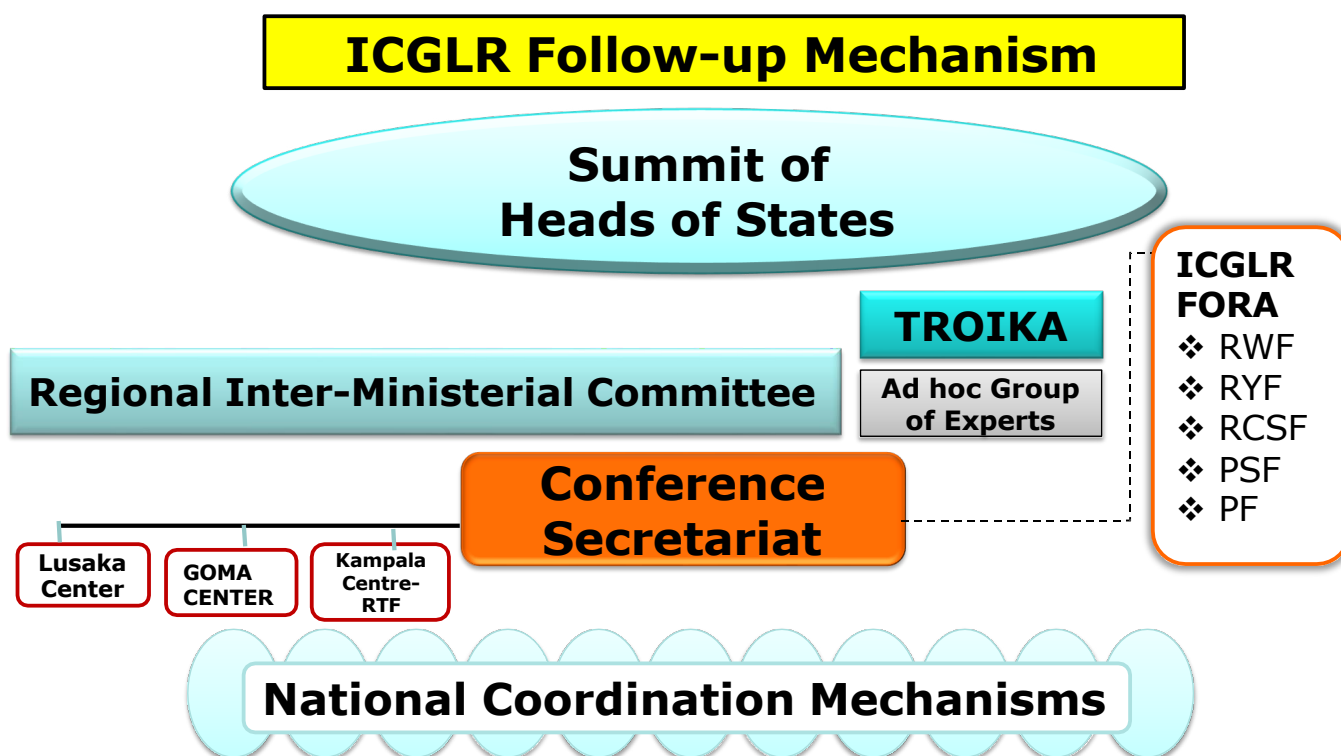
1. Heads of State and Government Summit

---

11 Acronym, Standard Operating Procedures

2. Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee (RIMC)
3. Conference Secretariat
4. National Coordination Mechanisms
5. Regional Security Mechanism (RSM)
  - Comprises the Joint Intelligence Fusion Centre (JIFC) and the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism (EJVM), responsible for monitoring security situations and verifying peace agreements.
  - Art 11, Pact, 2006, amended 2012
  - The Kampala Declaration on SGBV, 2011
  - ICGLR Regional Action Plan 2019-2024 on WPS
6. Committee of Ministers of Defense, Chiefs of Staff, and Ministers of Security
  - Oversees defense and security matters.
7. Special Envoys
  - Appointed to handle specific conflicts or crises within the region, providing on-the-ground diplomatic efforts.
8. ICGLR Forum of Parliaments
  - Ensures legislative support and oversight for the implementation of peace and security initiatives.
9. Regional Training Facility (RTF)
  - Provides training and capacity-building for mediators on gender-responsive practices.
10. Youth Forum
  - Engages young people in peace and security efforts, promoting their active participation in decision-making processes.
11. Civil Society Forum
  - Involves civil society organizations in the peace and security processes to ensure grassroots support and advocacy.
12. Private Sector Forum
  - Encourages the involvement of the private sector in promoting peace and security through economic development and corporate social responsibility.

### 3. ICGLR PEACE AND SECURITY ARCHITECTURE



### 4. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- Purpose: To establish procedures that ensure the integration of gender considerations in all mediation efforts and processes, promoting inclusive and equitable conflict resolution.
- Scope: These SOPs apply to all members of the mediation coordination mechanism, including mediators, support staff, and any stakeholders involved in the mediation process.
- **Guiding Principles**
  - Inclusivity: Ensure the participation of women, youth, and marginalized groups at all stages of the mediation process.
  - Gender Sensitivity: Integrate gender analysis into conflict assessments, strategy development, and the implementation of mediation efforts.
  - Compliance with ICGLR Pact: Adhere to the principles of the ICGLR Pact, particularly the Protocol on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence Against Women and Children, and the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance.

### 5. DEFINITIONS

- Gender-Responsive Mediation: Mediation that actively considers and integrates gender perspectives, ensuring that the needs, experiences, and contributions of all genders are recognized and addressed.
- Mediation Coordination Mechanism: A structured process involving various stakeholders

to coordinate mediation efforts, at institutional level as well as regional, sub-regional, country and team level, ensuring effectiveness and coherence in peace processes.

## 6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Deputy Executive Secretary and Senior Programme Manager to coordinate the GMCM unit and will receive support from the Peace and Security, Gender Women and Children, and Democracy and Good Governance Programmes. The Unit will provide technical and secretarial support to the Mediator.
- Mediation Coordination Unit (MCU): Responsible for overseeing the mediation process, ensuring gender considerations are integrated at all stages.
- Gender Advisors: Specialists embedded within the MCU to provide expertise on gender issues, ensuring that all mediation efforts are gender-responsive (Program on Women, Gender and Children to closely advise).
- Mediators: Individuals responsible for facilitating the mediation process, ensuring that gender perspectives are actively integrated into discussions and outcomes.
- Stakeholders: All parties involved in the mediation process, including conflict parties, civil society, and international organizations, must adhere to gender-responsive practices.
- A Coordination Committee is established, comprising representatives from the ICGLR Secretariat, NCMs, Women and Youth Fora, and other relevant stakeholders. The committee is tasked with developing gender-responsive mediation strategies, guidelines, and monitoring frameworks.
- CoP: Composed of representatives from the ICGLR Women's Forum, Youth Forum, and experts from the Regional Training Facility (RTF) and Levy Mwanawasa Regional Centre for Democracy and Good Governance. This committee provides strategic guidance to ensure that gender considerations are integrated into mediation efforts.
- Decentralized Organs: Utilize ICGLR decentralized organs, such as national coordination mechanisms, to implement and monitor gender-responsive initiatives at the country level.
- Group of Friends of Mediation: Provide necessary resources, advocacy, and support for gender-responsive mediation efforts.

## 7. PREPARATION PHASE

- Conflict-sensitive Gender Analysis (EJVM, JIIFC, Levy Mwanawasa Regional Centre, Peace and Security Directorate):
  - Conduct a gender analysis to understand the specific needs, roles, and impact of the conflict on different genders.
  - Ensure the analysis informs the mediation strategy, highlighting key gender issues that must be addressed.
- Training and Capacity Building (MCU, RTF):
  - The ICGLR Regional Training Facility organizes regular training sessions for

mediators, focusing on gender-sensitive approaches, conflict sensitivity, human rights, women's rights, and the importance of inclusive mediation processes.

- Participants include members of the Coordination Committee, national mediators, and representatives from the Women and Youth Fora.
- Offer continuous capacity-building opportunities to strengthen gender awareness and sensitivity.
- Stakeholder Engagement (MCU, RTF, NCM, Women and Youth fora):
  - Identify and engage with women's organizations, gender advocates, and other relevant stakeholders.
  - Ensure women's groups are adequately represented in the mediation process.
  - Formation of Mediation Teams: Ensure gender-balanced mediation teams with adequate representation from women and youth. Include gender experts or advisors in the teams.

## 8. COORDINATION WITH ICGLR DECENTRALIZED ORGANS

- Step 1: Collaboration with National Coordination Mechanisms (NCMs)
  - The mechanism collaborates with NCMs to ensure that gender-responsive mediation practices are implemented at the national level.
  - NCMs facilitate the participation of local women's groups and youth in the mediation process.
- Step 2: Engagement with the Regional Training Facility (RTF)
  - The mechanism works closely with the RTF to continuously enhance the skills of mediators in gender-responsive practices.
  - The RTF updates training modules based on the evolving needs and challenges identified in mediation processes.

## 9. PLANNING PHASE

- Inclusive Participation:
  - Ensure that both men and women are included in the mediation team and decision-making structures.
  - Promote equal representation of women in all negotiation delegations and stakeholder groups.
- Setting the Agenda:
  - Integrate gender-specific issues into the mediation agenda, such as gender-based violence, women's participation in governance, and access to resources.
  - Ensure that the agenda-setting process is inclusive and participatory, with input from gender-focused organizations.
- Communication and Outreach:
  - Develop communication strategies that are gender-sensitive and ensure that information is accessible to all genders.

- Use inclusive language in all mediation documents, statements, and communications.

## 10. IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

- Conducting Mediation Sessions (Secretariat):
  - Ensure that mediation sessions are conducted in a manner that is sensitive to gender dynamics and power imbalances.
  - Provide safe spaces for women and marginalized groups to voice their concerns and contributions.
- Monitoring Gender-Responsive Practices (RTF):
  - Implement a monitoring system to track the integration of gender perspectives throughout the mediation process.
  - Gender Advisors should regularly assess and report on gender inclusivity and the impact of mediation outcomes on different genders.

## 11. OUTCOME PHASE

- Gender-Sensitive Agreements:
  - Ensure that any agreements reached through mediation are gender-sensitive and address the needs and rights of all genders.
  - Include specific provisions that promote gender equality, protect against gender-based violence, and ensure women’s participation in post-conflict governance.
- Post-Mediation Evaluation:
  - Conduct an evaluation of the mediation process from a gender perspective to assess what worked, what didn’t, and what can be improved.
  - Document lessons learned and best practices for future gender-responsive mediation efforts.
- Follow-Up and Support:
  - Establish mechanisms for the continued monitoring and support of gender-related provisions in peace agreements.
  - Engage with local women’s groups and gender advocates to ensure ongoing advocacy and implementation of gender-sensitive measures.

## 12. REPORTING AND DOCUMENTATION

- Reporting Requirements:
  - Regularly report on gender-related aspects of the mediation process to all relevant stakeholders, including the mediation team, donor agencies, and local communities.
  - Regular Reporting: The ICGLR Secretariat, in collaboration with National Coordinators, should prepare regular reports on the progress and impact of

gender-responsive mediation efforts. These reports should be submitted to the ICGLR Summit of Heads of State and Government and other relevant bodies.

- **Accountability Mechanisms:** Establish accountability mechanisms to ensure that all stakeholders adhere to the principles of gender responsiveness in mediation. This includes mechanisms for addressing any grievances or challenges related to gender inclusion in the mediation process.
- **Documentation:**
  - **Case Studies:** Document case studies of successful gender-responsive mediation efforts and disseminate them through ICGLR training centers and Women and Youth Fora.
  - **Best Practices:** Compile and share best practices on gender-responsive mediation within the ICGLR region and with other international organizations engaged in similar efforts.
  - **Maintain comprehensive records** of all gender-related activities, decisions, and outcomes throughout the mediation process.
  - **Use this documentation** to inform future mediation efforts and improve gender-responsiveness.

## 13. REVIEW AND REVISION

- **Periodic Review:**
  - **Regularly review and update** these SOPs to reflect new insights, best practices, and changes in the field of gender-responsive mediation.
  - **Stakeholder Involvement:** Ensure that the review process involves input from all relevant stakeholders, including the Women and Youth Fora, decentralized organs, and civil society organizations.
  - **Engage with gender experts and stakeholders** in the review process to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness.
- **Feedback Mechanism:**
  - **Establish a feedback mechanism** for all participants to provide input on the gender-responsiveness of the mediation process.
  - **Use feedback** to make continuous improvements to the SOPs and the overall mediation approach.

## 14. COORDINATION AND COMPLEMENTARITY

### 30. Joint Initiatives:

- **Collaborative Platforms:** Establish platforms where women and youth can jointly influence mediation processes, ensuring that both groups' perspectives are integrated.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Engage the Women and Youth Fora in monitoring the

implementation of peace agreements, with a focus on gender responsiveness.

### **31. Coordination with the Group of Friends of Mediation**

- Partnership:
  - Establish a formal partnership with the Group of Friends of Mediation to provide technical support, share best practices, and mobilize resources for gender-responsive mediation initiatives.
- Joint Initiatives:
  - Collaborate on initiatives that promote the inclusion of women and youth in mediation, such as regional conferences, joint statements, and advocacy campaigns.
- Advisory Role:
  - The Group of Friends of Mediation can provide an advisory role, offering guidance on international standards and practices in gender-responsive mediation.

### **32. Interlinkages Between Peace and Security Infrastructure and Women and Youth Fora**

- Policy Integration:
  - Ensure that the Women and Youth Fora are integral to the ICGLR's peace and security infrastructure. Their inputs should shape policies and strategies at both the planning and implementation stages.
- Joint Planning:
  - Facilitate joint planning sessions between the Peace and Security Directorate and the Women and Youth Fora to align their activities with the overall peace and security agenda.
- Resource Allocation:
  - Advocate for dedicated resources within the ICGLR budget to support the participation of women and youth in mediation and peacebuilding efforts.
- Communication Channels:
  - Establish clear communication channels between the Peace and Security infrastructure and the Women and Youth Fora to ensure continuous dialogue and feedback loops.

## REFERENCES:

- ICGLR Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region (2006): The Pact provides the overarching framework for peace, security, and development in the region and includes several protocols relevant to gender-responsive mediation.
- Protocol on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence Against Women and Children (2006): This protocol highlights the need to address gender-based violence in conflict settings.
- Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (2006): Emphasizes the importance of inclusive governance, which is crucial for effective mediation.
- ICGLR Women and Youth Fora: Established to ensure that women and youth have a platform to contribute to peacebuilding and conflict resolution efforts in the region

# TERMS OF REFERENCE POOL OF MEDIATORS

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this terms of reference is to outline the qualifications, competencies, and responsibilities of a mediator to be selected for the ICGLR Pool of Mediators. The mediator will play a critical role in facilitating dialogue and negotiation processes to promote peace and security in the Great Lakes Region.

**Position Title:** Mediator - ICGLR Pool of Mediators

**Location:** ICGLR Member States, with travel as required

**Duration:** Initial appointment for [Specify Duration], with the possibility of extension based on performance and operational requirements.

**Reporting to:** ICGLR Executive Secretariat, ICGLR Peace and Security Directorate and the Chairperson of the ICGLR Peace and Security Council

## 1. BACKGROUND

The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) is committed to promoting peace, security, and stability in the Great Lakes Region. As part of its conflict prevention and resolution framework, the ICGLR has established a Pool of Mediators to address conflicts within its member states effectively. This Terms of Reference (TOR) outlines the qualifications, competencies, and desired skill set for mediators selected to this Pool.

## 2. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this terms of reference is to define the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of mediators in the ICGLR Pool. Mediators will be tasked with leading or supporting mediation efforts in the region, focusing on resolving conflicts through dialogue, negotiation, and other peaceful means.

## 3. SCOPE OF WORK

The mediator will be responsible for:

- **Conducting Mediation:** Leading or supporting mediation efforts in conflicts within the ICGLR member states, ensuring that the process is inclusive, transparent, and impartial.
- **Gender-Responsive Mediation:**
  - Ensure that gender perspectives are integrated into all stages of the mediation process.

- Engage with women’s groups, youth forums, and other gender-focused organizations to include their voices in the mediation process.
- Gender Sensitive Conflict Analysis: Performing in-depth conflict analysis to identify the root causes of the conflict and the interests of the involved parties.
- Stakeholder Engagement: Engaging with all relevant stakeholders, including governments, opposition groups, civil society, women’s groups, and youth organizations, to ensure a comprehensive mediation process.
- Advisory Role: Providing expert advice to the ICGLR Secretariat and member states on mediation strategies and approaches.
- Documentation and Reporting: Preparing detailed reports on the mediation process, outcomes, and lessons learned, and providing regular updates to the ICGLR Secretariat.
- Capacity Building: Contributing to the capacity-building efforts within the region by mentoring junior mediators and supporting training programs.

## 4. QUALIFICATIONS

Candidates must possess the following qualifications:

- Education: A minimum of a Master’s degree in International Relations, Conflict Resolution, Law, Political Science, or a related field.
- Experience: At least 10 years of experience in international mediation, conflict resolution, military (senior officer’s rank) or diplomatic services, with a proven track record in leading or supporting mediation efforts.
- At least 5 years of experience in conflict management or resolution in the Great Lakes Region or similar conflict-affected areas is essential, with a deep understanding of the region’s political, social, and cultural dynamics.
- Demonstrated experience in gender-responsive mediation and the ability to integrate gender perspectives into conflict resolution processes.
- Proven track record in negotiating peace agreements and managing complex, multi-stakeholder mediation processes.
- Language Proficiency: Proficiency in English and French is required, Portuguese and Arabic desirable. Knowledge of other official and local languages spoken in the Great Lakes Region is an asset.

## 5. CORE COMPETENCIES

- Leadership: Demonstrated ability to lead complex mediation processes and manage multi-disciplinary teams in high-pressure environments.
- Analytical Skills: Strong ability to conduct conflict analysis, assess situations objectively, and develop strategic approaches to conflict resolution.
- Communication: Excellent communication and negotiation skills, with the ability to facilitate dialogue between conflicting parties and articulate ideas clearly and persuasively.

- Impartiality and Integrity: A strong commitment to impartiality, neutrality, and maintaining confidentiality throughout the mediation process.

## **6. DESIRED SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**

- Mediation and Negotiation Skills: Exceptional ability to mediate complex conflicts, facilitate dialogue, and negotiate sustainable peace agreements.
- Analytical Skills: Strong ability to analyze conflict dynamics, assess mediation opportunities, and develop context-specific strategies.
- Cultural Sensitivity: Deep understanding of and respect for the cultural and social norms within the Great Lakes Region.
- Communication Skills: Excellent verbal and written communication skills, with the ability to engage effectively with a wide range of stakeholders, including high-level political actors.
- Gender Sensitivity: Proven experience in integrating gender perspectives into mediation processes, ensuring the participation of women and addressing gender-specific issues in conflict resolution.
- Cultural Awareness: In-depth understanding of the cultural, political, and social dynamics of the Great Lakes Region, and the ability to navigate these effectively.
- Problem-Solving: A proactive approach to problem-solving, with the ability to anticipate challenges and develop innovative solutions.
- Networking: Strong networking skills, with the ability to build and maintain relationships with a wide range of stakeholders, including governments, international organizations, and civil society groups.
- Training and Mentoring: Experience in training and mentoring other mediators or conflict resolution practitioners, contributing to the capacity-building efforts in the region.

## **7. REPORTING LINES**

The mediator will report directly to the ICGLR Executive Secretary and will work closely with the ICGLR Peace and Security Directorate. Regular updates and reports will also be shared with the ICGLR Secretariat and relevant member state representatives.

## **8. DURATION AND LOCATION**

Mediators will be engaged on a contractual basis, with assignments varying in duration depending on the nature and complexity of the conflict. Assignments will primarily be in ICGLR member states, with potential travel to other regions as required.

## **9. APPLICATION PROCESS**

Interested candidates should submit the following:

- A detailed curriculum vitae (CV) highlighting relevant experience and qualifications.

- A cover letter explaining the candidate's suitability for the role and motivation for applying.
- Two references from previous employers or clients in the field of mediation or conflict resolution.

## **10. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS**

- Applicants are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the following documents:
- ICGLR Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region (2006)
- ICGLR Protocol on Non-Aggression and Mutual Defence (2006)
- UN Guidance on Effective Mediation (2012)

# **TERMS OF REFERENCE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE**

# **DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) FOR THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE IN MEDIATION OF THE ICGLR**

## INTRODUCTION

The Community of Practice (CoP) in Mediation for the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) is established to enhance the capacity of Member States and stakeholders in mediating conflicts, promoting peace, and fostering regional stability. The CoP will serve as a platform for sharing best practices, building professional competencies, and coordinating mediation efforts across the region.

### Participation in the CoP is open to:

- ICGLR Member States Representatives: Government officials involved in peace and mediation efforts.
- Mediators and Practitioners: Individuals actively engaged in mediation processes within the region.
- Civil Society Organizations: Local and regional NGOs working on conflict resolution and peacebuilding.
- Academics and Researchers: Experts in peace and conflict studies with a focus on the Great Lakes Region.
- International Organizations: Representatives from entities such as the UN, AU, and other regional bodies involved in mediation support.

### Membership Expectations:

- Active participation in CoP activities and discussions.
- Contribution to knowledge sharing through case studies, tools, or resources.
- Commitment to collaborative problem-solving and policy advocacy.

## 1. OBJECTIVES

- Enhance the professional acumen of mediators in the Great Lakes Region.
- Promote the exchange of knowledge, experiences, and best practices in mediation.
- Strengthen the coordination and effectiveness of mediation initiatives within the ICGLR framework.
- Foster collaboration and networking among mediators, practitioners, and stakeholders.
- Build language skills and cultural competencies to facilitate effective mediation across diverse contexts.

## 2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Knowledge Sharing: Facilitate the dissemination of best practices, lessons learned, and innovative approaches in mediation.
- Capacity Building: Organize training sessions, workshops, and seminars to enhance

mediation skills and knowledge.

- **Coordination:** Work with the Mediation Coordination Office (MCO) and other relevant ICGLR bodies to align mediation efforts and avoid duplication.
- **Support:** Provide technical support and advisory services to ongoing mediation processes in the region.
- **Research and Development:** Conduct research on mediation trends, challenges, and opportunities, and develop resources and tools to support mediators.

### 3. PROFESSIONAL ACUMEN

Members of the CoP should possess:

- **Extensive Experience:** A minimum of 5-10 years of experience in mediation or related fields.
- **Educational Background:** Advanced degrees in conflict resolution, international relations, law, political science, or related disciplines.
- **Track Record:** Proven success in leading or participating in mediation processes at local, national, or international levels.

#### 38 Language Skills

- **Multilingual Proficiency:** Fluency in at least two of the following languages: English, French, Arabic, Portuguese.
- **Translation and Interpretation:** Ability to facilitate communication and understanding across different languages and cultural contexts.

#### 39 Competencies

- **Analytical Skills:** Ability to assess complex conflict situations and develop appropriate mediation strategies.
- **Communication Skills:** Strong oral and written communication skills, with the ability to engage effectively with diverse stakeholders.
- **Cultural Competence:** Understanding of and sensitivity to the cultural dynamics and diversity of the Great Lakes Region.
- **Negotiation and Facilitation:** Proficiency in negotiation, facilitation, and consensus-building techniques.

**Ethical Standards:** Commitment to the principles of impartiality, confidentiality, and integrity in mediation.

# **DRAFT OPERATIONAL PLAN BUDGET VERSION 1.1**

# THREE-YEAR OPERATIONAL PLAN AND BUDGET FOR THE ICGLR MEDIATION COORDINATION MECHANISM

## 1. YEAR 1: ESTABLISHMENT AND INITIAL OPERATIONS

### 1. OBJECTIVES:

- Establish the Mediation Coordination Function/Unit (MCU)
- Build initial capacity and resources
- Initiate preliminary mediation efforts

### 2. KEY ACTIVITIES:

#### 1. Office Setup and Staffing

- Located within DES
- Hire Program Officer (PO) and Program Associate (PA)
- Establish ToRs for PO and PA
- Establish office infrastructure and procure necessary equipment

#### 2. Training and Capacity Building

- Conduct initial training programs for mediation staff, mediators, negotiators, and other stakeholders
- Develop partnerships with external experts and institutions
- Liaise with the Group of Friends of Mediation and the African Union

#### 3. Strategic Planning

- Develop detailed mediation strategic and operational plans
- Identify and prioritize conflict areas for mediation efforts

#### 4. Stakeholder Engagement

- Engage with Member States through National Coordination Mechanism, international donors, Community of Practice (CoP), and partner organizations
- Conduct stakeholder mapping and establish communication channels with centers and fora
- Resource Hub: Creation of a repository of best practices, case studies, and tools for effective mediation. Incorporate innovative conflict resolution techniques and digital tools into the resource hub to adapt to diverse and evolving conflict scenarios.

#### 5. Initial Mediation Efforts

- Deploy fact-finding missions to conduct conflict assessments
- Deploy mediators from the Pool of Mediators
- Initiate preliminary mediation processes in identified conflict areas
- Communicate with member of the coordination mechanism, incl. regional centers and fora

- Coordinate information and intelligence with regional centers and fora
- Communicate the mediation strategy

## 6. Monitoring and Evaluation Setup

- Develop monitoring and evaluation frameworks
- Establish baseline data for conflict areas
- Conduct lessons learned
- Use and establish digital technologies for action learning processes

## 4. BUDGET

Item	Description	Annual Cost (USD)	Quantity	Total Cost (USD)
Personnel Costs				
Lead Mediator	Salary and benefits	120,000	1	120,000
Senior Political Advisor	Salary and benefits	100,000	1	100,000
Program Officer	Salary and benefits	70,000	1	70,000
PA (Administrative Support)	Salary and benefits	50,000	1	50,000
Sub-Total Personnel Costs				340,000
Travel and Logistics				
Travel for Mediation Team	Flights, accommodation, per diem	20,000	4 trips/year	80,000
Local Transportation	Vehicles, fuel, maintenance	5,000	12 months	60,000
Sub-Total Travel and Logistics				140,000
Capacity Building				
Training Programs	Workshops, seminars, training materials	30,000	4 sessions	120,000
Knowledge Management	Development of knowledge management framework	10,000	1	10,000
Sub-Total Capacity Building				130,000
Operational Expenses				
Office Supplies	Stationery, printing, communication	5,000	12 months	60,000
Communication	Internet, phone, communication devices	10,000	1xtime	10,000
Sub-Total Operational Expenses				70,000
Contingency Fund				
Contingency Fund	Unforeseen expenses	10% of total budget		68,000
Total Year 1 Budget				748,000

## **2. YEAR 2: CONSOLIDATION AND EXPANSION**

### **1. OBJECTIVES:**

- Consolidate initial mediation efforts
- Expand capacity and resource base
- Strengthen stakeholder relationships

### **2. KEY ACTIVITIES:**

#### **1. Mediation Process Implementation**

- Continue and expand ongoing mediation processes
- Ensure the implementation of mediation agreements

#### **2. Capacity Building and Training**

- Conduct advanced training programs for mediation staff
- Host workshops and seminars with external experts

#### **3. Enhanced Stakeholder Engagement**

- Strengthen relationships with Member States through National Coordination Mechanism and international partners
- Facilitate regular communication and feedback sessions

#### **4. Resource Mobilization**

- Secure additional funding from international donors and partner organizations
- Develop proposals for specific mediation initiatives

#### **5. Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Conduct mid-term evaluations of ongoing mediation efforts
- Adjust strategies based on evaluation outcomes

### 3. YEAR 2 BUDGET

Item	Description	Annual Cost (USD)	Quantity	Total Cost (USD)
Personnel Costs	See above			
Sub-Total Personnel Costs				340,000
Travel and Logistics				
Travel for Mediation Team	Flights, accommodation, per diem	25,000	4 trips/year	100,000
Local Transportation	Vehicles, fuel, maintenance	2,000	12 months	24,000
Sub-Total Travel and Logistics				124,000
Capacity Building				
Training Programs	Workshops, seminars, training materials	20,000	4 sessions	80,000
Knowledge Management	Updating knowledge management framework	12,000	1	12,000
Sub-Total Capacity Building				92,000
Operational Expenses	See above			70,000
Total				626,000
Contingency Fund				
Contingency Fund	Unforeseen expenses	10% of total budget		62,000
Total Year 2 Budget				688,000

### **3. YEAR 3: MATURATION AND SUSTAINABILITY**

#### **1. OBJECTIVES:**

- Mature mediation processes and mechanisms
- Ensure sustainability and long-term impact
- Conduct comprehensive evaluations and adjust strategies

#### **2. KEY ACTIVITIES:**

##### **1. Sustainable Mediation Practices**

- Finalize ongoing mediation processes
- Develop sustainable frameworks for future mediation efforts

##### **2. Capacity Building**

- Institutionalize training programs for continuous capacity building
- Establish a knowledge management system for best practices

##### **3. Long-term Stakeholder Engagement**

- Develop long-term partnerships with key stakeholders
- Facilitate regional and international cooperation

##### **4. Comprehensive Evaluation**

- Conduct final evaluations of all mediation efforts
- Adjust strategies and operational plans based on findings

##### **5. Documentation and Reporting**

- Document all mediation activities and outcomes
- Prepare comprehensive reports for stakeholders and donors

### 3. YEAR 3 BUDGET

Item	Description	Annual Cost (USD)	Quantity	Total Cost (USD)
Personnel Costs	See above			340,000
Travel and Logistics				
Travel for Mediation Team	Flights, accommodation, per diem	20,000	4 trips/year	80,000
Local Transportation	Vehicles, fuel, maintenance	6,000	12 months	72,000
Sub-Total Travel and Logistics				152,000
Capacity Building				
Training Programs	Workshops, seminars, training materials	40,000	4 sessions	160,000
Knowledge Management	Continuous improvement of knowledge management	14,000	1	14,000
Sub-Total Capacity Building				174,000
Operational Expenses	See above			70,000
Total				736,000
Contingency Fund				
Contingency Fund	Unforeseen expenses	10% of total budget		73,600
Total Year 3 Budget				809,600

### 4. SUMMARY OF TOTAL BUDGET FOR THREE YEARS

Year	Total Budget (USD)
Year 1	748,000
Year 2	688,000
Year 3	809,600
Total	2,245,600

This three-year budget is designed to provide the ICGLR Mediation Coordination Mechanism with the necessary resources to effectively coordinate, manage and support mediation initiatives in the Great Lakes Region. The budget includes allowances for inflation and increased activities over time, ensuring the sustainability and adaptability of the mediation efforts.

# **GENDER RESPONSIVE GUIDANCE NOTE**

**ICGLR GENDER-RESPONSIVE MEDIATION COORDINATION  
MECHANISM  
ENHANCING GENDER- RESPONSIVE MEDIATION A GUIDANCE NOTE**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction to Gender-Responsive Mediation Processes.....	2
What is mediation? .....	3
Women and gender: Concepts and considerations .....	3
Why is a gender-responsive mediation process needed? .....	4
What is a gender-responsive mediation process? .....	6
Guidance on gender-responsive implementation of third-party mediation.....	6
Mainstreaming gender in mediation process design.....	6
Research and conflict analysis.....	7
Pre-deployment training for mediators.....	8
Knowledge Management and Operational Guidance.....	8
Gender-Responsive Budgets .....	9
Monitoring and Evaluation .....	9
Raising gender awareness among stakeholders at the negotiating table .....	10
Enhancing the representation of women.....	11
Building effective relations with women’s organizations.....	13
How do mediators work with women’s organizations?.....	13
Developing a gender-responsive agenda .....	15
Security agenda .....	15
Empowerment agenda .....	17
Reaching agreements and implementing them.....	18
Repository of Knowledge: Overview of Relevant Gender Responsive Mediation Guidance	
Notes 19	
Selected Resources .....	21

# 1. INTRODUCTION TO GENDER-RESPONSIVE MEDIATION PROCESSES

## 1.1. WHAT IS MEDIATION?

Mediation is one of several possible responses to conflicts, crises and civil unrest. Mediation can be defined as a structured communication process, in which an impartial third party works with parties to the conflict to find commonly agreeable solutions to their dispute in a way that satisfies all interests at stake.

The ICGLR Strategy on Gender-Responsive Mediation Coordination Mechanism identifies the following key features of mediation:

- It is voluntary, requiring the consent of the parties.
- It leaves autonomy to the parties insofar as they can control the out- come of the mediation process.
- It provides for an inclusive space in which conflicting parties can share sensitive issues.
- It relies on the mediator's impartiality.
- It is based on the mediator's observance of confidentiality.

## 1.2. WOMEN AND GENDER: CONCEPTS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Gender. This term refers to the social construction of roles, behaviors and attitudes associated with being male and female in a particular context. Gender is not a synonym for women. Taking into consideration the historic in- equalities between women and men, including asymmetric access to power and control over resources (which tends to marginalize and discriminate against women), policy interventions have centered on highlighting women's experiences and on improving women's lives. Still, using gender as a synonym for women keeps them as separate group from the male norm, while ignoring male gender aspects and constructions of masculinities, which remain unaddressed.

Persisting stereotypes hinder gender-responsive processes. Stereotypes include ideas that women are peaceful or inherently passive; that they do not want to take part in peace negotiations, or are not sufficiently qualified (while men are rarely held up to this standard). A closer look at the different roles women actually assume or are forced into during conflict – as agents of change, active participants (combatants), supporting participants or human shields, victims and peace activists and primary breadwinners – demonstrates that women are not inherently good, or better than men, or vice-versa. Both genders have a conflict experience that they can add to peace talks and both can also delay progress by adopting uncompromising positions in negotiations. They have things to say about all aspects of the conflict/ peace, not only on “men's issues” or on “women's issues” narrowly conceived.

Non-discrimination means that individuals or groups of individuals which comparatively should not be treated less favorably because of a particular characteristic such as their sex, race, ethnic origin, religion, disability, age of belief.

There is no gender neutrality. Gender, together with class, ethnicity and race, constitute socially defined categories that are intertwined and generate structural inequalities. Thus, mediation practitioners cannot simply 'opt out' of gender. Even if the mediator chooses to have no position on gender, this decision is likely to have a concrete impact on the lives of people, perpetuating gendered inequalities or generating new asymmetries through discrimination, unequal access and control over resources.

Gender equality is more than a politically correct term. It is not a nicety but a necessity<sup>12</sup> and a legally protected human right. Rather than understanding gender responsive interventions as a favor or as an imposition from donors, mediators should take advantage of the transformative potential of gender responsive measures on social relations and peace-building and heed legal responsibilities delineated in international standards and national legislation.

Gender equity refers to the fair and just distribution of all means of opportunities and resources between women and men.

Women empowerment implies deliberate measures for promoting women's sense of self-worth, their ability to determine their own choices and their right to influence social change for themselves and others. It includes raising the status of women through enabling their access to education, awareness, training and financial resources.

Women, just as men, are not a homogenous group of people. They are shaped by interests and other inequality generating structures such as class, nationality, ethnicity, age, faith or sexual orientation. Women do not speak with a single voice and should not be expected to have unified positions, thus women's demands cannot be generalized from talking to one segment of the female population.

### **1.3. WHY IS A GENDER-RESPONSIVE MEDIATION PROCESS NEEDED?**

Among the multiple reasons to embrace a gender perspective in mediation are:

Compliance with normative and policy frameworks. The principles of gender equality and women's empowerment are firmly grounded in international law and have to be addressed in all legislation, policies and processes created by international, regional, national and community stakeholders.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> <https://hdcentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/27AntoniaPotterGendersensitivityWEB-June-2008.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> For regional legal framework of the ICGLR, see: ; As for the international legal framework please see: CEDAW <http://www.un.org/women-watch/daw/cedaw/cedaw.htm>. Beijing Platform for Action: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/>. UNSCR 1325: [http://www.un.org/events/res\\_1325e.pdf](http://www.un.org/events/res_1325e.pdf)

**Inclusivity.** Ensuring the systematic and structured participation of women leaders, gender experts and women's organizations helps to identify the gender dimensions of substantive issues on the negotiation agenda and thus contributes to creating a truly inclusive conflict settlement or peace process.

**Comprehensiveness.** Women have or are forced into different roles in crises, conflicts and post-conflict settings. They are civilians, victims of violence and sexual violence. They constitute the majority of refugees and internally displaced persons; they are combatants and providers of support to fighters. They head households after the absence or loss of their husbands and become the main breadwinners; they are responsible for the health and education of their children and are confronted with the demobilized, mainly male, fighters reintegrating into their communities. Enhancing female representation and taking into account women's needs, vulnerabilities, capacities, priorities and interests in peace and mediation processes generates a more comprehensive response that is more likely to create a stable and secure peace.

**Efficiency.** Adopting a gender perspective is likely to install a broader set of female and male mediation skills and qualities in conflict settlement and can increase the efficiency of the overall mediation process.

**Effectiveness.** Thorough information gathering from both men and women about the impact of a crisis or conflict provides for a more balanced set of facts and can help the mediation process effectively accomplish its goals.

**Cost-efficiency.** Planning a gender-responsive mediation process from the start is more cost-effective than piecemeal approaches with limited impact that add gender issues through ad-hoc measures or externally funded projects at later stages.

**Stability.** Addressing conflict-related patterns of violence and sexual violence, including sexual violence against men and boys, in mediation can foster a more stable peace. There is a direct link between conflict brutality and intimate/partner violence in post-conflict settings.

**Sustainability.** Including all segments of the population in the mediation and conflict-settlement process can have a major impact on the sustainability of peace. That is because the diverse stakeholders discussing a breadth of issues they might otherwise not have discussed can have a crucial influence on the post-conflict stability and security.<sup>14</sup>

Considering that more than 50 per cent of peace agreements fail within the first five years of signature, approaches to formal peace negotiations mediated by third parties need to be revisited in order to increase levels of efficiency and sustainability. Excluding women from mediation and decision-making clearly does not seem to be a successful strategy.

---

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.un.org/shestandsforpeace/content/women's-participation-peace-negotiations-connections-between-presence-and-influence-un-women>

## 1.4. WHAT IS A GENDER-RESPONSIVE MEDIATION PROCESS?

A gender-responsive, third-party mediation rests on three overlapping and intertwined areas:

- Representation and participation: Comprises the measures and initiatives taken to reverse under-representation of women in peace negotiations and to allow for women's meaningful participation.
- Institutional framework and process management: Includes planning, design and implementation of third-party mediation processes in such a way that (institutional) policies, procedures and practices take into account the impact they will have on individuals as a result of their gender.
- Substantive issues on the agenda and content of agreements: Refers to the extent to which gender dimensions of substantive topics on the agenda and the provisions contained in agreements are designed and implemented to be equally beneficial to men and women and would neither undermine nor harm them.

## 2. GUIDANCE ON GENDER-RESPONSIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIRD-PARTY MEDIATION

Gender-responsiveness in mediation and peace processes should be included in the early planning stages in order to be fully effective and to ensure the maintenance of a gender perspective throughout the process.

This chapter highlights several actions third-party mediators can take to create a gender-responsive mediation process. Because one size does not fit all circumstances, appropriate measures should be tailored to specific features of each conflict. When designing an approach, each mediator should incorporate the parameters and principles outlined below.

### 2.1. MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN MEDIATION PROCESS DESIGN

Gender mainstreaming ensures that all (institutional) policies and activities take into account the effect they will have on individuals as a result of their gender. It is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action in any area at all levels. In a gender-responsive mediation approach, mediators should mainstream gender issues in all aspects of the process. This includes research and analysis; training and capacity-building; knowledge management and operational guidance; budgeting, monitoring and evaluation; as well as outreach, networking, co-operation and coordination. The concerns and experiences of women and men have to be an integral part of each of the areas. Both must benefit from the measures undertaken.

The following are entry points for mainstreaming gender considerations into mediation and peace processes:

### 2.2. RESEARCH AND CONFLICT ANALYSIS

To better understand the conflict context and create a mediation process that can deliver a sustainable agreement, mediators have to figure out the dynamics on the ground. Research and (conflict) analysis as a basis for the design of the mediation process will inform decision-making, set priorities and shape the agenda. Assessing and mapping of stakeholders and identifying critical issues as well as conflict dynamics need to be conducted in a gender sensitive manner. This entails reaching out to different groups of women and men at various levels, as “men and women who live the conflict have knowledge and wisdom to contribute to the solution to the conflict”. Consultations need to be conducted with female and male government and opposition representatives, combatants, representatives of the business community, educators, health care providers, refugees and internally displaced persons, victims of sexual violence, youth organizations, religious leaders, women’s organizations, possible spoilers of the peace process

and influential individuals. If available, sex-disaggregated data from different areas that are included in the mediation agenda should be collected and included into a gender-responsive assessment process.

### **Key questions are:**

- Do women and men have the same needs, constraints, opportunities, and resources?
- If no, how do they vary?
- How does a planned action impact men and women differently?
- How can contrasting needs and constraints be translated into mediation implementation design?

### **Access to Resources and Opportunities:**

- Addressing the unequal access to resources, opportunities, and power structures that affect different genders. For example, women and marginalized groups may face barriers in accessing economic resources, education, and leadership opportunities, which should be factored into mediation and coordination strategies.
- Purposely improving women's access to justice is critical in post-conflict settings, especially for those seeking accountability for war crimes or gender-based violence.

### **Power Dynamics and Structural Inequalities**

- Understanding and addressing the underlying gendered power dynamics and structural inequalities that may exist within the community or between parties in conflict. Mediators should be aware of how traditional gender roles and stereotypes might affect negotiations and outcomes.

### **Inclusive and Gender-Sensitive Language**

- Ensuring that the language used in the mediation process is inclusive, non-discriminatory, and respectful of all genders. This includes promoting gender-neutral language and avoiding terms or practices that reinforce harmful stereotypes.

### **Creating Safe Spaces**

- Providing safe and supportive environments where individuals from all genders can participate freely in discussions, negotiations, and decision-making processes without fear of intimidation, discrimination, or violence.

### **Addressing Gender Impacts of Conflict**

- Recognizing how conflict impacts different genders differently—such as the disproportionate economic, social, and psychological effects on women and children—and ensuring that recovery and peace-building efforts address these gendered consequences.

## Relief and Recovery for Women and Girls in Post-Conflict Settings

- Women and girls often face specific challenges during the recovery phase, including displacement, loss of livelihoods, and the need for psychosocial support. The NAP should focus on gender-responsive recovery efforts that empower women economically and socially.
- Economic empowerment of displaced women: Develop programs that provide microfinance opportunities and vocational training for displaced women, enabling them to rebuild their lives and support their families.
- Meet the needs of women, including reproductive health services and secure shelters for women and children.

## 2.3. PRE-DEPLOYMENT TRAINING FOR MEDIATORS

Tailored gender-inclusive training or modules of general instruction for mediators in the pre-deployment phase should aim to enhance the ability of male and female professionals to understand women's security issues and incorporate this throughout the entire process. Mediators need to understand the relevance of international legally binding standards and commitments on Women, Peace and Security and learn how to design a gender-sensitive mediation process. The ultimate goal of the training is to ensure accountability and responsibility of the mediators for enhancing women's meaningful participation and engaging conflict parties to include gender dimensions in the agenda. Trainers should be experts on gender issues, Women, Peace and Security and/or inclusive mediation processes.

## 2.4. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE

Knowledge management is the practice of capturing, storing and sharing lessons learned from the past and applying them in the future. In the case of gender responsive knowledge management, lessons learned and good practices should be collected from professionals who were or are engaged in inclusive mediation processes. Relevant information can be gathered by different stakeholders (national and international institutions or organizations, civil society, experts, academia etc.) through interviews and debriefing sessions so that it can provide guidance for future gender inclusive mediation<sup>15</sup>. The acquired knowledge can also be applied to defining mandates, standard procedures, protocols and rules of engagement to facilitate mediators in working towards gender equality.

## 2.5. GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETS

Gender-responsive budgeting is based on the acknowledgement that the allocation of financial resources reflects values, power relations and political priorities and has different impacts on

15 <https://peaceresourcecollaborative.org/en/theories/peace-process-peace-negotiation/make-room-for-peace-a-guide-to-womens-participation-in-peace-processes>

women and men. It is a viable instrument to translate gender-related policy commitments into practice and ensure effective and sustainable implementation of policies during negotiations and with respect to peace agreements. As such, gender-responsive budgeting constitutes a useful indicator for measuring the achievements related to equality commitments.

Forward-looking budgetary practices avoid piecemeal approaches and ad hoc gender initiatives that may lack sustainability and risk being among the first to be discontinued in the event of financial shortages. Thus, gender-responsive mediation requires earmarked funds to flexibly and timely address concrete and diverse needs on the ground. Budgetary allocations may serve to enhance technical expertise for stakeholders at the negotiation table by deploying gender experts or organizing professional skills training of those directly involved. Further, financial allocations can be used to support women participating in formal negotiations, increasing the size of delegations or making available spaces for separate consultations and discussions. Finally, they can be used to support concrete needs of women's organizations, be it training or arranging events. It can also help women from grassroots organizations that may not be in the position to finance their own travel, accommodation and child care.

## **2.6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Limited attention has been paid to monitoring and evaluating gender-responsiveness in third-party mediations. Still, tracking such developments could yield important insights for mediators to maintain a certain level of gender responsiveness. Gender-responsive monitoring may deliver insights into the performance of a mediation delegation as well as on the overall process, provided that clear objectives and targets for performance have been established early on. Examples of possible indicators include: the percentage of women and men within the mediation delegation; the percentage of women with positions of responsibility within the overall negotiation process; the number of direct meetings with women's organizations during specific negotiation phases; the number of topics on the agenda dealing implicitly or explicitly with gender or the percentage of funds per period allocated to gender-equality enhancing projects and/or women-specific projects. Qualitative indicators might cover the type, level and quality of women's participation, local, national and international media coverage and the women's involvement in it.

## **2.7. RAISING GENDER AWARENESS AMONG STAKEHOLDERS AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE**

Gender-responsive mediators assisted by their team need to raise awareness and gather support among stakeholders at the negotiating table in order to ensure that women are included in the negotiations themselves and that they contribute to the decisions and final outcome of the entire process.

While pro-actively working on gender inclusiveness in the planning and process design, there are certain measures mediators may pursue to reach out to delegations and promote the significance of a gender-aware mediation process:

### **Act as a role model**

By including women and men in their teams, mediators already set standards and send a signal to the negotiating parties of the gender awareness and inclusive-ness of their approach. Mediators also have effectively engaged as door openers to enhance female participation in negotiation processes by being pro-active.

### **Convene separate information sessions**

To get the negotiating parties acquainted with the added value of inclusive mediation processes, mediators can convene separate information sessions where gender experts explain the tools and benefits of gender awareness, offer examples of good practices and make proposals on how to include gender in the respective mediation process.

### **Offer training to build expertise**

Parties to the conflict might be willing to engage in inclusive mediation processes, but do not have the expertise to do so. In such cases, mediators should facilitate training courses for delegations or their advisers. Mediators can also pro-actively reach out to stakeholders and offer training.

### **Use favorable arguments**

Mediators may explore different entry points and arguments to introduce gender equality into conversations with stakeholders, presenting it as an issue of shared interest rather than an outside imposition:

- **Non-contentious issue:** Introduce gender equality as a non-contentious issue that can be discussed in a depoliticized way. This may constitute a means to connect the conflict parties, for example through joint training sessions on gender-responsiveness that would also serve as confidence-building measures;
- **Common interests:** constitute a means to connect the conflict parties, for example through joint training sessions on gender-responsiveness that would also serve as confidence-building measures;
- **Compliance with principles:** Communicate to the parties that they are bound by international legal and policy frameworks to respect gender equality. Mediators should also identify specific commitments that the parties have already undertaken and refer to them. They could include ratification of international conventions, adoption of national gender-equality legislation and strategies or efforts to combat discrimination. These issues may constitute entry points to enhance discussions on gender equality and to counter arguments such as that gender equality is “culturally impossible”.

## Offer incentives

Mediators may proactively explore the extent to which incentives for the inclusion of women within negotiating parties are appropriate: Perhaps they can leave seats empty to symbolize the absence of women, provide more talking time if gender balance is observed or disburse support funds depending on the inclusion of women in negotiating teams.

## Reach out to the public

Mediators also may include and prioritize the topic of gender equality in public statements, presentations or interviews. Creating awareness on this topic in the public will exercise influence on the negotiators. It can also reach and mobilize women's organizations. Preferably, mediators can engage media as allies on this subject. However, if the outreach to the public is not performed with necessary sensibility it could backfire, cause offence and risk women's security.

# 3. ENHANCING THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN

The international legal and policy framework on Women, Peace and Security calls upon stakeholders to address the under-representation of women in peace negotiations. Third-party mediators should hold themselves accountable and increase the number of female mediators by using gender parity principles. Thus, the mediation delegation can convey a message of inclusiveness to negotiating parties and lead by example when seeking to reverse women's under-representation in formal negotiating processes.

Women in mediation processes can act, among other things as:

- Lead mediators
- Members of mediation teams
- Delegates of negotiating parties
- Gender advisers to mediators
- Gender advisers to negotiating parties
- Women protection advisers to mediators
- Women protection advisers to negotiating parties
- Advisers on technical topics like gender and land rights, gender and disarmament demobilization and reintegration
- Members of technical committees
- Members of working groups
- Representatives and observers from civil society
- Signatories

Moreover, efforts need to be made to ensure gender balance in different concrete activities such as needs assessment, ceasefire-monitoring missions or in response mechanisms. In addition,

women's participation needs to be increased in the fields of operative mediation support, including research and analysis, knowledge management and outreach as well as co-ordination. Some tools to do this include:

- Affirmative action or temporary special measures constitute decisions and actions that challenge gender imbalance through preferential appointment of women. This could include specific training schemes for targeted groups of women (like young women, or women from a specific background or ethnic community), preferential selection from rosters or pools of experts or valuation of gender equality skills and proven capacity as conditions for promotion. Such measures are temporal in nature and should be suspended once gender balance is reached.
- Quotas are a form of temporary measures to overcome unequal opportunity and have been used to improve women's representation in the political sphere.<sup>16</sup> Quotas should be framed as a minimum to avoid being interpreted as a maximum: for example at least three seats on the Commission, rather than simply three seats on the Commission.
- Mentoring schemes may be used to help junior and mid-career women in international organizations and institutions gather first-hand experience of formal mediations by working with senior professionals. Mentoring is a useful tool to prepare future generations of mediators. According to a study of the careers of lead mediators, mentoring women in their 30s and 40s helps prepare them for senior assignments between the ages of 55 and 75<sup>17</sup>.
- Gender Expertise needs to be owned by both male and female professionals. Increasing representation and enhancing women's participation is not a guarantee for gender-responsiveness of the overall process. Qualified women (like men) who reach positions of responsibilities might not necessarily have a firm grasp of what a gender perspective means, know how to act in gender-responsive ways or be committed to enhancing gender equality. So female and male professionals need to learn to apply gender responsiveness, whether it is through training courses, mentoring, information sessions on UNSCR 1325 and the Women, Peace and Security agenda or on the job training. Gender expertise can be ensured by hiring permanent gender advisers as well as thematic specialists with a clear understanding of gendered dimensions in their respective areas of expertise. This can include professionals on specific women's security issues like sexual violence or experts on land rights.

---

16 [https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/SCR1325WomensParticipation\\_IQd2010.pdf](https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/SCR1325WomensParticipation_IQd2010.pdf)

17 <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/20277/WetheWomen.pdf>

### **3.1. BUILDING EFFECTIVE RELATIONS WITH WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS**

Practitioners and scholars recognize the importance of linking mediation and dialogue efforts at different levels to ensure effective mediation. Interaction and cross track communication between the formal and informal processes can result in a more comprehensive consideration of interests and in an agenda-setting that is more likely to be accepted by broader segments of society. In addition, reaching out to civil society, including those operating at the grassroots and community level, may boost the credibility of the overall process, enhance stakeholders' ownership and increase sustainability of agreements reached. Informal mediation actors often have extensive networks, a more direct understanding of the context and the parties involved in conflict. And, they mostly enjoy trust at local level or at least have access to it.

### **3.2. HOW DO MEDIATORS WORK WITH WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS?**

#### **DELIVER AND EXCHANGE INFORMATION**

Mediators can play a key role in enhancing relations between peace negotiation processes and women's peace initiatives, by providing information on procedures, particular rules of engagement and other modalities of the negotiations. Accurate and complete information delivered and exchanged in a timely manner will support women's organizations in developing appropriate strategies that they can integrate in the peace process.

#### **SET UP CONSULTATION MECHANISMS**

Depending on the context, the parties might agree to establish permanent consultation mechanisms with women's organizations within the formal set-up of the mediation. Besides, mediators can address civil society assemblies or initiate information sessions, informal platforms or thematic working sessions. Such mechanisms not only serve to disseminate information, but help the mediator to feel the pulse of civil society's perception of the processes, respond to concrete demands of civil society representatives (such as meeting directly with negotiating parties) and feed their input back into the official processes. Mediators are vital in generating the right environment to support women's peace initiatives in putting forward their contributions, demands and recommendations to formal negotiations.

#### **IDENTIFY NEGOTIATING TOPICS**

In accordance with UNSCR 1325 and consecutive WPS related resolutions, mediators need to ensure full and effective participation of women and their organizations in peace processes. These efforts should include taking into account women's contributions and asking for input on a range of topics that are on the negotiation agenda. In addition, mediators will need to be prepared for women to identify issues beyond the set topics. Informal consultations with women's initiatives

and organizations have to start early on, in the phase of information gathering, fact finding and other assessment activities.

### **FACILITATE TRAINING**

To strengthen the impact of their work in areas relevant to the negotiations, women's peace initiatives may require easy access to training in areas like mediation techniques, advocacy, lobbying, engagement with the media, conflict resolutions tools, conflict analysis, and peace process terminology. In addition, knowledge of international legal frameworks, resolutions and women's human rights paired with practical training on how to document cases of human rights abuses may be useful. Mediators can explore options to collaborate with observing countries, groups of friendly states and donor governments to finance projects that support enhancing skills women need to meaningfully participate in negotiations. Sometimes ensuring participation of women will require overcoming obstacles that relate to gendered roles and responsibilities. For instance, child care and/or financial restraints may constrain women's ability to attend meetings. Or women may not be allowed to travel on their own due to cultural constraints or they may have difficulty obtaining the necessary travel documents and visas.

### **ORGANIZE COMMON ACTIVITIES**

The mediator may organize common activities between delegations to the negotiation and representatives of the diverse women's initiatives. These efforts would promote confidence among the stakeholders and help identify challenges to women's meaningful participation at the table. Options may include conducting joint fact-finding missions and field visits or attending the same training.

### **AVOID SECURITY RISKS**

Women's organizations may pay a high price for collaborating with mediators and their teams or international initiatives if there is no agreement on co-operation by the parties to the conflict. Under such circumstances women can be viewed as traitors. Thus, mediators need to pay particular attention not to expose women leaders and their organizations to security risks.

### **CREATE PARALLEL FORA FOR WOMEN**

Parallel fora may constitute safe spaces for women to exchange views as well as discuss and draft their own agenda. This might be a relevant way to collect input and bring it to the negotiation table, particularly in highly formal contexts with limited opportunities for women's initiatives to engage. Mediators can communicate the women's contributions to the negotiating parties through different mechanisms such as events in which women hand over written demands, formal meetings to address negotiation delegations in plenary sessions or the use of trusted intermediaries. However, mediators should utilize this measure cautiously and as a temporary one in order not to run the risk of completely marginalizing the impact of women and women's organizations on the negotiation process.

## ORGANIZE WOMEN'S MEETINGS

Women's conferences and events may allow for peer-exchange, networking and alliance building among different local, national and regional initiatives. This helps develop focused strategies for women's organizations to engage in negotiation processes.

## 4. DEVELOPING A GENDER-RESPONSIVE AGENDA

The term agenda is understood in broad terms and comprises substantive issues addressed throughout the different negotiation phases, starting with “talks about talks” in the pre-negotiation phase where potential issues are already put on the table. Mediators play an important role in identifying gender dimensions to issues on the agenda that should not only take into account the protection and security of women in the transition and reconstruction phases, but also their political and economic empowerment. Virtually every substantive issue on the peace agenda has a gender dimension, which will affect individuals differently depending on their gendered roles and responsibilities.

Gender differences shape interests, vulnerabilities and needs of people. Mediation professionals should acquire expertise on how these considerations affect substantial issues in the negotiation. Furthermore, mediators should learn how gender could be taken into account when developing solutions to these issues in a way that they would consider the interests, vulnerabilities and needs of the whole population.

Essentially, topics on mediation and negotiation agendas can be roughly divided into two areas: security and empowerment. Both areas are closely interlinked and interdependent and have to be considered from the cessation of hostilities through the establishment of ceasefire agreements and the discussions that lead to peace agreements to implementation arrangements.

## 5. SECURITY AGENDA

Examples of substantive issues addressed in third-party mediations and related to security may include:

- Ceasefire agreements
- Security arrangements
- Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of fighters
- Deployment of joint peace keeping forces
- Monitoring mechanisms
- Incident response mechanisms
- Return of refugees and internally displaced persons
- Prisoner exchange
- Border security
- Freedom of movement
- Access to land
- Missing persons
- Conflict-related sexual violence
- Security sector reform

Some of the key questions mediation professionals may ask to identify gender dimensions of substantive security issues on the agenda are:

- What are the key security considerations of women, girls, men and boys? Are they different? If so, how?
- Are women undergoing particular vulnerabilities that expose them to increased risks and unsafe coping mechanisms?
- What are the gendered patterns of violence? What measures have been undertaken to protect women, girls, men and boys from on-going violence?
- Do women and men have equal access to services, benefits, entitlements and opportunities? Can they benefit equally?
- Have gender specific health needs been addressed (including sexual and reproductive health services, child-care services, or monthly hygiene kits for women's specific needs)?
- How can women be included in security arrangements, peacekeeping forces and monitoring mechanisms?

In particular, gender and mediation experts emphasize that sexual violence in conflict has to be addressed from the very beginning of a mediation and negotiation process, when the principles of ceasefire and peace agreements are set up. The UN Guidance for Mediators Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence stresses that “the use of sexual violence humiliates, dominates, instils fear, breaks identity and creates enduring ethnic, family and community division”.<sup>18</sup> Addressing

---

<sup>18</sup> <https://dppa.un.org/en/guidance-mediators-addressing-conflict-related-sexual-violence-ceasefire-and-peace-agreements>

conflict-related sexual violence from the start can increase the durability of peace by mitigating security fears and improving transparency, accountability and trust among parties. If left unaddressed, conflict-related sexual violence can be used as a means to continue acts of war outside the purview of agreements and monitoring. This can trigger cycles of vengeance and vigilantism, and risks undermining the confidence in agreements and possibly the mediation process itself.

The issue of sexual violence has to be included in monitoring mechanisms. The extent of sexual violence that has occurred needs to be established. Perpetrators should be prosecuted and victims' needs addressed via transitional justice processes. An example of the strongest existing ceasefire agreement with respect to sexual violence is the Libreville Ceasefire Agreement for the Central African Republic, signed January 2013. The parties in the conflict agreed to the immediate halt of sexual violence, declared sexual violence a prohibited act in the definition of ceasefire and arranged to address sexual violence in a program of urgent priority. Often considered as too private or potentially threatening to conflict parties, there are also other issues that lie at the core of women's conflict experiences and have an impact on the security and justice agenda throughout the negotiation processes. These include forced recruitment into armed forces or other parties to the conflict, human trafficking, increased intimate/ partner violence, and crimes involving small arms and light weapons.

## 6. EMPOWERMENT AGENDA

Mediation and negotiation processes that aim to restructure or reconstruct a post-conflict society in order to create sustainable peace have to take into account that all the principles and values that are to be enshrined in future state documents apply to women and men in equal measure. The issues that are likely to be discussed with a view of peace-building and reconstruction processes and that have to be gender mainstreamed include:

- The constitution
- Legal frameworks
- Economic recovery

Elaborating constitutional and legal frameworks comprises a number of issues that have a vital impact on the quality of the reconstruction and peace-building efforts and processes, including fundamental rights and freedoms as well as the structure and role of government institutions. This is the point in time when stakeholders have the opportunity to mend past inequalities and establish the foundation of a society that will consider the rights and needs of the whole population: men and women, boys and girls, the young and the elderly, ethnicities and minorities.

Some of the measures and the mechanisms that can be established to ensure that gender-inclusiveness is promoted through the peace agreement and will persist could include the:

- Development of a national gender equality strategy;
- Establishment of a national women's commission or committee;
- Establishment of a Transitional Justice mechanism which is gendered and sensitive to issues of victim's rights;
- Formation of a women's caucus in parliament;
- Development of national action plans and/or other strategies for the implementation of CEDAW as well as UNSCR 1325 and subsequent resolutions on Women, Peace and Security;
- Introduction of time-limited gender equality quotas;
- Training seminars or workshops on gender-inclusiveness for all government institutions;
- Skills developments for women (scholarships, mentoring programs etc.);
- Establishment of women's resource centers;
- Access to grants and loans for economic empowerment;
- Co-operation with women's civil society organizations;
- Allocation of budgets for all the above.

Some of the key questions mediation professionals may ask to identify gender dimensions of substantive empowerment issues on the agenda are:

- Does the constitution guarantee protection against gender-based discrimination?
- Is there additional national legislation and policy envisioned in order to enable the implementation of this guarantee?

- Have women been included in all reconstruction efforts and at all levels?
- Are women represented in newly established institutions, different governmental branches and temporary bodies, such as constitutional assemblies, security institutions or political parties?
- Are there special measures and mechanisms in place to assist with reaching gender equality (like quotas or women's committees)?
- Have structural obstacles to women's full and equal participation been addressed? (Can women participate in elections and stand for elections?)
- Has equal access to and control over resources been ensured for women and men (including access to credits, grants, land and distribution of tools, equal pay for equal work)?
- Have obstacles such as discriminatory inheritance laws and laws regulating the ownership of land been repealed?
- Have women's social and economic contributions during conflict been acknowledged and are they now well positioned to contribute to post-conflict reconstruction?
- Have means been explored to incorporate women into income-generating activities (like starting small businesses and community projects in the post-conflict setting)?
- Are women involved in the monitoring of human rights and humanitarian conditions?
- A final, essential question that mediators have to consider throughout assessment, agenda-setting, negotiations and conclusion of agreements and documents has to be: Is the language used in oral and written communication and drafting gender-sensitive?

## 7. REACHING AGREEMENTS AND IMPLEMENTING THEM

It is likely that memoranda of understanding, transitional arrangements and partial accords will be signed before a comprehensive agreement is reached. These different settlements need to comply with international standards, treaties and conventions and should ensure that no amnesty is granted for crimes committed during the conflict or that conflict-related gender-based and sexual violence does not remain unaddressed.

Negotiators must also ensure that all issues and priorities that were addressed at the negotiating table are incorporated into drafts and subsequent versions of accords. Most importantly, they must be included in the final agreement. In Sudan, women-specific points agreed upon during multiple negotiations were subsequently reduced and eventually dropped by an all-male team of professionals in charge of drafting the agreements.

The final agreement sets the threshold for professionals in charge of implementing the provisions that will either help or hinder the implementation of gender-responsive stipulations of the accord.

Some issues that mediators have to take into consideration when concluding the mediation and negotiation process:

- Gender experts or reliable representatives of women's organizations should be involved in the different stages of drafting peace agreements, including the final stage.
- It is highly desirable to have (expert) women from the negotiating parties sign the intermediate and final documents and agreements in order to make sure that gender equality issues are properly addressed and have their legitimacy.
- Provisions should be worded as explicitly and accurately as possible, using inclusive language. Abstract formulations or gender-neutral language that may open problematic interpretative spaces should be avoided.
- Gender sensitive language should survive translation into local language and be accurate.
- Women's organizations should be involved in planning, implementing and monitoring of agreement provisions.
- Women's civil society initiatives need be provided with the proper conditions to contribute to the implementation of agreements. This requires that women are notified of the content of the agreement, provided with space and if necessary with resources for the reconstruction phase.
- Aim for a minimum of 40 per cent of female and male participation in oversight commissions and other institutions; consider using quotas or other affirmative actions in this regard.
- It is important that all provisions of the agreement are implemented with full regard of their gender specific implications and that they are carried forward in a comprehensive and timely manner and are adequately funded.

- Mechanisms should be established to review progress on the implementation of the signed peace agreements on a regular basis; the results should be shared widely with decision-makers and the civil society.

## 8. REPOSITORY OF KNOWLEDGE: OVERVIEW OF RELEVANT GENDER RESPONSIVE MEDIATION GUIDANCE NOTES

These guidance notes provide mediators, policymakers, and practitioners with strategies and best practices to incorporate gender perspectives in mediation processes effectively:

### 1. UN WOMEN AND UN DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS (DPA) - “GUIDANCE ON GENDER AND INCLUSIVE MEDIATION STRATEGIES” (2017)

#### Overview:

- This guidance note provides comprehensive strategies for integrating gender perspectives into mediation processes. It outlines practical steps for mediators to ensure women’s meaningful participation and to address gender-related concerns during peace negotiations.

#### Key Elements:

- Importance of inclusive mediation teams and the role of women in negotiation delegations.
- Approaches to include gender-specific provisions in peace agreements.
- Guidance on creating gender-sensitive ceasefire agreements and security arrangements.

#### Reference:

- UN Women and UN DPA. Available at: <https://dppa.un.org/en/guidance-gender-and-inclusive-mediation-strategies>

### 2. MEDIATION SUPPORT NETWORK (MSN) - “GENDER-RESPONSIVE PEACE AND CONFLICT ANALYSIS: PRACTITIONER’S TOOLKIT” (2016)

#### Overview:

- This toolkit provides a framework for conducting gender-responsive conflict analysis, a critical first step in designing effective mediation strategies. It emphasizes understanding the different impacts of conflict on men, women, boys, and girls.

#### Key Elements:

- Gender analysis in conflict contexts to identify the roles and needs of different gender groups.
- Tools for integrating gender perspectives in conflict assessments and planning processes.
- Practical case studies and lessons learned from past mediation efforts.

## REFERENCE:

- MediationSupportNetwork. Available at <https://css.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/special-interest/gess/cis/center-for-securities-studies/pdfs/MSNDiscussionPoints-2018-09.pdf>

### 3. UN WOMEN - “WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN PEACE NEGOTIATIONS: CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PRESENCE AND INFLUENCE” (2012)

#### Overview:

- This guidance note discusses the importance of women’s participation in peace negotiations and how their inclusion impacts the outcomes of peace agreements. It provides evidence-based recommendations for enhancing women’s influence in mediation processes.

#### Key Elements:

- Analysis of the barriers to women’s participation in peace negotiations.
- Strategies for increasing women’s substantive involvement and influence in peace processes.
- Recommendations for international actors supporting mediation efforts to prioritize gender equality.

#### Reference:

- UN Women. Available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2012/10/un-women-sourcebook-on-women-peace-and-security>

### 4. GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT NETWORK (GADN) - “GENDER-RESPONSIVE MEDIATION AND PEACE PROCESSES: A PRACTICE GUIDE” (2018)

#### Overview:

- This practice guide offers a step-by-step approach to incorporating gender perspectives into peace processes. It is designed for practitioners in the field and provides actionable recommendations for mediators.

#### Key Elements:

- Detailed guidance on planning and implementing gender-responsive mediation.
- Tools for integrating women’s rights and gender equality into peace agreements.
- Monitoring and accountability mechanisms to ensure gender commitments are met.

#### Reference:

- <https://hdcentre.org/insights/mediation-practice-series-gender-inclusive-peacemaking/>

## 9. SELECTED RESOURCES

- Bell, Christine (2015). "Text and Context: Evaluating Peace Agreements for Their 'Gender Perspective'." Political Settlements Research Programme, available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2017/1/text-and-context-evaluating-peace-agreements>
- Initiative on Quiet Diplomacy SCR 1325 and Women's Participation: Operational Guidelines from Conflict Resolution and Peace Processes, (2010) available at: [http://www.iqdiplomacy.org/images/stories/handbook/pdf/scr1325\\_iqd.pdf](http://www.iqdiplomacy.org/images/stories/handbook/pdf/scr1325_iqd.pdf)
- Itto, A., Guests at the table? The role of women in peace processes. (Accord 18, 2005) available at: [http://www.c-r.org/sites/c-r.org/files/Accord18\\_19Guestsatthetable\\_2006\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.c-r.org/sites/c-r.org/files/Accord18_19Guestsatthetable_2006_ENG.pdf)
- Potter, A. We the Women: Why conflict mediation is not just a job for men, (Humanitarian Dialogue, 2005) available at: <http://www.hdcentre.org/files/We%20the%20Women.pdf>
- Potter, A. Gender sensitivity: nicety or necessity in peace-process management? (Oslo Forum Network of Mediators, 2008) available at: <http://www.hdcentre.org/files/Antonia%20Potter%20Gender%20sensitivity%20WEB.pdf>
- Potter, A. G is for Gendered: taking the mystery out of gendering peace agreements. (Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue 2011) available at: <http://www.hdcentre.org/publications/g-gendered-taking-mystery-out-gendering-peace-agreements>
- ICGLR Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region (2006) available at: <https://icglr.org/the-pact/>
- Protocol on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence Against Women and Children (2006), available at <https://icglr.org/the-pact/>
- ICGLR Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, 2021-2024, available at: [https://icglr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2022-08-ICGLR\\_-RAP\\_ENG\\_Ver\\_1\\_REP\\_Final-4\\_Final\\_forewordGender.pdf](https://icglr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2022-08-ICGLR_-RAP_ENG_Ver_1_REP_Final-4_Final_forewordGender.pdf)
- UN. Guidance for Effective Mediation, (2012) available at: <http://www.un.org/wcm/webdav/site/undpa/shared/undpa/pdf/UN%20Guidance%20for%20Effective%20Mediation.pdf>
- UN Secretary General. Enhancing mediation and its support activities, (S/2009/189) (2009) available at: [http://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/SGReport\\_EnhancingMediation\\_S2009189%28english%29.pdf](http://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/SGReport_EnhancingMediation_S2009189%28english%29.pdf)
- UN Secretary General. Strengthening the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution (A/66/811) (2012) available at: [http://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/SGReport\\_StrengtheningtheRoleofMediation\\_A66811.pdf](http://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/SGReport_StrengtheningtheRoleofMediation_A66811.pdf)
- UN Department of Political Affairs. Guidance for Mediators: Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Ceasefire and Peace Agreements, (2012) available at: <http://www.>

[un.org/wcm/webdav/site/undpa/shared/undpa/pdf/DPA%20 Guidance%20for%20 Mediators%20on%20Addressing%20Conflict-Relat- ed%20Sexual%20Violence%20in%20 Ceasefire%20and%20Peace%20Agree- ments.pdf](https://un.org/wcm/webdav/site/undpa/shared/undpa/pdf/DPA%20Guidance%20for%20Mediators%20on%20Addressing%20Conflict-Related%20Sexual%20Violence%20in%20Ceasefire%20and%20Peace%20Agreements.pdf)

