

STRATEGIC PLAN 2022 - 2027



Equal Rights under the Law

**Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia
(AFELL)**

Support by: **Spotlight-Liberia**
Through: **UNOHCHR-Liberia**

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Foreword

This Strategic Plan is intended for the Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL) for the next five years (2023 – 2028). In terms of its Structure, this Strategic Plan has Eight (8) Chapters. Chapter 1 gives the introduction of the Strategic Plan and discusses the mandates of AFELL including Constitutional, Policy and other mandates that guide the work of the Institution. Chapter 2 conducts a contextual analysis of AFELL’s areas of human rights concerns. In addition, Chapter 2 discusses the human rights situation in Liberia, key human rights issues, as well as key institutional challenges. Chapter 3 explains the institutional strategic review process. It also highlights the environment context in which the AFELL will implement this Strategic Plan. It looks at both the opportunities and challenges and considers the political and other implications that could, in some ways or the other, positively or negatively influence the implementation of this Strategic Plan. In this Chapter the Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis is stated. Chapter 4 focuses on the Strategic Direction of AFELL, including its vision, mission and core values. In addition, this chapter outlines the strategic outcomes areas, strategic targets as well as strategic intervention plan. Chapter 5 looks at what are AFELL proposed strategic accomplishments over the next five ` – the deliverables. Here it projects the Strategic Focus Areas, Strategic Outcomes, and Objectives. Further, this chapter has a section on Peacebuilding and Reconciliation considering Liberia is a post-conflict country. Chapter 6 discusses how AFELL will manage its Strategic Plan.

In this regard, it clearly articulates the Results Matrix (Log frame) including, outcome, outputs and activities to be achieved. It then looks at AFELL’s Management Structure particularly with regards to the role of the Board of Directors, the Administration and general staff in implementing its Strategic Plan. This chapter also articulates a coordination mechanism and direction to ensure the success of the Strategic Plan. In Chapter 7 the Strategic Plan is costed and a resource mobilization plan is advanced.

Finally, Chapter 8 of the Strategic Plan presents the first two and a half years Performance Management Plan (PMP) or the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. It projects a rigorous

formative evaluation of the Strategic Plan after the first two and a half years of implementation, after which the next two and half years the PMP will be developed.

This plan will guide the association in its human rights advocacy to ensure the full promotion and protection of the rights of all its clients and targeted beneficiaries.

Declaration

AFELL declares:

- 1) That this Strategic Plan was developed by AFELL Management, under the overall direction and approval of the Board of Directors (BOD).
- 2) It takes into account all the relevant policies and legal mandates for which AFELL is established in line with the AFELL Constitution and Articles of Incorporation; and
- 3) It accurately reflects the strategic focus areas and strategic outcomes, goal and objectives which AFELL will endeavour to achieve over the next five years from 2023 - 2028.

Acknowledgement

The Board of Directors (BOD) of AFELL acknowledges with profound gratitude the efforts of the Administration of AFELL including the President, Core of Officers and the entire staff of AFELL for developing this Strategic Plan that articulates AFELL's programs and activities for the next five years.

The Board also remains gratified to all its partners that read the first and second drafts and made comments and suggestions. The BOD expresses its felicitations to OHCHR, and other partners that participated in the Planning Retreat and validation of the Strategic Plan. The development of the Strategic Plan has been completed; however, its implementation is the most crucial. The BOD looks forward for continuous support from AFELL partners to help achieve this strategic plan.

Abbreviations and List of Acronyms

AFELL	Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women
COVID 19	Corona Virus Disease 2019
EU	European Union
INCHR	Independent National Commission on Human Rights
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MOGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MOYS	Ministry of Youth and Sport
NAP	National Action Plan on 1325
NHRAP	National Human Rights Action Plan of Liberia
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PAPD	Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development
RC	Resident Coordinator
RPP	Reflection of Peace Practice
SLI	Spotlight Initiative-Liberia
SPP	Strategic Planning Process
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
ToR	Terms of Reference

UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nation Children’s Fund
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Coordination Framework
UNWOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

CHAPTER 1: LEGAL, POLICY AND OTHER MANDATES

1.1. Introduction

The Association of Female Lawyers (AFELL) was established and accredited on February 24, 1994 by the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, as a non-profit, non-governmental organization duly incorporated under Liberian laws. The establishment of AFELL was a direct response to ensure advocacy for the rights and promotion, and advancement of women, children and indigent persons.

In Liberia, women, children, and indigent persons face daunting challenges which lead to deprivation of justice which is an inherent right of every citizen. In addition, women experience constant marginalization due to traditional, cultural, and societal prejudices and biases against them. They are vulnerable to harmful practices including female genital mutilation (FGM), gender-based violence (GBV), sexual exploitation, and early marriages. Often, rape cases are consciously compromised by law enforcers, local authorities, and family members; they often act against the will of victims, which is an affront of the rape law. Victims are ignorant in most instances and are left with long-life traumatic physical and psychological scars while perpetrators roam freely. To support the justice system, AFELL’s Legal Aid Clinic engages in mediation as first option of giving relief to the parties and at the same time reducing the case load on the dockets of the courts. AFELL also engages in legal representation when the defendants refuse to appear for mediation or when the parties fail to reach an understanding during mediation.

Over the next five years, AFELL’s work will be guided by its Strategic Plan, which will serve as the organization's process of defining its strategy and direction, and making decisions on allocating its resources to attain its strategic goals. Most strategic plans, as in the case of AFELL’s, have extended to include mechanisms for guiding the implementation of their strategy. However, Strategic Plans usually have a timeframe for implementation and may be reviewed from time to time, amended and

revised to consider the current context and emerging tasks at hand. A Strategic Plan must remain contextual, contemporary and realistic to achieve the goals and aspirations, as well as strategy of an institution.

1.2. MANDATE

The Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia derives its Mandate from its Constitution of February 25, 1994 as well as its Articles of Incorporation of February 1994. AFELL's also works as a NonGovernmental Organization in compliance with the National Policy on Non-Governmental Organizations in Liberia of June 2008. In addition, AFELL works in line with other policies and frameworks of Liberia including regional and international instruments that have evolved out of several efforts to help put end to all of forms of violence against women and girls.

In addition, in 2016, the Government of Liberia (GoL) through the Governance Commission (GC) and the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) signed an ACCORD (MOU) highlighting partnerships and collaboration between and amongst the GoL and CSOs. In this MOU, the GoL and CSOs represented by the National Civil Society Council of Liberia (NCSCCL) agreed, after extensive consultations, to strengthen their partnership in working for the realization of the following set of shared objectives:

1. An enabling environment for the development of a viable civil society;
2. Broaden and deepen participatory governance through Liberian Government partnerships with citizens and development partners for the purpose of building an inclusive and cohesive society;
3. An integrated partnership role of a strong, diverse and independent civil society sector in national development processes; and,
4. Amplified voices of the poor and marginalized in national development.

Besides, almost all the Government key policy related documents, be it the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) of 2008; the Agenda for Transformation (AfT) of 2011, and now the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) of 2018, Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHRs) Policy of 2010, the National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security NAP-WPS of 2021 have highlighted the key role of CSOs in the implementation of these documents. Besides, all these policy documents highlight various issues affecting women and girls. These are the considerations that underpin AFELL's Strategic Plan.

While we provide strategies to achieve this strategic plan over the next five years spanning from 2023-2028, it is obvious that as an effective organization AFELL will continuously refine their strategies as the landscape evolves, issues affecting women and girls and indigents become more pervasive, and new lessons are learned. In this light, AFELL's strategic plan is intended to be a roadmap, defining a clear destination while encouraging creativity and flexibility throughout its implementation.

1.3 CONSTITUTIONAL MANDATE

As articulated in Articles II of the AFELL’s Articles of Incorporation, AFELL is and shall be a charitable not-for-profit corporation established for the following intentions, objectives and or purpose:

1. To foster, promote and maintain the ideals and integrity of the legal profession among women.
2. To encourage female students and women in general to embrace the legal profession.
3. To provide legal and services for women, children, and indigent persons who are in need of such service but are not able to obtain such legal assistance and by reason thereof, would be denied the urgent and equal protection of the law.
4. To review and revise laws which adversely affect the standing of women and lobby for the promulgation of laws in furtherance of the interest of women.
5. To study, improve and facilitate the administration of justice; increase awareness of women’s right under international conventions and national laws and to ensure equal rights for women under national and domestic relations laws.
6. To provide legal education, consultative and advisory service for women, children and indigent person in the community and to work with national and international institutions, non-governmental organizations and women’s organizations for the advancement of women and women’s rights.
7. To organize and conduct seminars, training and research program for women lawyers and to advocate, ensure and facilitate the full and effective representation of women lawyers at all national, regional, continental and international conference wherein issue of a legal nature affecting the concerns of women are discussed.
8. To receive, accept gifts property by devise or bequest, or otherwise acquire and hold all properties real or personal.

1.4 LEGISLATIVE MANDATES

AFELL takes its Legislative mandate from the National NGO Policy of Liberia. In Section 2.1 the Policy defines a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) functioning within the territory of Liberia “shall mean an independent, non-profit making, non-partisan and charitable organization, established in accordance with the Associations Law of Liberia of 1977 and amended on April 3, 2020, having the primary goal of enhancing the social, educational, professional, scientific, athletic, cultural and economic well-being of communities; and it may operate nationally or locally on a non-discriminatory bases.

In Section 3.1 the NGO Policy defines “Eligibility Requirements for NGO Status in Liberia.” It states “An organization wishing to operate as an NGO in Liberia must fulfil the following basic requirements:

1. Must fall within the definition of an NGO as contained in Section 2.1 of the NGO Policy;
2. Must have a mission statement containing clearly defined objectives, target beneficiaries, sector(s) of operation, constitution and by-laws;
3. Must obtain accreditation from the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP), following formal registration with the Liberia Business Registry/ Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOF) as required by law (Articles of Incorporation); and
4. Must submit annual NGO reporting requirement as stated in Annex 3 of the NGO Policy.
5. Must obtain sectoral clearance from the relevant line ministry.

Also, AFELL has met all Accreditation Requirements for NGOs in Liberia which is defined in 4.1 of the NGO Policy of Liberia. In addition to the requirements listed above the NGO must:

1. have office space with a visible signboard exhibited and, where feasible provide postal address and email addresses and telephone numbers;
2. have a bank account in the organization's name in Liberia that concurs with the rules and regulations of the Central Bank Authority and Financial Institution Act of Liberia;
3. must have a board of directors or its equivalent policy making body whose composition is not dominated by a family group. In addition, the NGO should make available the contact information of this body upon request.

1.5 POLICY MANDATES

AFELL's work is guided by a number of key policies related to ending various forms of violence against women and girls and to promote women and girls civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights, as well as other rights in line with various international human rights covenants, standards and protocols to which Liberia is a State Party. A few include:

1. Liberian Constitution of 1986
2. The Rape Law of 2006
3. Domestic Violence Law of 2018
4. Land Rights Law
5. Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development of 2018
6. National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security of 2021
7. National Human Rights Action Plan of Liberia (NHRAP) or 2018
8. United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework of 2018
9. Sustainable Development Goals 2015
10. African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights
11. Maputo Protocol

12. African Charter on the Rights of the Child
13. UNCSR 1325
14. International Covenant on the Elimination of all forms of Violation Against Women
15. United Nation Convention on the rights of the child
16. Convention of the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women
17. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women

1.6 APPROACH AND OPERATING PRINCIPLES

Through this strategic plan, AFELL remains committed to focusing on areas that are consistent with the association’s mission which is “to advocate for the Protection, Promotion and advancement of the rights of women, children and indigents persons.”

Further, the following are the key operating principles that will guide the implementation of this Strategic Plan

1. Independence and impartiality: In a highly polarized political environment such as Liberia’s, successful implementation of this Strategic Plan will depend on the extent to which the Association is not political. All AFELL’s staffs and collaborating institutions will sign a statement of commitment to remain impartial and independent throughout the implementation its various activities and programs.
2. Transparency and accountability: Aside from protecting the confidentiality of victims the Association and implementing organizations will open all their activities to public scrutiny.
3. Respect for Victims and Victimized Communities: AFELL’s staff and collaborating actors will conduct all their activities with the highest regard and respect for the human dignity and the rights of all persons and their communities. Implementing institutions will ensure that activities and approaches are expeditious, fair, and accessible, especially when dealing with victims. All agencies will take all measures to minimize inconvenience to victims and protect their safety and security throughout and after the activities.
4. Process oriented: Addressing the pervasive human rights issues that affect women and girls and to ensure the full promotion and protection of their rights is a process, not an event. AFELL will ensure careful definition of all processes and approaches through which the components and outputs of this Strategic Plan will be achieved.

5. Integration and Comprehensiveness: The success of the Strategic Plan will depend on understanding and keeping in view all the components and outcomes and not just individual components. A coordinating mechanism will ensure complementarity and coherence throughout the implementation of the Strategic Plan.
6. An example of the highest standard of integrity and professionalism: All staff of AFELL and collaborating partners will conduct themselves with the highest levels of integrity and professionalism. They will: not engage in conduct that is in any way inconsistent with the goals and aspiration of AFELL.

CHAPTER 2: AFELL'S AREAS OF HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS: CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

2.1 AREAS OF HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS

AFELL's strategic plan will have to determine the human rights issues in Liberia in order to describe their strategy. From desk review of secondary data, there are about "ten facts about human rights in Liberia."

For example, Wikipedia highlights several human rights violations in Liberia based on various reports. Some of these include ritualistic killings, police abuse, incidents of so-called "trial by ordeal", arbitrary arrest, the denial of due process, violence against women, domestic violence, female genital mutilation, child abuse, human trafficking, and child labour.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_rights_in_Liberia

Also, on December 8, 2018 the Borgen Project Report flagged several human rights issues in Liberia. These can be summarized below:

1. Violence against women is a major concern in Liberia. It is not uncommon to have domestic violence and sexual violence including rape and female genital mutilation (FGM). Marriage at a young age is also commonplace. Impunity, or lack of punishment for these crimes, is prevalent. Sexual harassment is not explicitly prohibited by law. However, a bill was passed in July 2018 to set regulations against domestic violence.
2. The country's maternal mortality rate is one of the highest in the world. Despite some progress, girls still face barriers to attaining equal education as do students with disabilities. Child abuse, child marriage and even infanticide of children with disabilities are severe human rights violations that still occur in Liberia.
3. Conditions in Liberian prisons are poor. They are extremely overcrowded and there is a lack of adequate medical care, sanitation, food and water. See <https://borgenproject.org/factsabout-human-rights-in-liberia>.

Liberia has a variety of institutions working in the nation to improve the country's human rights situation, including The Liberian Independent National Commission on Human Rights, The Ministry of Justice Human Rights Protection Division and various national committees that focus on specific issues such as child labour rights. The government has also cooperated with the U.N. Office of The High Commissioner for Human Rights to address human rights violations in Liberia.

There still exist societal prejudices and biases against women who stand up to compete for elected positions especially during elections.

These facts about human rights in Liberia show that Liberia has made some important advances in improving human rights; however, there is still much progress to be made.

Although not prevalent, but remains an area of Human Right concern is accusations especially in rural areas against children claiming that they are involved in witchcraft. Often times these children are hypnotized by so called "Men or Women of God" to confess that they are witchcraft and are responsible for evil befalling their families. These children live with stigmatization and isolation from the communities and schools as well as family members and friends. (See INCHR Human Rights Situation Report 2017).

Furthermore, a report published by <https://newsghana.com.gh/the-prevailing-threats-of...24/08/2020> notes that threats to the violations of human rights in Liberia are increasing and these are due to a weak Justice system, high unemployment rate, poor qualities of health, etc. A few key reports on human rights violation include from media.aclj.org/pdf/Human-Rights-Violations-in... as well as US Embassy Human Rights Report on Liberia published on <https://lr.usembassy.gov/ourrelationship/official-reports/human-rights-report> 30/03/2021.

In this respect, the below human rights issues and concerns are critical for AFELL's intervention:

1. Domestic Violence
2. Inheritance Rights
3. Land Rights
4. Divorce / Abandonment
5. Child Abuse
6. Child Neglect
7. Practices
8. Discrimination
9. Political Prejudices and Biases
10. Human rights violations against indigents
11. Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
12. Human Trafficking

13. Advancement of women in political participation
14. Women and children health rights

2.2 HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES

Despite a number of institutions – the majority CSOs have been established to advance human rights and help ensure redress for human rights violations, the majority of these institutions have several institutional challenges that impede their work. These include lack of capacity, lack of financial resources, and there are limited or no logistics and supplies for the operations of these institutions to enable them operate. At the same time, the poor coordination and collaboration amongst most of these institutions on the one hand, while there are little of no synergies and coherence amongst their programs and activities, something which is needed to ensure maximum progress in the promotion and protection of human rights.

2.3 POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

Liberia goes for General and Presidential Elections in 2023, just a year in the implementation of this Strategic Plan. Already the political landscape is polarized alongside ethnicity and sectionalism in some cases, the poor versus the affluent, as well as social cleavages. Examples from past elections show that the political competition during these elections did not unite the country and its people but further divided the country. In 2023, all efforts must be exerted to ensure we delink the political competition in a way that the elections will unite the majority of the citizens. Also critical during this period, and must be a concern of AFELL is that elections period most often have led to various forms of human rights violations. In addition, there is always political prejudices and biases against women contesting for political positions. Lastly, there are uncertainties associated with the conduct of the up-coming elections given the factors explained in the preceding sentences.

Depending on the government that comes to power and its respect for human rights, various human rights issues would be address, however if not, human rights violations could become more pervasive. It is in lieu of this that AFELL must consider the political implications it will have to implement its Strategic Plan and brace itself for whatever happens before, during and after the elections be it good or bad.

2.4 ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Economically, Liberia has not fully recovered for the adverse effects of the Ebola Virus Pandemic of 2014 – 2016, and now the COVID -19, from 2020 – present. Despite economic growth and macroeconomic stability is being restored, and the national budget has increased, funding is grossly inadequate to address national priorities and critical human rights issues especially in health care delivery and education. Funding for the justice and rule of law sector remains low and affects the dispensation of justice. Because of the poor economic situation unemployment remains all time low and the vast majority of the citizens especially in rural areas live on less than 2 US\$ per day. As a result, victims for various forms of human rights violations are unable to get redress for their rights. It is in

such condition that AFELL must implement its Strategic Plan. It is in this regard that AFELL would endeavor to mobilize the needed resources to enable it achieve its goals and objectives and help mitigate, if not put an end to violence against women and girls across Liberia.

2.5 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Peacebuilding and Reconciliation

Following the end of the civil crisis in Liberia a Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established in 2006 to investigate what led Liberia to brutal civil war and the gross human rights violations and crimes against humanity that occur during the civil war. After three years of investigations both in and out of Liberia, in 2009 the TRC released a comprehensive report with a total of 207 recommendations aimed at reconciling Liberia, fostering and promoting peace, and to ensure justice for victims of human rights violations. Since 2009 some efforts have been exerted, although unannounced, to implement a few of the recommendations. However, nothing has been done to address issues related to restorative, restitutive and retributive justice, while economic and social justice remains very poor. The TRC report included two Annexes that exclusively outlined the gross human rights violations against women and children – at least there are 47 recommendations intended to address the issues of women. Unfortunately to date, very little has been done to implement these recommendations. Additionally, despite efforts to restore peace, security and long-term stability, the Country remains in a state of fragility. It is in this context that AFELL will be implementing its Strategic Plan and thus must consider all these implications.

2.6 FORGING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

It is obvious that AFELL cannot implement this Strategic Plan alone. It will require AFELL to forge partnerships with human rights CSOs and CBOs especially those that focus on women and girls' rights. As AFELL does not have office all over Liberia collaborating with CSOs including the NCSCS Human Right Advocacy Platform that now has regional offices in the five regions of Liberia, will go a long way in helping AFELL achieve its mandate. It is important to also work closely with the Independent National Commission on Human Rights of Liberia that has human rights monitors across Liberia. In fact, by their creation and in line with the Paris Principles of 1993, National Human Rights Institutions are under obligations forge partnerships and collaborate closely with CSOs.

Besides, AFELL must continue to forge partnership with key line Ministries and Agencies of Government especially the Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, Liberia Land Authority and Ministry of Agriculture. Last, AFELL will have to forge partnerships with bilateral and multilateral partners, and donors including the UN in Liberia especially, UNDP, OHCHR, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNWOMEN, and the Resident Coordinator's Office that will be able to support AFELL's programs and activities.

CHAPTER 3: SWOT ANALYSIS

3.1 STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

This Strategic Plan is a result of a rigorous process of consultations with AFELL leadership, strategic membership and key stakeholders and actors including the Ministry of Justice, Liberia National Bar Association, Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection, INCHR and the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights and other partners that reviewed the draft plan, made substantive inputs and suggestions and participated in the final validation exercise. The Plan was developed following desk reviews of key legislative and policy frameworks, and strategies as well as operational plans and review of related literature.

In addition, AFELL held a Strategic Planning Retreat from September 2 – 3, 2022 to conduct a situational assessment of the Association. The Retreat did not only conduct analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges (SWOT) of AFELL, but also reviewed its administrative/institutional policies related documents. The retreat further enabled participants to think more strategically and derived all the necessary actions to help AFELL meet its goals and objectives. During this session, participants were drilled through 5 key steps in strategic planning: 1) determine or identify where you are, 2) identify your goals and objectives, 3) develop your plan, 4) execute your plan, and 5) revise and restructure as needed, utilizing or taking into consideration both Political, Economic, Social and Technical (PEST) and SWOT analysis. Underpinned by AFELL’s inputs, the process ultimately resulted to revised and clearly articulated goal and objectives and strategic outcomes for the next five years.

3.2 SWOT ANALYSIS

3.2.1 Strength

- All female lawyers exclusively
- Legally incorporated with constitution and by-laws
- Has its own office building
- Expertise in advocacy for rights of women children and indigents
- Expertise in litigating SGBV cases and utilizing ADR mechanisms
- National and international recognition by legal authorities, CSOs and the general public • Strong human resource capacity

3.2.2 Weaknesses

- No clear strategy for fund raising
- Poor coordination with CSOs and other women groups

- Lack of a sustainability plan
- Membership fatigue/commitment
- Programmatic capacity deficit
- Poor visibility
- Weak administrative structure

3.2.3 Opportunities

- Proliferation Female lawyers in national leadership
- Establishment of Criminal Court E
- Existing national laws to include [legislation and criminalization of] rape, domestic violence, and inheritance
- Only female legal group capable of attracting funds for donors and the Government • Female lawyers with diverse educational backgrounds

3.2.4 Threats

- Limited political will to advance women rights advocacy
- Cultural, religious and traditional barriers
- Poor economic environment
- Inconsistencies in laws that effect women and girls
- Patriarchal systems
- Limited understanding of laws and policies by the public

CHAPTER 4: STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The Strategic Planning Process also deciphered the following:

4.1 MISSION

To advocate for the Protection, Promotion and advancement of the rights of women, children and indigents persons.

4.2 VISION

To ensure women of Liberia are educated of their rights under the law and children are protected and provided for under the laws of Liberia.

4.3 CORE VALUES

1. Integrity
2. Confidentiality
3. Commitment
4. Transparency
5. Equality

4.4 STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

These are drawn in line with the institutional mandates, the National Development Plan and other policy related documents

1. Improved service delivery by AFELL
2. Enhanced cooperation and collaboration with stakeholders
3. Improved access and respect for Human Rights
4. Improved state compliance with national int'l and regional laws, policies and other obligations
5. Improved visibility and adequately informed and empowered citizenry

4.5 STRATEGIES

In pursuit of its strategic direction, AFELL shall employ a number of right base strategies which in most cases are cross cutting. The specific interventions for the strategies are presented in the detailed Outcome/output matrix.

4.6 STRATEGIC TARGETS

A. Improved service delivery by AFELL

- i. AFELL establish a secretariat with required human resource by 2024
- ii. Acquire 90% of essential office equipment by 2023
- iii. Strengthens the internal management system by 2024 iv. Office accommodation improved by 2024
- v. 65 % of the population aware of the role of the AFELL by 2027

B. Enhanced cooperation and collaboration with stakeholders

- i. 80% of CSOs, NGOs and other stakeholders' working for the advancement of women rights documented and engaged by 2027
- ii. 80% of legal institutions in good working relationship with AFELL by 2027

- C. **Improved access and respect for Human Rights**
 - i. 90% of reported complaints resolved through litigation or Alternative Dispute Resolution (ARD)
 - ii. Strategic litigation and mediation for the protection, promotion, and advancement of the rights of women, children and indigents strengthened

- D. **Improved state compliance with national international and regional laws, instruments and other protocols**

- E. **Improved visibility and adequately informed and empowered citizenry**
 - i. AFELL decentralized across 5 targeted Counties with the highest prevalence of gender base violence by 2027
 - ii. 80% of women, children and indigents across the Country aware of their rights and remedies for redress by 2027

CHAPTER 5: EXPECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

5.1 Strategic Intervention

5.1.1 Improved service delivery by AFELL

The key issue is to improve AFELL’s efficiency and effectiveness as an organization in realizing the targets set in the strategic outcomes. The key focus areas include review of the Association structure, staffing issues, management systems and working environment as well as consolidating financial resource base. AFELL will also seek to strengthen its internal management systems and institutional accountability mechanisms. This will involve streamlining internal working procedures of AFELL.

5.2 Enhanced cooperation and collaboration with stakeholders

AFELL will seek to improve its strong partnerships and alliances with key stakeholders in women, children and indigents rights advocacy. Since inception, AFELL has been working with various stakeholders at the international, national, regional, district and community levels to fulfill its institutional mandate. This was out of the appreciation that women, children and indigents rights advocacy is very wide and required the concerted efforts of several stakeholders operating at the different levels. AFELL regards partnerships and strategic alliances as a central part of its strategic direction in fulfillment of its mission. AFELL will therefore endeavor to ensure a robust collaboration and coordination strategy is mainstreamed in all women, children and indigents rights advocacy organizations including development partners, government agencies, private sector, CSOs, media and the general public.

5.2.1 Improved access and respect for Human Rights

A conscious approach in mitigating violence against women children and indigents requires full compliance by respondents. The strategies devised to achieve this will include but not limited to the conduct of consultative meetings with stakeholders, conduct expeditious investigation on matters brought before AFELL, Adopt and replicate best practices in addressing violations against women by enhancing accountability on human rights.

5.2.2 Improved state compliance with national, regional and international laws, instruments and other protocols

AFELL is committed to work with public institutions under governance sector to promote, protect and advance the rights of women, children and indigent persons. This will be strategically achieved by conducting working sessions with the Legislature, MOJ, MOFA, and Law Reform Commission to discuss factors that relates to timely ratification or domestication of international treaties and at the same time follow up on the amendments and reforms of national laws that affects the rights of women and children thus ensuring these laws are compliant with international treaties²

5.2.3 Improved visibility and adequately informed and empowered citizenry

The full realization of mitigating violence against women, children and indigents cannot be achieved solely through the development of protective law and the establishment of mechanisms to implement these laws. Over the next 5 years, AFELL will endeavor to play a vital role in promoting women and children across the Country. The enjoyment of rights largely depends on the level of awareness and knowledge of the citizenry. The protection of women, children and indigents depends on people knowing about the rights to which they are entitled and the mechanisms which are available to enforce those rights. In the same way, all members of society should be made aware of their personal responsibilities under international and domestic law.

CHAPTER 6: MANAGEMENT OF AFELL'S STRATEGIC PLAN

AFELL's Management Structure

The Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL) is headed by a President. According to the Association's by-laws, the President shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Association and shall direct and manage the affairs of the Association. AFELL also has as part of its leadership the 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Chaplain.

AFELL also has a Board of Directors responsible for supervising the overall affairs of the Association consisting of not less than 3 persons and not more than 9 persons.

Detailed organigram with names is enclosed as annex – (please develop one and include names or specify vacant if applicable).

Management Committee

As described in its by-laws, AFELL Board of Directors is the topmost administrative structure. A Management Committee comprising of the elected leadership and heads of special units will be established. The Management Committee shall be responsible to roll-out the implementation of the Strategic Plan and ensure quarterly reports are made to the Board. The Management Committee shall also advance strategies to ensure the success of the strategic plan with advice from a Monitoring and Evaluation consultant. [See the full Organigram in Annex a].

Program’s Results Matrix (Log frame 2023 – 2028) Implementation Matrix



Strategic Plan

Goal: To advocate for the Protection, Promotion and advancement of the rights of women, children and indigents persons This is defined as an activity – please consider rewording Women’s children and indigents persons rights in Liberia are protecte4d, promoted and advanced										
Strategic Objective 1: Enhance efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of AFELL										
Outcome: A reliable institution with improved productivity in advocacy for women, children and indigents										
Strategic Objectives	Outputs	Output Indicators, Baseline, Targets	Key Activities	Implementing years targets					Implementin g Unit	Indicative Budget
				'23	'24	'25	'26	'27		



<p>1. Improved service delivery by AFELL</p>	<p>A vibrant and wellfunctioning institution capable of achieving its mandate</p>	<p>Number of policies developed, validated and adopted.</p> <p>Number of established committees functioning and reporting regularly</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: AFELL organigram, 8 committees, 12 policy documents (be SMART and specify e.g.: Human Resources Policy, Financial Management Policy, PSEA, procurement, etc</p> <p>TIMELINE: 4 by Dec 2023, and 4 Dec 2024</p>	<p>Develop institutional policies and conduct a functional review of established units with clear ToRs and adopt all policies and ToRs</p>	<p>X</p>					<p>Leadership</p>	<p>25,000.00</p>
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	MoV: copies of PDs, reports									
1.a) Program / project management and implementation enhanced	<p>Number of persons recruited as Secretariat staff</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: 4 staff</p> <p>MoV: Employment letters /contract</p>	Set up a secretariat (@40,000) and institute a repository/library (online? Or hardcopies – the expenses will be different) for all AFELL policy guidelines, SOP, MOU etc	X	X	X			Leadership/ Board	100,000.00	
1.b) An improved project management system with clear deliverables and set timelines	<p>Number of approved AWP</p> <p>Number of reports per quarter submitted categorize by units</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: 4 qtr. WP & reports, 1 annual WP & report</p> <p>MoV: copies of approved plans and reports, signed by the highest Decision-making officers / executive</p>	Develop annual and quarterly work plans in line with Strategic Plan Results Framework, ensure gender and Human Rights are mainstreams in all plans and submit regular narrative and financial reports	X	X	X	X	X	AFELL Program Department	25,000.00	

1.c) AFELL visibility and accessibility enhanced	AFELL headquarters refurbished Number of regional offices established	Renovate AFELL headquarters and establish offices across the Country	X	X	X			Leadership	100,000.00
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		Baseline: 0 Target: HQ building and 5 regional offices MoV:								
	1.d) Increased knowledge and skills in advocacy for women children and indigents	<p>Number of in-service trainings conducted</p> <p>Number of members trained internally or externally in specific discipline</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: 50% membership currently there are ABC members so 50% is X</p> <p>MOV: Training reports, credentials, certificates etc.</p>	Conduct capacity building for members to enhance commitment and improve motivation	X	X	X	X	X	Leadership	100,000.00

1.e) High audit and performance ratings achieved	Number of programs /activities audited Baseline: 0 Target: at least one – all could be too ambitious, All programs/Activities	Conduct external audits and evaluation as may be required	X	X	X	X	X	Financial Policy and Guidelines Unit / External Partner	50,000.00
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		MoV: External Auditing reports								
2. Enhanced cooperation and collaboration with stakeholders	2.a) Mechanisms for collaboration and coordination improved	Number of institutions engaged and MoU signed Baseline: 0 Target: Several (Be SMART, at least three?) MoV: Signed agreements	Develop and sign MoU for collaboration with selected institutions and work with the Legislature on post-election violence	X	X	X	X	X	Leadership	17,500.00
	AFELL's inputs and contributions to technical decisions affecting women, children and indigents including persons with disabilities incorporated	Number of representations at WG meetings per month Baseline: 0 Target: As may be required MoV:	Ensure AFELL representation or presence at strategic Technical Working Groups Meetings	X	X	X	X	X	Project Unit	20,000

Organizations working for the advancement of women rights documented and put in prospective	Number of organizations working on women rights documented Baseline: 0 Target: Several MoV: Organizations list	Conduct research to document all organizations working for the promotion protection and advancement of women, children and indigents persons	X	X	X			Project Unit	00,000.00
Updates on issues affecting women, children and	Number of coordination meetings held	Hold quarterly coordination meetings with women's CSOs and other partners working on	X	X	X	X	X	Leadership	25,000.00

	indigents documented	Number of CSOs submitting reports Baseline: 0 Target: ALL MoV: Organizations list	women rights advocacy and obtain regular updates							
	Working relations between CSOs and AFELL strengthen	Number of CSOs involved in AFELL related activities Network of women, children and indigents advocates established Baseline: 0 Target: ALL (vague, specify a number) MoV: Training list	Organize joint programs and trainings with other CSOs working for women rights and establish a network of women, children and indigents advocates	X	X	X	X	X	Leadership / Project Unit	25,000.00
3. Improved access and respect for Human Rights	3.a) Complaints involving women, children and indigents amicably resolved	Number of complaints received and investigated Number of court cases adjudicated Baseline: Target: 75 per year MoV: findings report	Conducts expeditious investigations in all complaints received and make legal representation as may be required Follow up on cases of women held in pretrial detention	X	X	X	X	X	Legal Aid Clinic	50,000.00

	Number of cases refer to appropriate authorities and follow ups made Baseline:	Makes referrals and recommendations to the appropriate authorities for remedy	X	X	X	X	X	Legal Aid Clinic	20,000.00
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		Target: As may be required MoV: referral forms archive (electronic and hardcopies)								
	3.b) Issues arising from non-settlement or commitment resolved	Proportion of respondents not in compliance with decisions made during investigations Baseline: Target: MoV: findings report	Conducts consultative meetings with complainants and respondents to address issues that lead to non-compliance and the protection of children's right	X	X	X	X	X	SGBV Unit	20,000.00
	3.c) Data management information system established and Secured	Complaints received and investigated store electronically Baseline: 0 Target: All cases received MoV: electronic data base	Create a computerized complaints handling and records management system.	X	X	X	X	X	Legal Aid Clinic / SGBV Unit / Secretariat	40,000.00
	Women, Children and indigents have speedy access to Justice	Number of legal aid clinics set up and functional Number of legal representations made per year Baseline: Target: 5 clinics, MoV:	Organize legal aid clinics in 5 locations and provide legal counsel for women, children and indigents utilizing litigation or ADR	X	X	X	X	X	Leadership / Board	200,000.00

4. Improved state compliance	4.a) Liberia complies with international treaties and	Number of ratified laws affecting women rights domesticated	Engage the national legislature to discuss and advocate the timely domestication	X	X	X	X	X	Law and Regulation Reform Unit	50,000.00
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with national int'l and regional laws, policies and other obligations	conventions that affect women's rights	Number of engagement meetings or forums on reforms of laws affecting women held Baseline: Target: MoV	ratification, amendments and reforms of laws including the(Domestic Violence Act, Rape Law, Inheritance Law) that affect or limits the protection of women and girls rights							
		Percentage of proposed bills with unresolved women rights concern identified Baseline: Target: 5 clinics, MoV	Collect and review proposed bills and submit legal advisory opinion to the national legislature on bills with unresolved concerns affecting women, children and indigents	X	X	X	X	X	Law and Regulation Reform Unit	20,000.00
5. Improved visibility and adequately informed and empowered citizenry	5.a) Women, children and indigents' knowledge on their rights and redress mechanisms increased	Proportion of women claiming their rights and advocating for the protection of their children Baseline: 0 Target: over 50% MoV: Complaints handling data base	Develops and roll-out a strategic Communication and education programs that advance women and children rights	X	X	X	X	X	Communication and Media Unit	82,000.00

5.c) Women, children and indigents knowledge on their rights and redress mechanisms increased	Number of communities reached Percentage of IEC materials produced and distributed Baseline: 0 Target: All counties MoV:	Conducts sensitization campaigns, in the form of open-air sensitization and town hall meetings, radio programs, booklets, posters, leaflets, policy briefs, newsletters, bill-boards, as well as translate materials in vernaculars that promotes women's rights	X	X	X	X	X	Communication and Media Unit	80,500.00
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5.d) School-going children knowledge of their rights increased	Number of schools with established child rights clubs trained and functioning Baseline: 0 Target: 10 MoV: reports	Foster the establishment of child rights clubs in elementary and senior high schools	X	X	X			Project Unit / Communication and Media	100,000.00
5.e) Civil servants and others knowledge on women's rights and redress mechanisms increased	Number of institutions trained Number of personnel trained disaggregated by sex Baseline: 0 Target: Key MACs MoV: Training reports	Conduct various women and children's rights trainings for key Government institutions and personnel including, LNP, BIN, AFL, civil servants, CSOs, NGOs etc.	X	X	X	X		Leadership / Communication and media	100,000.00
5.f) Knowledge on women rights and children protection sustained	Number of engagement meetings to incorporation of women and children's rights topics with relevant government institutions held Baseline: 0 Target: MOE, MOGCSP, etc. MoV: Reports	Supports the incorporation of women and children's rights topics in the education curriculum for elementary and high schools			X	X	X	Leadership	0.00

	5.g) CSOs knowledge on women rights and redress mechanisms increased	Number of institutions trained Number of personnel trained disaggregated by sex	Conduct trainings for CSO WHRD, and media institutions on advancing the rights of women children and indigents	X	X	X	X	X	Leadership / Communication and Media	250,000.00
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		Baseline: 0 Target: Key MACs MoV: Training reports									
Total											1,500,000

Risks and Mitigation Strategy

This Strategic Plan has considered the various contexts or considerations including political, social, economic, cultural as well as post-conflict context under which AFELL will implement its Strategic and Human Rights Advocacy Plan. However, it is obvious that some risk factors could hinder or undermine the implementation of this Plan and these risk factors need to be flagged. See the matrix below:

Risk Factors	Frequency	Mitigation Strategy
AFELL is unable to mobilize the needed resources to implement it Plan	Moderate	AFELL will employ all efforts aimed at resource mobilization, Besides AFELL will conduct midterm review of its program and activities and will make adjustments in its budget projections where necessary
If there is political tension that leads to disruption of program activities across Liberia	Low	AFELL will work with national actors to avoid any conflicts during and after the elections and at the same time will take precautions to ensure the Association and its assets are protected
Bad roads in the interior especially during the heavy rains	Low	AFELL will plan its programs in a way that avoid regular field visits during the heavy rain season when the roads become impossible.
Lack of adequate awareness of AFELL's work	Low	AFELL has an outreach and media plan and will work hard to reach out and educate women and girls of their rights and on how to seek redress.
Natural or human made calamity or humanitarian situation	Low	

CHAPTER 7: STRATEGIC PLAN COSTING & RESOURCE MOBILIZATION PLAN

7.1 Introduction

It is obvious that to implement this strategic plan AFELL will need the financial, human and other resources including logistics and supplies. As mention earlier under the section on institutional challenges lack of adequate financial resources and capacity continues to be major impediments for civil society organizations to achieve the goal and aspiration no matter how well they are defined and articulated. The next section below on financing the plan highlights resource mobilization from partners and donors both international and regional as well as from domestic sources. The resource mobilization plan must be realistic and contextual given resource constraints within every institution. The economic implications highlighted above remain the AFELL management to cost reasonably and realistically.

Have you had any former Strategic plan that you could build upon? Would be worth to mention and refer to.

7.2 Financing the Plan

Since its establishment, AFELL has generated financial resources for its operations, programs and activities, through partners and donors and from direct revenue generation including member dews, pledges and good will contributions. It is estimated than annually, AFELL would require an amount of **1,500,000.00** to implement its programs and activities. For this Strategic Plan, this annual projection will certainly increase.

7.3 Cost Estimates

The cost for implementing this Strategic Plan over the next 5 years derives from the results matrix that shows activities with related outputs and outcomes that are costed. Therefore, the budget is realistic and factual.

7.3.1 Partners / Donors Contribution (2023– 2028)

AFELL will seek to mobilize at least 1,000,000 from key donors and partners and UN institutions in Liberia as well as aboard over the next five years. Funding will be mobilized

through projects and proposals intended to implement AFELL's program activities. Some of this funding could be mobilized in kind especially logistical support, furniture, fixtures, stationeries and vehicles.

7.3.2 Domestic Resources Mobilization

AFELL hopes to mobilize at least 500,000 from transnational corporations and other businesses, including State Owned Enterprises, and from membership dues and other contributions for philanthropy institutions. Depending on the government resources mobilization, AFELL will seek support from the Government to help implement its programs and achieve its strategic plan. AFELL will seek to put before the government a specific request for direct budgetary allocation.

7.3.3 Sustainability

An indispensable element of mobilizing resources externally and internally is the need for sustainability. Sustainability should be considered in three aspects: 1) Financial sustainability, 2) Institutional sustainability, and 3) National ownership.

- 1) Financial sustainability needs to consider:
 - The inclusion of AFELL in the National Budget. Forging partnerships with private sector and philanthropic organizations and foundations with a focus on women's right promotion for annual donations and contributions to AFELL.
- 2) Institutional sustainability needs to take into consideration
 - Undertaking continuous M&E process and impact analysis through bottom-up institutional architecture that measures progress and outcomes on the implementation of the Strategic Plan
 - Publishing periodical annual and quarterly research reports and findings on issues affecting women, children and indigents and attempts made to address them.
 - Institutionalizing inter-institutional coordination (to include information sharing; M&E; oversight; implementation; support; mutual capacity development)
 - Institutionalizing horizontal and vertical information sharing in an open and transparent manner.
 - Institutionalizing transnational cross-fertilization for the sharing of Best Practices and Lessons Learned on the promotion and protection of women, children and indigent.
- 3) National Ownership - this could be achieved by
 - Institutionalizing continuous civic engagement through existing educational, traditional and media institutions.

CHAPTER 8: STRATEGIC PLAN – TWO YEAR PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN (January 2023 – July 2025)

This Performance Management Plan (PMP) sets the basis for measuring the implementation of key activities highlighted under each strategic objective. It will measure progress over the first two and a half years (January 2023– July 2025), leading to the mid-term evaluation of the Strategic Plan. Unlike the Results Matrix, the PMP projects a number of critical assumptions (which implicitly) allows for risks and mitigation strategies. It also lists the inputs needed to achieve the overall goal. As much as possible, the PMP sets realistic targets that are achievable and measurable within in the next two and a half years. While the majority of the indicators are quantitative, a few are also qualitative. Finally, the mid-term evaluation as projected in the PMP is formative, as such, at the end of the first two and a half years AFELL will be able to determine and make adjustments or revisions in its activities going forward. The inputs column will track the extent to which human, financial and other resources were mobilized and the challenges experienced so as to determine areas for realignment and readjustment.

Two and a half years Performance Management Plan (indicate start and end dates)

Association of Female Lawyers Association of Liberia (AFELL) -			
Overall GOAL	Indicators, critical assumptions and MoV	Target 2023- 2024	Inputs
<p>To promote, protect and advance the rights of women, children and indigents persons in Liberia</p> <p><i>Theory of change:</i> Within 5 years, through AFELL’s work, the various forms of human rights violations against women and girls would have been mitigated it not fully address; AFELL would have been capable of ensuring speedy redress for victims of human rights violations, thereby leading to the promotion and</p>	<p>(1) Perception index rating of service rendered by AFELL</p> <p>(2) Percentage of stakeholders working on women rights engaged</p> <p>(3) Proportion of reported human rights abuses resolved categorized by Judicial or non-Judicial means</p> <p>(4) National, international and regional laws, instruments and protocols affecting women, children and indigents rights reviewed</p> <p>(5) Proportion of citizens aware of AFELL and how to seek redress</p>	<p>AFELL establish a secretariat with required human resource by 2024</p> <p>Strengthens the internal management system by 2024</p> <p>65 % of the population aware of the role of the AFELL by 2027</p> <p>80% of CSOs, NGOs and other stakeholders’ working for the</p>	<p>(1) Funding (Donor and Domestic)</p> <p>(2) Vehicles</p> <p>(3) Robust Internet connectivity</p> <p>(4) Essential office supplies</p> <p>(5) Staff</p>

<p>protection of women, children and indigents persons' rights.</p>	<p><u>Critical Assumptions:</u> AFELL is able to source funds from donors to support its budget enabling delivery on its mandate Incidence of human rights abuses agai women, children and indigents is grea reduced as a result of AFELL's strate interventions. Capacity enhancement of female law nst will result to an efficient mitigation of fly human rights abuses against women, ic children and indigents thus gaining ers public trust.</p>	<p>advancement of women's rights documented and engaged by 2027 80% of legal institutions in a good working relationship with AFELL by 2027 90% of reported complaints resolved through litigation or Alternative Dispute Resolution (ARD) Strategic litigation and mediation for the</p>
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	<p><i>Means of verification:</i> Copies of Aide Memoir and MoU signed with various institutions and partners Copies of administrative documents Reports</p>	<p>protection, promotion, and advancement of the rights of women, children and indigents strengthened 60% of international treaties on women rights domesticated by the Government by 2027 Existing Laws affecting women rights repealed or amended consistent with international Human Rights instruments Gender issues and sensitivity mainstreamed in major national policies, programs and interventions AFELL decentralized across 5 targeted Counties with the highest prevalence of gender base violence by 2027</p>	
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Annex A: AF

Annex A: AFELL's Organogram

