



**SONKE  
GENDER  
JUSTICE**

HIV/AIDS • GENDER EQUALITY • HUMAN RIGHTS



# **SONKE GENDER JUSTICE STRATEGIC PLAN: 2020 – 2024**

**Rights – Action – Accountability – Sustainability**



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# INTRODUCTION

In the past year, **SONKE GENDER JUSTICE (SONKE)** has undertaken a journey of self-reflection. We assessed our performance against our Strategic Plan 2014 –2019, during which time we commemorated our 10th year anniversary. We sought to examine our priorities for the next five years. In doing so we reflected on our strengths and challenges that emerged during the process. We explored the changing global context and the role and opportunities that Sonke has in influencing positive change over the next five years.

Sonke envisions a world in which violence of any form is socially unacceptable and dramatically reduced; a world in which duty-bearers – multilateral agencies, governments, religious and traditional leaders, the private sector, community leaders – and womxn, men, and gender-non-conforming people take action to address violence. We support those who experience it and put in place national action plans and frameworks to prevent it. This requires rights, action, accountability, and sustainability which are the four key pillars that form the foundation for our work and that provide the continuity between our previous strategic plan and the current one.

In Africa and globally, we strive for **HUMAN RIGHTS**, where individuals and communities take **ACTION** against gender injustice and violence, and seek interpersonal, community, and structural **ACCOUNTABILITY** for long-lasting, **SUSTAINABLE** change.

Our strategic objectives for the next five years are a refinement rather than a new direction. We believe in what we are doing, and that change is indeed possible and that significant progress has already been made. We are therefore building on our strengths and successes, and committing to address the gaps while remaining flexible enough to respond to the evolving global human rights and gender justice agenda.

Our **Strategic Goal 2020 – 2024** is that Sonke, communities, and partners collectively take action and promote accountability for the protection and realisation of human rights and gender justice in Africa.

## Our Strategic Objectives 2020 – 2024 are:

- 1 Rights:** Individuals and communities are aware of and able to articulate their rights.
- 2 Action:** Individuals, institutions, organisations, and communities put their knowledge into action for the realisation of rights.
- 3 Accountability:** Duty bearers, including government, multilateral institutions, the private sector, and Sonke, are accountable for collective responsibilities and obligations to advance gender equality and health and human rights as laid out in national and international law.
- 4 Sustainability:** To ensure the gender justice and human rights sectors are sustainable through increased funding, improved capacities, stronger partnerships and stronger evidence base.

This strategic plan is the result of a collective reflection and thinking process that involved the Sonke staff, board members, communities, partners, and stakeholders, who not only provided thoughtful and objective insights that challenged us to think critically but also reconfirmed our belief in our approach and supported us in aiming high. Above all, our diverse beneficiaries, represented by our Community Action Teams (CATs), hold an important voice in our self-reflection processes, as they keep us grounded in reality and holding us accountable to our stated commitments.





# OUR IDENTITY

**F**ounded in 2006, Sonke is a womxn's rights organisation that is committed to feminist principles, using a rights-based and gender-transformative approach to achieve human rights and gender justice.

Sonke's foundation came about as a result of the shared understanding that violence against womxn and girls constitutes one of the gravest and most pervasive human rights violations and that it undermines South Africa's new democracy in far-reaching ways. A further driving motivation was a belief that gender inequalities, gender norms, and power relations underpinning domestic and sexual violence are bad not only for womxn but also for men. Recognising that these norms and the harmful perceptions of what it means to be a man or a womxn encourage men to engage in high-risk behaviours, Sonke was established with a firm conviction that men and boys have a critical contribution to make in ending violence, in transforming gender roles and ultimately in being part of the solution to achieving gender justice.

In line with the United Nation's (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) motto, 'Leave No One Behind', Sonke prioritises work that improves the lives of the most marginalised populations, such as refugees and migrants, sex workers, the LGBTQI community, prisoners and ex-offenders, people living with HIV, children, and youth.

As a non-partisan civil society organisation, Sonke works with community-based organisations, faith-based organisations, UN agencies, media, academic institutions, government, international NGOs, private sector, multilateral agencies, international human rights bodies, development partners, and intergovernmental agencies to achieve human rights and gender justice.

Sonke works at a community, national, regional, and global level. In South Africa, Sonke is a registered NGO with offices in the Western Cape Province (Cape Town and Kraaifontein), Gauteng Province (Johannesburg and Diepsloot), Mpumalanga Province (Bushbuckridge), and Eastern Cape Province (Butterworth and East London). Our Wellness Centre is situated in Gugulethu, Cape Town. In addition to its offices in South Africa, Sonke has offices in Kampala in Uganda and Buea in Cameroon, and works in 22 countries across Southern, Eastern, Central, and Western Africa through the Regional Programme and Networks Unit and as Chair of the MenEngage Africa (MEA) Alliance. As part of our growth strategy, Sonke will establish a permanent presence in East and West Africa in the next five years.

The growth of the work in the region bears testimony to the traction that our model is having on the ground, as the issues that Sonke addresses remain a major challenge in many countries in the region. Our experience of working in the region in the recent past points to an urgent need to grow the work in this area to strengthen democratic processes and womxn's rights to achieve the SDGs and advance the 2063 Agenda of the African Union Commission (AUC).

Thanks to the progressive work we have been able to do in South Africa to advance womxn's rights, there is scope for Sonke to increase its footprint in the region. Sonke will be learning valuable lessons from the region in instances where other countries have shown invaluable leadership in advancing womxn's rights. We will share promising practice models, such as the positive experience of Rwanda concerning womxn's representation in public structures.

## Our Vision

A world in which womxn, children, men, and gender-non-conforming individuals enjoy equitable, caring, healthy, and happy relationships that contribute to the development of gender-just and democratic societies, free from poverty.

## Our Mission

Sonke strengthens the capacity of governments, civil society, and citizens to advance gender justice and womxn's rights, prevent gender-based violence and reduce the spread of HIV and the impact of AIDS, and in this way contribute to social justice and the elimination of poverty.

## Our Principles

Sonke's Code of Good Conduct provides a framework for employees regarding their beliefs, principles and values that the organisation aspires to, including:

- Acknowledging that every human being has a unique value and potential, irrespective of origin, ethnicity, culture, gender, age, sexual orientation, values, beliefs, politics, religion, race or socioeconomic or HIV status;
- Ensuring safeguards and measures are in place to prevent sexual exploitation, harassment, bullying, and abuse from taking place within the organisation;
- Recognising that all employees have the right to fulfil their potential;
- Acknowledging that all employees have a responsibility to support and empower their peers with knowledge and skills;
- Acknowledging that all employees have a responsibility to safeguard the children in their family and environment against all forms of violence, including corporal punishment;

Sonke has been profiled by many UN agencies as an example of international best practice in violence and HIV prevention. Sonke's work is widely recognised as innovative and effective and has received several awards and recognitions including but not limited to the following:

- Sonke was a runner-up for a French Human Rights Prize in 2011.

- In 2012 Sonke was recognised by Philanthropedia as one of the top-performing organisations working globally to end violence against womxn. The recognition was created by a global survey of 80 experts from 60 NGOs, research institutions, and philanthropic organisations.

- In 2012 Sonke won the *Mail & Guardian's* Investing in Change Award.

- In 2017 Sonke received the Overall Human Rights Award in the Foundation for Human Rights' inaugural Mogambri Moodliar Human Rights Awards.

- In 2017 Sonke was awarded the *Mail & Guardian* Investing in the Future and Drivers of Change Health Award for its prison reform work.

- Respecting the rights, culture, and dignity of all the people we work with;
- Promoting unity and wellbeing within the communities we work in;
- Being responsive to the needs of the people of South Africa and the communities we work in across the globe;
- Ensuring that there is no discrimination against any member of the public on account of race, gender, gender identity, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, political persuasion, conscience, belief, culture or language;
- Considering the circumstances and concerns of the beneficiaries when making decisions that affect them; and
- Working with organisations that adhere to principles and values similar to Sonke's.

## Our values:

- Promote the rights of womxn and girls;
- Transform gender relations by engaging with womxn, children, men, and gender non-conforming individuals;
- Respond to diversities among womxn and men in terms of sexual, ethnic, age, race, and class differences;
- Address structural and social determinants of gender inequality and, in so doing, promote social justice;
- Promote and support state accountability in fulfilling its obligations to protect, promote, and enforce all rights that uphold gender equality.



# OUR IMPACT: BUILDING ON STRONG FOUNDATIONS

**S**onke's **recent 10-year review** found evidence that while gender equality and human rights remain elusive and are at times under increased threat in South Africa, the region and globally, the organisation has achieved significant success in multiple communities and contexts in advancing gender equality, reducing gender-based violence (GBV), increasing health-seeking behaviours, changing social norms on masculinity, and contributing to new laws and policies that promise to consolidate these gains.

The review found that Sonke's community mobilisation work, and particularly the establishment of CATs, has resulted in **changes in community understandings of masculinity and beliefs and practices in relationships**. In the communities in which Sonke works, these changes have led to changes in men's attitudes and behaviours, and greater awareness around health issues. Sonke's work with religious and traditional leaders has been seen to **counteract conservative culture** and religious narratives that oppose gender equality.

The evaluative studies reviewed also point to **increased levels of social cohesion** within communities and a **greater sense of agency** among individuals, communities and civil society, coupled with the understanding of how to advocate for change. The findings from some studies that certain attitudes and behaviour that had shifted remained changed more than a year after Sonke's involvement are further evidence of the extent of this achievement.

Sonke has also played an important role in **holding institutions and individuals to account** for their roles in perpetuating harmful gender stereotypes and promoting prejudiced views. This work has included laying charges against an Eastern Cape school principal for sexually assaulting learners, charging prominent public figures and politicians for hate speech, and laying complaints against newspapers and private companies for promoting destructive gender norms. In doing so, the organisation has raised awareness and **created opportunities for national-level conversations** about gender equality and human rights.

The evaluation also found that there has been a real **impact on changing policies**, while playing an important role in supporting institutions to implement their mandates. In doing this work, Sonke and its partners have contributed to institutional changes in South Africa, as well as in a number of other countries and regional bodies in the continent.

**Some of the key highlights from 2014 to 2019 include the following:**

- 1** Sonke was instrumental in the establishment of a national coalition of more than 60 organisations advocating for a fully costed National Strategic Plan on Gender-based Violence and Femicide (NSP GBVF) in South Africa, resulting in the President's commitment and the signing of a declaration in March 2019. Sonke was appointed to the national subcommittee tasked with re-establishing the National GBV Council that will drive the development of the NSP GBVF.
- 2** In December 2016, following an application against the government by Sonke, represented by Lawyers for Human Rights, for the High Court in Cape Town to address the severe overcrowding and deplorable conditions in Pollsmoor Remand Detention Facility, the court found that government was in breach of its constitutional obligations to detain inmates in conditions consistent with human dignity and ordered the government to decrease overcrowding.
- 3** With the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS) and International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), Sonke launched the Global Platform for Action on Men and HIV in 2016, which highlights the importance of engaging men in the fight to end HIV and AIDS, and which is now implemented across Africa.



- 4 Sonke was a key partner in helping to secure the passage of a 2017 UN Human Rights Council resolution on engaging men and boys in GBV prevention.
- 5 In May 2017, the South Gauteng High Court sentenced former African National Congress Youth League Chairperson Patrick Wisani to 20 years in prison for the brutal murder of his girlfriend. Throughout the 14-month trial, Sonke and partners monitored the case closely to make sure that Wisani was indeed held to account and justice was served, by educating community members on accessing their rights, mobilising the community during court proceedings, and extensively using media to keep the case in the public domain.
- 6 As Secretariat of MEA, Sonke has secured and managed multi-year funding, which has resulted in the growth of the network across 22 countries in Africa, the largest and most active regional network in the MenEngage Global Alliance.
- 7 As a member of the children's rights sector, Sonke has taken a leading role in advocating for the prohibition of corporal punishment in the home. In an application brought before the Constitutional Court in 2019 by Sonke and others, the common law defence of reasonable chastisement was declared unconstitutional, and no longer applies in South African law. This effectively prohibited the use of corporal punishment against children in any setting in South Africa.
- 8 Sonke is building a network of activists and leaders across Africa through its formal training programmes, including the MenEngage Africa Training Initiative (MATI), the Sonke-University of Pretoria Human Rights Course, and the Sonke-UCLA Law Fellowship.
- 9 As amicus curiae on a landmark class action against the gold mining industry in 2016, Sonke provided evidence and ongoing advocacy on the gendered impact of occupational lung disease in mine sending communities, including the unpaid caregiving provided by womxn and children to sick miners. The historic settlement agreement, made in 2019, makes provision for payment of damages to the widows and surviving families of mineworkers.
- 10 Sonke was a member of the editorial team for the first *State of the World's Fathers* report in 2015. The report is the first of its kind and joins the *State of the World's Children* and *State of the World's Mothers* reports as a regular global update on men's involvement in non-violent caregiving. Sonke produced the first *State of South Africa's Fathers* report in 2018.
- 11 Sonke successfully advocated in South Africa for improved parental leave in partnership with womxn's rights organisations and trade unions. Due to the advocacy of the new Labour Laws Amendment Act of 2018<sup>1</sup> allows for better-paid maternity leave, ten days of leave for parents who do not qualify for maternity leave (including fathers), and new provisions of leave for adoptive parents.

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<sup>1</sup> Republic of South Africa. Act No. 10 of 2018: Labour Laws Amendment Act, 2018 (2018). South Africa: Government Gazette No. 42062



# OUR CONTEXT

In order to give effect to our role in the world, we are committed to understanding the context in which we work, and to put in place processes that allow us to be proactive in taking advantage of global shifts in the human rights and social justice sector, as well as to be responsive to local community realities and needs.

## Political Context

Africa continues to be marred by the slow and uneven implementation of regional human rights instruments, such as the Maputo Protocol, resulting in even slower adoption and implementation of progressive recommendations at a country level. It has become increasingly important to design and implement policy and grassroots-level advocacy strategies, to make existing accountability mechanisms work, to hold political leaders accountable, and to strengthen civic education on existing regional and global commitments.

Gender-based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) remains a major challenge for our development agenda. Incidents of violence against womxn in South Africa are higher than the global average. At the same time, violence against children, especially the girl child, remains unacceptably high. Serious efforts are required to turn the tide against GBVF.

We are glad that we have managed to move the needle somewhat in South Africa through massive efforts by civil society that have led to the approval and signing of the National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (NSP GBVF) strategy as national policy. While we celebrate this landmark, we will in the course of this strategy remain committed to popularising, cascading, and monitoring the implementation of the NSP strategy. We are mindful that good policies do not implement themselves, and part of our responsibility is to continuously engage with the process to give life to the response. Key in this process will be to continue to lobby for the adequate resourcing of the NSP to ensure that all stakeholders, especially communities in all corners of our country, engage meaningfully with the policy.

Related to this is the major global challenge of the implementation of the SDGs. Sonke will continue to collaborate with other civil society partners to support the advancement of the UN Women's Generation Equality agenda. This we will need to do both at national level and through our engagements through the MEA to ensure that all efforts are brought to bear to push for the goals of Generation Equality.

## Socio-economic context

South Africa still experiences high unemployment rates and low incomes. This is at the heart of many of the socio-economic development challenges. Related to this is the skewed distribution of wealth that is acute in South Africa. There is also a breakdown in family cohesion owing to rapid urbanisation. The latter points contribute to some extent to the high crime rates, poor standards of education, and unsustainable business practices, resulting in poor health outcomes and a precarious business environment.

The challenges facing countries with developing economies can be staggering, and South Africa is no exception. The socio-economic development challenges in South Africa can be overwhelming, but the good news is that corporates can work with the government to face up to the challenges. Many companies are running effective Socio-Economic Development (SED) programmes in South Africa. These programmes result in measurable, significant, positive change in our communities.

Overcoming socio-economic development challenges in South Africa is possible. However, it will take a concerted effort from all sectors of society; government, corporates, and individuals working together for a better society to achieve this.

The above challenges have a special impact on womxn, who in the main remain at the bottom of most development indices. It is crucial that in all interventions this point is taken into account to ensure that countermeasures are appropriate and offer a much-needed remedy for those most affected.

## COVID 19 and its Impact on Gender Equality

The outbreak of COVID 19 has posed a serious challenge for the world and development agenda, and will certainly impact negatively on gender outcomes. This requires all institutions to develop pragmatic response initiatives. Sonke has been exploring mechanisms and strategies that will help mitigate the challenges posed by this pandemic.

As many countries around the world take measures to curtail the spread of Covid-19, the direct relationship between the pandemic and rising levels of gender inequality and gender-based violence cannot be overlooked. Every sector of society; government, business, civil society organisations, the faith, and traditional leaders' communities, as well as individuals have a role to play to prevent the further repression of womxn and girls during this period, exacerbating gender, social and economic challenges.

Since the global outbreak of the coronavirus and ensuing lockdowns, many countries have seen huge increases in different forms of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), including intimate partner violence.<sup>2</sup> Alongside deepening socioeconomic factors, restriction of movement, and isolations, there has been the rise of this shadow pandemic. While womxn are forced to be under lockdown with

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/4/statement-ed-phumzile-violence-against-women-during-pandemic>

their abusers, services offered in support of intimate partner violence and domestic violence remain inaccessible and disrupted. These multiple layers have been exacerbated in light of competing limited resources and services, and government response to the pandemic.

Beyond its tragic human toll, the coronavirus pandemic has triggered unprecedented economic turmoil across the globe. Due to economic shutdowns caused by the fight against the virus, millions of jobs have already been lost as thousands of businesses have closed down and many others are at risk of experiencing a similar fate sooner rather than later. This social and economic disruption has led to several challenges, including food insecurity for poor and vulnerable households.

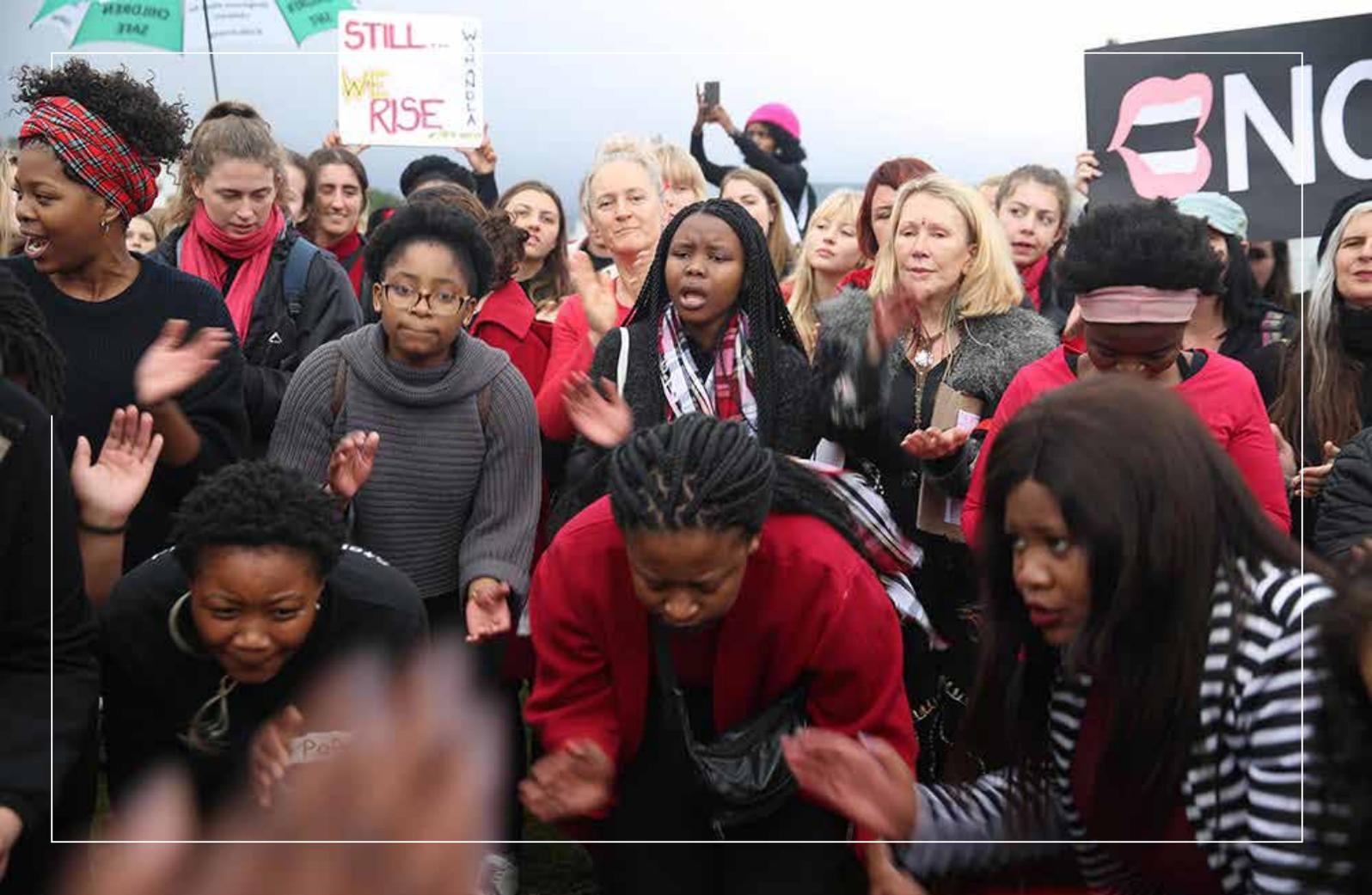
All institutions and organisations are challenged by this pandemic and its impact on livelihoods, health systems and economic activities. Current evidence indicates that this pandemic will be with us for a while until a vaccine cure is discovered. Consequently, we all have to ready our institutions to respond to this global challenge. There can be no doubt that this will impact on our programming. Sonke will need to be adaptable as we learn more from science on this pandemic and develop innovative response mechanisms.

## **Human Rights and Gender Justice in Africa**

Despite tremendous progress in respect of the inclusion of gender equality as a global goal – including in numerous UN conventions, the SDGs, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the African Agenda 2063 – gender inequalities continue to undermine womxn’s rights, gender equality, and the enjoyment of human rights by all womxn and girls, to impede development and democracy-building, and to compromise people’s lives in dramatic and devastating ways. Deeply rooted structural obstacles such as the unequal distribution of resources, power and wealth, combined with social institutions and norms that sustain inequality, are holding African womxn and girls, and as a result the rest of the continent, back.

## **Violence against Womxn and Girls, and Gender-based Discrimination**

Globally the scale of men’s violence against womxn is enormous and its impact devastating, with prevalence significantly higher in sub-Saharan Africa than the rest of the world. Research by the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) found that for combined intimate partner and/or non-partner sexual violence among all womxn 15 years or older, Africa had the highest levels. 45,6% of womxn in Africa compared with 35% of womxn globally will experience either intimate partner or non-partner violence in their lifetime. A 2018 report by Sonke and the University of the Witwatersrand School of Public Health indicated that in a Johannesburg township, 56% of men had perpetrated violence against



womxn in the last 12 months, many of them multiple times.<sup>3</sup> In the continent, forced migration has become a direct consequence of violence and it is estimated that approximately 3 million people became refugees on the African continent in 2014, following the conflict, persecution, and political turmoil.<sup>4</sup> Africa is home to one-third of the world's refugee population, and the highest proportion of these are refugee children and females, 51% and 59% respectively. Among the top 10 countries hosting refugees, Uganda, Kenya, and Ethiopia house a greater proportion of refugee girls than boys. So, while boys and girls are affected by crisis and conflict, the face of displacement in Africa is undoubtedly and disproportionately that of a girl.<sup>5</sup> In these circumstances, female migrants and refugees become easier targets of GBV. The lack of available and reliable data, together with the fear of reprisals faced by womxn when they report cases of GBV, tells us that these statistics significantly underrepresent the scale of the problem.

While womxn and girls are the most visible survivors of sexual violence and GBV, men's violence affects other members of the community, including children of both sexes, adult men who witnessed or experienced abuse as children, people with disabilities, and members of the LGBTQI community – especially black lesbians. Many of these groups are often neglected in policies and programmatic interventions.

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<sup>3</sup> [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317339742\\_Evidence\\_Brief\\_Men%27s\\_use\\_of\\_violence\\_against\\_womxn\\_in\\_an\\_informal\\_settlement](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317339742_Evidence_Brief_Men%27s_use_of_violence_against_womxn_in_an_informal_settlement)

<sup>4</sup> Landau, L and Achiume, TE (10 November 2015) 'The African Union migration and regional integration framework', ACCORD Policy & Practice Brief, available at <http://www.accord.org.za/publication/the-african-union-migration-and-regional-integration-framework/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.globalpartnership.org/blog/forced-displacement-africa-has-female-face>

In sub-Saharan Africa, about two-thirds of children suffer physical violence, a third of girls suffer sexual violence, a quarter of children suffer emotional violence and half of children witness domestic violence. One in five instances of physical violence causes injury. Parents, partners, teachers, and neighbours are the primary perpetrators.<sup>6</sup> In South Africa, research shows that the non-involvement of a father results in a poorer household (female-headed households are about a third poorer than male-headed households) and a lack of positive role modelling for boys and girls regarding appropriate male-female interaction and shared parenting models.<sup>7</sup> This is a cause for major concern, given the significant body of evidence showing the positive effects of the presence and active involvement of a father or male caregiver on a child's life chances; academic performance, and social, emotional, and cognitive functioning.<sup>8</sup>

There are also distinct harmful traditional practices that violate the human rights of girls in the continent, namely female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced child marriage. Population data on FGM prevalence from African countries in which the practice is documented suggests that more than 3 million girls are estimated to be at risk of FGM annually,<sup>9</sup> while 39% of girls living in sub-Saharan Africa are married by the time they turn 18.<sup>10</sup>

The rights of LGBTIQ communities are currently severely under threat by conservative legislation and discriminatory attitudes and beliefs at the community level, even in countries where homosexuality is not criminalised. Nigeria passed the Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act, while Uganda's President signed the Anti-Homosexuality Bill into law, toughening and broadening punishment for homosexuals and those seeking to advance their rights.

The rigid gender norms and harmful practices that determine individuals' behaviour, causing GBV and gender injustice, are upheld and reinforced by the community, civil society, and state institutions alike. National governments, although often "progressive" at the international level, fail to formulate and/or implement laws, policies, and programmes that address the root causes of GBV and gender injustice. Other actors, such as multilateral/bilateral agencies, international NGOs, and the private sector, fail to comprehensively work with all actors.

However, the power of movements has once again shown its impact, and local manifestations of the global #Metoo movement in South Africa – such as the #MenAreTrash movement and the Total Shutdown – have captured people's imagination and have sparked debate around the power and role of young women in catalysing change, as well as the power of social media to shift discourses and reach out to multitudes in innovative ways. A more responsive South African government has also committed to a renewed focus on an NSP GBVF and the rights for individuals with diverse sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI).

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<sup>6</sup> [https://www.bigwin.org/nm\\_pent\\_bigwp/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Violence-against-children-Big-Win-Philanthropy-July-2018-SUMMARY.pdf](https://www.bigwin.org/nm_pent_bigwp/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Violence-against-children-Big-Win-Philanthropy-July-2018-SUMMARY.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Swartz, S, Bhana, A, Richter, L and Versfeld, A (2013) Human Sciences Research Council, *Promoting young fathers' positive involvement in their children's lives*

<sup>8</sup> [www.stateoftheworldsfathers.org](http://www.stateoftheworldsfathers.org)

<sup>9</sup> World Health Organization Fact Sheet on Genital Mutilation, available at <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs241/en/>

<sup>10</sup> UNICEF (2015) The National Strategy to End Child Marriage 2014/2015 – 2019/2020

## Caregiving, Children's Rights and Positive Parenting

Working on parenting can influence gender equality and contribute to preventing violence against children and womxn.

Around the world, womxn do most of the daily paid and unpaid work. Globally, for every one hour of unpaid care work done by men, womxn do three hours.<sup>11</sup> In South Africa, the inequality of care work is even more extreme, with womxn doing eight hours for every hour of unpaid care work that men do.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, in South Africa, since most households are supported by womxn, mothers mostly play the dual role of being both caregiver and breadwinner. The contemporary market-driven economy places a relatively lower value on care work and a higher value on financially productive work.



<sup>11</sup> [www.stateoftheworldsfathers.org](http://www.stateoftheworldsfathers.org)

<sup>12</sup> The State of South Africa's Fathers Report 2018

Working with parents presents an opportunity to influence the gendered sharing of child-care work. The MenCare Global Fatherhood Campaign works towards a vision of men and womxn around the world sharing all child-care work in a 50/50 ratio. Sonke is a co-founder and coordinator of the campaign and implements strategies across a spectrum of change, including interventions, campaigns, policy advocacy, research, and movement building towards this vision.

Working with parents also provides an opportunity to prevent violence. Sonke actively joined the movement to prohibit corporal punishment in South Africa in 2013. As the organisation increased its focus on evidence-based violence prevention, it became clearer that the prevention of corporal punishment not only holds value for protecting children but also presents a catalytic opportunity to, in the longer term, prevent violence against womxn. Various studies<sup>13</sup> have shown that childhood experience of violence is associated with adults, especially men's, perpetration of violence. Preventing corporal punishment may, therefore, in addition to improving children's safety, have a positive effect on preventing adult use of violence, including GBV, in the longer term.

In addition to promising interventions that can change individual behaviour, the work to end corporal punishment also requires a change in the context within which such punishment occurs, in other words, a response at the policy level, and an accompanying shift in social norms.

Sonke played an important part in the movement to prohibit corporal punishment in South Africa, and was a respondent in the 2019 Constitutional Court case that found the defence of reasonable chastisement unconstitutional, thereby effectively prohibiting corporal punishment in South Africa.<sup>14</sup> Sonke now focuses on supporting social norms to reduce violence against children, by promoting the use of non-violent discipline, or positive parenting.

## Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)

Womxn and girls carry the majority of the burden for contraceptive use and suffer grave implications of violations of their sexual and reproductive health rights. Men's lack of involvement influences womxn's and girls' sexual health negatively and constrains their life decisions. The limited involvement by men in joint decision-making, together with men's limited use of sexual health services, represents an ongoing, major health problem for both men and womxn.

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<sup>13</sup> Guedes, A et al (2016) 'Bridging the gaps: a global review of intersections of violence against women and violence against children', *Global Health Action*, 9(0), pp. 1–15. doi: 10.3402/gha.v9.31516. Fulu, E, McCook, S and Falb, K (September 2017) 'What works evidence review: Intersections of violence against women and violence against children', , pp. 2015–2018, available at <http://www.whatworks.co.za/documents/publications/116-vac-vaw-evidence-brief-new-crop-1/file>

<sup>14</sup> Mogoeng, M (2019) *Freedom of Religion South Africa v Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development and Others* [2019] ZACC 34, available at <https://collections.concourt.org.za/handle/20.500.12144/36570>

Health activists argue that “there is overwhelming evidence that in the continent, even in those countries where there are liberal laws, the protection and promotion of sexual and reproductive health rights has taken a back seat. In most instances, there has been expressed pushback against the entrenchment and/or realisation of sexual and reproductive health rights.”<sup>15</sup>

Indeed, in 2003, African countries took the lead in terms of recognising safe abortion as a human right under the African human rights system (Maputo Protocol). However, the promises of the protocol have not yet translated into appropriate abortion laws in the continent and, even in countries with very progressive laws, such as Ethiopia and South Africa, access to safe abortion services remains limited. An estimated 93% of womxn of reproductive age in Africa live in countries with restrictive abortion laws. Africa is the continent with the highest number of abortion-related deaths; in 2014, at least 9% of maternal deaths (or 16 000 deaths) in the continent were from unsafe abortion.

## HIV and AIDS in Africa

In a global context, sub-Saharan Africa remains the region that is most affected by the HIV epidemic. In 2017, sub-Saharan Africa accounted for nearly 65% of new infections globally and 1,2 million people were infected with HIV. The region accounted for more than 70% of deaths globally; 282 000 young womxn (age 15 to 24) were infected with HIV, which is more than 750 a day. Young womxn in sub-Saharan Africa are twice as likely to be infected with HIV as young men.<sup>16</sup> The high number of new infections among young people in Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) is a serious concern, as is the fact that the majority of adolescents and young people living with HIV are growing up in the same region.<sup>17</sup> The cycle of heterosexual HIV transmission from older men to adolescent girls and young womxn (AGYW) and the particular biological and socioeconomic vulnerabilities of AGYW are some of the reasons for the disproportionately high burden of HIV infections among AGYW.<sup>18</sup>

An extensive body of literature over many years provides clear evidence that gender inequalities and associated gender norms about femininities and masculinities encourage men to act in ways that put themselves and their sexual partners at risk of contracting HIV. Study after study tells us that when men equate masculinity with dominance over womxn, risky sexual behaviour, sexual conquest, and alcohol consumption, and when womxn are expected to acquiesce to men’s sexual advances, then men are more likely to have multiple sexual partners, less likely to use condoms or access HIV testing and treatment, and less likely to remain in treatment and be virally suppressed. This has negative consequences not only for womxn, who are

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<sup>15</sup> Mafuma, T, ‘Sexual and reproductive health rights should matter to all’, available at [https://www.spotlightnsp.co.za/2018/06/11/sexual-and-reproductive-health-rights-should-matter-to-all/#\\_ftn1](https://www.spotlightnsp.co.za/2018/06/11/sexual-and-reproductive-health-rights-should-matter-to-all/#_ftn1)

<sup>16</sup> [https://www.one.org/international/blog/aids-facts-epidemic/?gclid=EAlalQobChMI1puomf6l4AIV7b\\_tCh-0WvABeEAAYASAAEgKK9vD\\_BwE](https://www.one.org/international/blog/aids-facts-epidemic/?gclid=EAlalQobChMI1puomf6l4AIV7b_tCh-0WvABeEAAYASAAEgKK9vD_BwE)

<sup>17</sup> UNESCO (2013) ‘Young People Today. Time to Act Now’, available at <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002234/223447e.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> WHO (2017) Evidence brief: The importance of sexual and reproductive health and rights to prevent HIV in adolescent girls and young women in eastern and southern Africa, available at <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/255334/WHO-RHR-17.05-eng.pdf>

exposed to a greater likelihood of HIV acquisition but also for men, as they are less likely to get tested and to stay on treatment. Research shows that 70% of men are more likely to die of AIDS than womxn. Progression of HIV to AIDS is faster among men and older people as a result of cultural and social norms that continue to reinforce stigma around HIV, as well as structural factors, such as health system policies, programmes, and service delivery that do not include an awareness of or cater for the HIV-related needs of men in all their diversity. The intersection of HIV and GBV is also at the centre of feminist programming in the continent, as 'there is a growing recognition that womxn and girls' risk of and vulnerability to HIV infection are shaped by deep-rooted and pervasive gender inequalities – violence against them in particular. Studies conducted in many countries indicate that a substantial proportion of womxn have experienced violence in some form or another at some point in their life. Studies from Rwanda, Tanzania, and South Africa show up to a three-fold increase in the risk of HIV among womxn who have experienced violence compared with those who have not.'<sup>19</sup>



<sup>19</sup> <https://www.who.int/hac/techguidance/pht/InfoBulletinIntimatePartnerViolenceFinal.pdf>



# OUR WAY FORWARD: RIGHTS, ACTION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY 2020-2024

## Sonke's Theory of Change

**S**onke seeks rapid and sustained change in the harmful cultural norms and patriarchal attitudes that drive gender inequality and human rights violations. We recognise that no single strategy will achieve this goal. Our Theory of Change – the Sonke Rights, Action, Accountability and Sustainability Model – consists of eight mutually reinforcing **strategies**: community education; community mobilisation; individual skills building and leadership development; building networks and movements; use of mass and community media; legal and policy advocacy; action research and evaluation; and organisational strengthening. We believe this model represents our best chance at achieving the systemic and structural change required to achieve gender justice and human rights. The Sonke Rights, Action, Accountability, and Sustainability Model is complex, but it offers many advantages, especially in our context where civil society is relatively small and limited in its capacity. Our rootedness in local communities provides us with the insights needed to advance our work. Our media visibility and reach enhance our legitimacy and leverage in local communities, and with policymakers and donors, and it inspires replication across the country and region. Our leadership and movement building spread our priorities. Our legal work, informed by formative research and community priorities, and supported by mass mobilisation and media advocacy, compels government and the private sector to comply with court rulings and the law and thereby unlocks rapid systemic change. Our research and evaluation shape our strategy, assess our progress, and generate lessons about what works for ourselves, our partners, and the broader field. Our organisational development supports our and our partners' effective, transparent, accountable, and sustainable programming and operations.

## Four Key Approaches Underpinning our Theory of Change

Sonke adopts a **socioecological approach** that recognises that people live within social, economic, religious, and cultural contexts and that change occurs at different levels. Addressing ill-health, violence, and discrimination can only take place if all levels of society are engaged in a process of transformation: individual, community, institutions and government. The action is required at the individual, family, community, policy and structural levels to transform and sustainably change society.

**A gender-transformative approach** means changing how we conceptualise gender and gender relations, which in turn means not only changing the way men and womxn treat one another, but also changing what we think it means to be a man or a womxn. True gender equality will be impossible to achieve if we all continue to believe that girls and boys, womxn, and men *should* behave in certain ways because of their gender and that particular role in our society can only be filled by either womxn or men. Once we become open to the idea that womxn and men are all simply people – capable and worthy of a variety of roles and purposes in our society – we will have transformed the way we think about gender and will, therefore, be able to treat and value people with different sexual orientations equally. Sonke reaffirms the importance of working *with* men and boys as a component of achieving gender equality and womxn’s rights. At the same time, Sonke continues to work in ways that strengthen how we engage with womxn’s rights organisations. To achieve this, Sonke focuses on initiatives that have the potential to transform unequal power relations between womxn and men from individual to structural and institutional levels.

Sonke uses a **human rights-based approach** to development and the achievement of gender equality. Firstly, we use a human rights framework to analyse the political economy of the countries where we work, which entails doing scans and analysis of key legislation and policies in the field of gender equality and womxn’s rights, and their compliance with national constitutions, as well as with regional and international human rights instruments. This analysis assists us in determining the gaps, from both a content or implementation point of view, and the ensuing advocacy priorities.

Secondly, we promote the empowerment of individuals and communities through long-term and rights literacy campaigns – on both political and socio-economic rights – and the avenues and recourses available when those rights are violated. Sonke has developed a number of educational materials on gender equality, GBV legislation, socio-economic rights and local accountability that are based on and promote human rights and their manifestations in the gender field. Most importantly, our community and policy development and advocacy work builds the capacity of communities to increase the accountability of key duty bearers and institutions responsible for respecting, protecting, and fulfilling their rights.

Thirdly, Sonke's policy development and advocacy work put a strong emphasis on making national governments and regional human rights bodies accountable for the passing and implementation of international human rights instruments, and their domestication into national laws and policies. In this vein, Sonke also engages constructively with duty bearers to build their capacity and better deliver on their mandate.

Sonke is guided by **feminist principles and analysis** in its quest to end GBV and achieve gender equality. We believe that unequal power relations between men and womxn are the root cause of violence against womxn, girls, and gender-non-conforming people. Our work tackles not only the individual behaviour of men – who are the main perpetrators of violence – but also institutional and structural power relations and systems. Building on South Africa's rich anti-apartheid struggle, we also use an intersectional analysis – understood as a theory of oppression – to highlight the multiple experiences of discrimination of womxn and non-conforming people and the impact on their lives, and through our work, we endeavour to build coalitions with other social justice movements. We put womxn and girls at the centre of our programmes and strive to amplify their voices and needs, at the same time promoting their leadership. The 'do no harm' principle guides our community work in particular and we strive to work in partnership with community-based stakeholders and organisations that are aware of the risks faced by womxn and girls in their communities and to better implement programmes that incorporate risk mitigation strategies. One of our main strategies – engaging men and boys as allies for gender equality – is based on the premise that men should be led by those experiencing oppression and hence should be accountable to womxn's rights organisations and movements. This entails programmatic interventions that: are not centred on men's needs, but rather on how men can support, and not lead, gender-transformative processes; do not use a role model methodology that implies that only men can talk to men; question and tackle the role of men at the individual, community and structural levels; work in partnership with other organisations that focus mostly on womxn's empowerment initiatives, and constantly reflect and act on the impact that programmes targeting men have on the lives of womxn and girls.

Taking this Theory of Change, its context analysis, and insights from its evaluative and reflective work, Sonke has outlined the following Strategic Plan for the 2020 – 2024 period.

**Strategic Goal 2020 – 2024:** Sonke, communities, and partners collectively take action and promote accountability for the protection and realisation of human rights and gender justice in Africa.

## Sonke's approach is unique in six ways:

1

We put a strong emphasis on the *prevention* of GBV and HIV and AIDS, alongside response.

2

We use a broad mix of social change strategies to achieve systemic change.

3

We are rooted in local communities and mobilise citizens to hold duty bearers accountable from local to international levels.

4

We bring womxn, men, and gender-non-conforming people together to advocate for change locally, nationally, and regionally.

5

We believe men have to be partners in changing gender norms and preventing GBV and HIV.

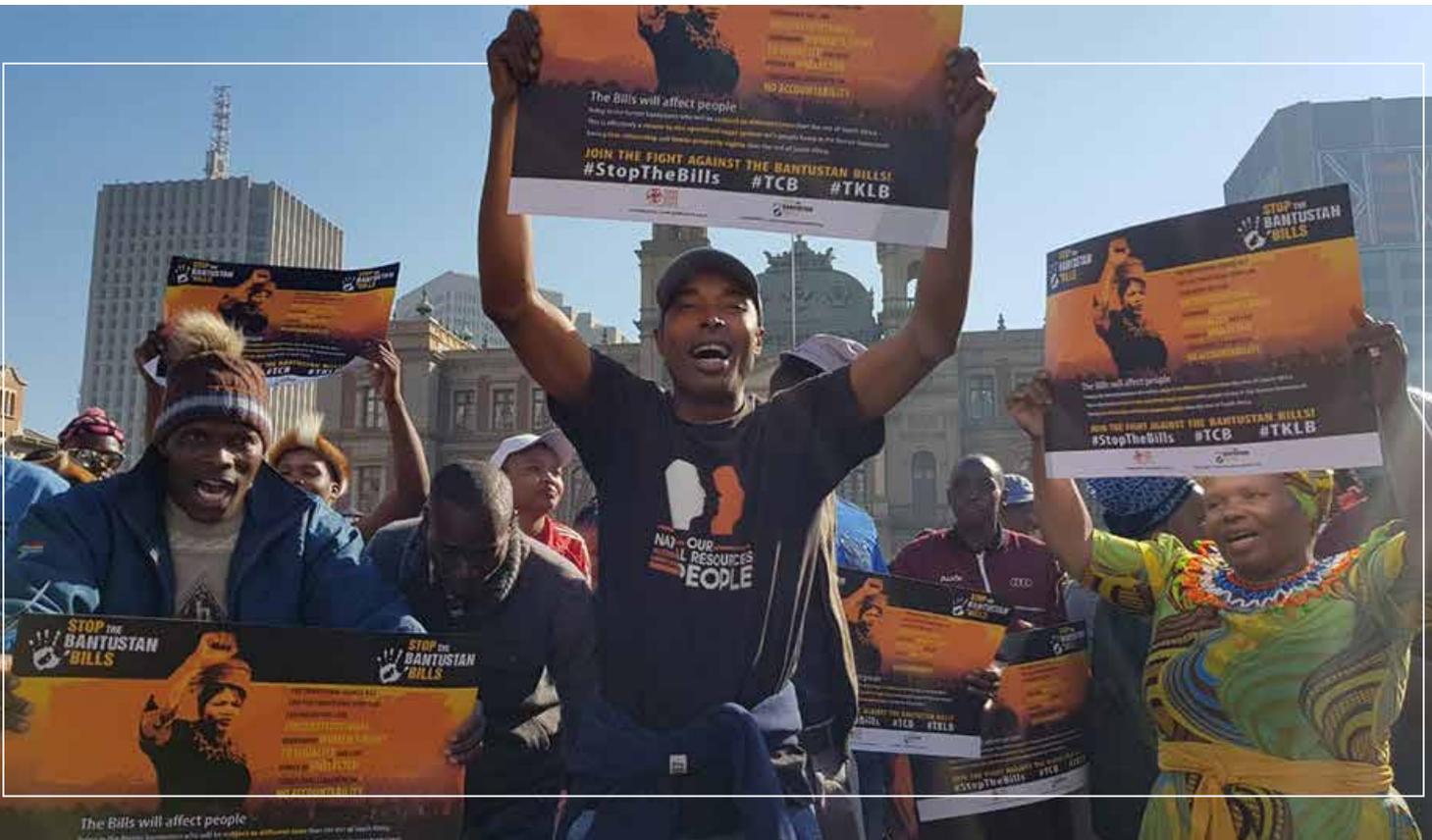
6

We create powerful partnerships locally, nationally, and globally, and emphasize sustainable, systemic change to achieve impact at scale.

**Strategic Impact 2020 – 2024:** By the end of 2024, there is progress on the monitoring and implementation of national and regional laws, policies, and programmes related to human rights and gender justice in Africa.

Sonke will measure its *contribution* to this Strategic Impact through the following key indicators, based on the countries where Sonke has a footprint:

- 1 The number of countries in Africa that have moved up in the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>20</sup>
- 2 The number of countries in Africa that have a National Strategic Plan on GBV.
- 3 The number of countries in Africa that prohibit all forms of violence against children, including corporal punishment.
- 4 The number of countries in Africa that offer a minimum of ten days' parental leave for men.
- 5 The number of regional and national policies and laws integrating gender-transformative approaches to engage boys and men on SRHR.
- 6 The number of national action plans on HIV that integrate the UNAIDS Men and HIV Acceleration Plan.<sup>21</sup>
- 7 Increased generation of Global South driven evidence of the impact of social norms change programming.
- 8 Improved country-level availability and reliability of data on GBV.



<sup>20</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii>

<sup>21</sup> [https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2016/2016\\_meeting-report-male-engagement-HIV-response](https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2016/2016_meeting-report-male-engagement-HIV-response)

To contribute to this Strategic Goal, Sonke will work towards achieving the following **four Strategic Objectives 2020 – 2024**:

### **Strategic Objective 1: RIGHTS – Individuals and communities are aware of, and able to articulate, their rights**

Active and empowered individuals and communities are knowledgeable about human rights, gender equality and SRHR, and the socioeconomic determinants that prevent them from fully realising those rights. Through focused workshops and community outreach, individuals and communities will increase their knowledge, skills and rights literacy. Knowledge development will focus on transforming understanding of gender: including an increased understanding of masculinities and the negative impact of patriarchy on human rights and gender equality; the gendered dimensions of xenophobia; GBV and the intersection of GBV and HIV and AIDS; the social and cultural norms that prevent health-seeking behaviours and the full realisation of SRHR; and positive parenting as a pathway to violence prevention. Skills building will focus on community education and mobilisation, leadership, creative advocacy strategies, use of media and programme planning. Through rights literacy, individuals and communities will be able to use regional, national and local legislation, policies and mechanisms for the protection of human rights; and political, community and religious leaders will have increased capacity to reinforce messaging about gender equality and to address violence and human rights.

#### **Broad activities include:**

- Carry out recruitment and formation of CATs, organised groups, and task-oriented teams of diverse volunteers committed to raising awareness and taking action on issues that affect them and their fellow community members. CATs provide the basis for sustained impact over time;
- Provide training and capacity building of community-based organisations; faith-based organisations; community members (womxn and men, girls and boys, gender-non-conforming individuals); religious, traditional and community leaders; refugees, migrants, sex workers, inmates, and other marginalised groups;
- Conduct community education and mobilisation activities to engage and educate the broader community

In the past few years in South Africa, Sonke's Community Action Team (CAT) model has grown to encompass a network of activated, concerned citizens across the country, who mobilise and educate their communities, put pressure on state actors to respond to cases of GBV with urgency and justice and support victims of violence. CATs respond to the needs present in their communities and choose different actions depending on their interests, purpose, and resources. For example, one CAT might form a hip-hop group to educate youth in schools about HIV and AIDS or GBV, while another might organise an HIV testing day, and another a campaign to pressurise a local ward councillor to improve street lighting. CATs also organise and implement the critical function of holding local officials to account for their roles and responsibilities, much of which focuses on monitoring the judicial system through cases of GBV, which includes creating community activism and awareness and educating the community and the officials tasked with delivering services (courts, police officials and health institutions).



MenCare Global Fatherhood Campaign (<http://www.men-care.org>) is a global fatherhood campaign coordinated by Promundo and Sonke Gender Justice. It was launched in 2011 and is active in more than 50 countries on five continents. Our mission is to promote men's involvement as equitable, non-violent fathers, and caregivers in order to achieve family wellbeing, gender equality and better health for mothers, fathers, and children. We aim for men to be allies in supporting womxn's social and economic equality, in part by taking on more responsibility for childcare and domestic work. MenCare works at multiple levels to engage individuals, communities, institutions and policymakers. We work with partner organisations around the world, offering a suite of media resources, educational programming and advocacy initiatives that can be customised for different countries, languages, and cultural contexts. From participation in international conferences like the Clinton Global Initiative and TEDx Barcelona to being highlighted by the media on issues such as men's engagement in prenatal health visits and paid parental leave policies, MenCare is receiving global attention.



through community dialogues, community radio and mainstream media, door-to-door campaigns, sports events, commemoration events and targeted awareness campaigns;

- Conduct training on gender transformation for government officials, members of the legislature and other public servants and professionals who hold positions where upholding human rights is their responsibility, or because they can influence or educate others. This would also include law-enforcement personnel such as police and security forces; prison officials; lawyers, judges and prosecutors; educators; social workers; health professionals; journalists and media representatives and UN agency officials.



## **Strategic Objective 2: ACTION – Individuals, institutions, organisations and communities put their knowledge into action for the realisation of rights**

Rights holders will take action and engage with governments, regional bodies, Chapter 9 institutions and other key stakeholders at different levels on policy and planning processes, and mobilise and support advocacy efforts to access justice. This objective will also focus on building a strong and cohesive civil society that advocates for government laws and policies that protect and promote the rights of womxn and girls, men and boys and marginalised groups. Sonke, partners and the communities in which we work will influence lawmakers and policymakers to amend existing policies and develop new policies, implementation plans, programmes, and coordination mechanisms that prevent and respond to GBV and HIV and strengthen gender justice and the achievement of human rights.

### **Broad activities include:**

- Support community members – womxn, men and gender non-conforming individuals – to become active members of local structures such as ward committees, community policing forums, clinic committees, traditional councils, school governing bodies and local AIDS and GBV councils in order to influence local government policy and planning processes;
- Establish and strengthen coalitions and alliances to amplify the voices of civil society in driving social change;
- Provide technical input on key pieces of draft legislation and policy relating to GBV, SRHR and HIV, and other human rights issues at the national and regional level, including working through MenEngage Africa to provide technical input into regional policy processes;
- Review existing policy and programmes, and produce reports and policy briefs to highlight findings and recommendations, and suggest policy language in line with the gender justice and human rights agenda. The reports can be used as advocacy and programming tools;
- Engage with government officials and policymakers through regular dialogue and stakeholder forums to further the gender justice and human rights agenda;
- Initiate and support advocacy campaigns and social movements aimed at influencing positive changes to policies and programmes, including the global MenCare Campaign and the #MeToo movement.

**Strategic Objective 3: ACCOUNTABILITY – Duty bearers, including government, multilateral institutions, the private sector and Sonke, are accountable for our collective responsibilities and obligations to advance gender equality and human rights, as laid out in national and international law**

This objective will involve holding accountable duty bearers to their mandate of protecting the rights of individuals and will focus on accountable and well-governed institutions, including national parliaments, governments, justice systems, Chapter 9 institutions, regional economic communities, Human Rights institutions regionally such as the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, and internationally such as United Nations agencies. The private sector will also be pushed to commit to more sustainable business practices that focus on social impact and sustainability, while Sonke will hold itself accountable to its commitments as laid out in its Strategy, Code of Conduct and Accountability framework. A commitment to rights will be built, with respect to international human rights instruments, national laws in countries and protocols in the region, as well as policies, services and programmes that address gender equality, GBV and SRHR, including HIV and AIDS. Institutions and individuals, in particular those in positions of power, will understand their role and express commitment in the language of the policies, statements, and plans addressing gender justice and human rights.



### Broad activities include:

- Engage in social accountability mechanisms to monitor and report on implementation of local laws, policies and plans, such as the Mystery Client methodology (see **Mystery Client**);
- Monitor selected cases of GBV, xenophobia or other human rights abuses to measure, assess and document the effectiveness and adequacy of the services rendered to the public by the court structure;
- Use of existing mechanisms provided under the regulations of Chapter 9 institutions to hold duty bearers accountable;
- Initiate strategic litigation in cases where other accountability mechanisms have not produced results, to bring about systemic social change;
- Promote accountability to the populations we serve, by establishing ongoing feedback mechanisms, including on project and research results; conducting regular needs assessments; establishing complaints and safeguarding mechanisms, and adhering to the organisation's Code of Conduct.



### **Strategic Objective 4: SUSTAINABILITY –To ensure the gender justice and human rights sectors are sustainable through increased funding, improved capacities, stronger partnerships and stronger evidence base.**

Sonke is a learning organisation and is committed to evolving and continually improving all aspects of its operations. While full sustainability is inherently unattainable for a non-profit organisation, Sonke will continually review and assess its level of organisational, reputational, financial, and programmatic sustainability; its ability to measure impact; its ability to deliver value for money; and its contribution to the field of gender equality and human rights, and will work with and learn from its partners in doing so.

### Broad activities include:

- Use research, monitoring, evaluation and learning to build the evidence base of Sonke's approach: Across all four objectives, Sonke will share successes and experiences with stakeholders, civil society organisations and partners across the region to improve on its practice. Sonke and its partners will engage in reflective practice and deliberate interrogation of its approach, and will conduct and publish the results of ongoing evaluations of the effectiveness and impact of different components of its model;

Sonke has distributed R80 million to 22 organisations in the region over the last decade. Through a well-functioning sub-awards system with comprehensive assessment tools and monitoring mechanisms, Sonke provides ongoing support to partners to strengthen organisational systems, focusing on areas such as grant compliance, financial management, human resources management and monitoring and evaluation. A review of this support provided to MEA member organisations between 2014 and 2019 showed that Sonke has contributed significantly to the strengthening of these partners. For example, on a risk-level scale of high to low, at baseline 20% of partners ranked as high risk, 60% of partners ranked as medium risk and 20% of partners ranked as low risk. At closeout in 2019, 20% ranked as medium risk while 80% ranked as low risk, with all sub-awardees attaining unqualified audits.

Governance structures improved from 30% inadequate at baseline to only 2% inadequate by midterm and no risk at closeout, and financial systems from 30% inadequate at baseline to 0% at midterm, and our partners have maintained the low risk profile.

- Develop and strengthen partnerships. Through its leadership in multiple alliances and coalitions, including MenEngage, MenCare, the Call To Action Collective, Detention Justice Forum, the Asijiki Coalition, and the Diepsloot GBV Stakeholder Forum, Sonke is able to ensure broad adoption of its goals and strategies, and learn from and apply partners' expertise;
- Build the operational and programmatic capacity of partner organisations across the continent, through sub-grants and technical assistance;
- Strengthen its internal governance, finance, human resource, compliance, risk management, safeguarding, and other policies, procedures, and systems. Through the continual review, benchmarking and donor-driven due-diligence processes, Sonke will refine and strengthen the mechanisms necessary to ensure accountability and transparency;
- Use strategic communications and multimedia tools to produce and disseminate stories of change, to put a spotlight on the lived realities of those for whom we work, and to raise the public's awareness of the key issues Sonke seeks to address;
- Increase and diversify its resources to facilitate growth, provide freedom to test and refine its model and approaches, and allow for flexibility in responding to changing priorities.



# OUR ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

**T**he commitment, passion and dedication of Sonke's staff and board, many of whom are recognised globally for their expertise and participate in shaping global policy and practice, have been instrumental in the organisation's success. Sonke has a capable board of directors, and dedicated staff, management and CATs. Also, Sonke engages volunteers, interns and fellows every year.

Sonke is also proud of its longstanding commitment to diversity and transformation. As an organisation, Sonke is representative of the demographics of South Africa, while a number of staff comes from the African region. Most of the board of directors, senior management team, full management team, and the majority of staff are female, and identify as "black." Additionally, the board charter clearly states that the board must take into account issues of diversity, and include representatives from womxn's rights organisations, youth, people living with HIV and AIDS, refugee and migrant communities, and from other African countries. Sonke has a robust Employment Equity Committee in place that helps guide the organisation with recruitment and new appointments.

The board of directors is composed of prominent Southern African and regional leaders from civil society, academia, and the private sector with expertise in Sonke's programme areas, as well as in human resources and finances. The Sonke board comprises between 10 and 12 board members, who meet at least twice a year. The board provides oversight and strategic direction to the organisation. It is responsible for approving the strategic plan, annual operational plan, annual budget and annual audited financial statement. The board has two subcommittees, namely the Audit, Risk, and Finance Board Subcommittee, and the Human Resources Board Subcommittee.

Sonke has three programme units, three support units, and two support functions that work cross-functionally to achieve the Strategic Plan Goal and Objectives. Below is a summary of the programme units, support units and support functions.

## **Community Education and Mobilisation Unit**

Since its inception, Sonke has been committed to building and sustaining grassroots citizen activism and rights literacy. Sonke's Community Education and Mobilisation (CEM) Unit works closely with communities and community leadership structures across South Africa's nine provinces to address gender inequalities, and strengthen community prevention and response to GBV and reduce the spread and impact of HIV and AIDS. The unit comprises a team of highly experienced, passionate, and dedicated trainers and mobilisers who work with refugees and migrants, parents (especially fathers), ex-inmates, schoolchildren and adolescents, the media, and other relevant community groups and individuals. The CEM Unit's primary strategy for achieving active and empowered local communities has been the development and training of Community Action Teams working to advance gender justice and human rights at the local level.

## Policy Development and Advocacy Unit

Sonke's Policy Development and Advocacy (PDA) Unit consists of policy analysts, researchers and lawyers who base their practice in activism and disrupting the status quo. They – and Sonke – advocate for progressive legislation and policy on gender equality, GBV, and SRHR (including HIV and AIDS) to empower and protect womxn, children, and vulnerable men, and to cultivate positive masculinities. They offer technical expertise to national processes of drafting legislation and policies; use the courts and Chapter 9 institutions to hold public figures accountable for their actions; support communities to participate in public advocacy action; and lobby government institutions to uphold the rights of all, but in particular, marginalised groups.

## Regional Programmes and Networks Unit

The Regional Programmes and Networks (RPN) Unit works across 22 countries in Africa to share the lessons Sonke has learnt from its work in South Africa and our partners in the region. As the Secretariat of the MenEngage Africa (MEA) Alliance, Sonke coordinates training, technical assistance, organisational capacity strengthening and peer exchange among dozens of organisations in West, Central, East and Southern Africa on a range of thematic issues and strategic approaches, including on community mobilisation, policy advocacy, organisational development and the use of community and mass media. As the Secretariat, Sonke convenes the regional steering committee and is also responsible for mobilising resources and ensuring that the network remains active and relevant to emerging issues in the region and globally.



The Regional Programming and Networks Unit engages with policy processes at regional and international levels. Sonke has observer status at the African Commission for Human and People's Rights (ACHPR). The Regional Programmes and Networks Unit provides input into key policy processes, submits shadow reports and engages in numerous policy processes at the Regional Economic Communities like SADC and EAC in partnership with key regional civil society organisations. This unit also implements a highly sought-after MenEngage Africa Training Initiative (MATI) – a rigorous residential two-week programme that builds participants' capacity on the intersection of Womxn's Health Empowerment and Masculinities. Over the past five years, MATI has contributed to the development of a strong cadre of gender-justice activists in the region and beyond. Notably, the work in the region has led to the successful development of a gender-justice movement.

The Regional Programmes and Networks unit also includes a technical focus on caregiving, children's rights and positive parenting. This technical focus promotes gender-equal caregiving, positive parenting practices that include positive discipline strategies, a healthy, supportive relationship between co-parents, and supporting a child's education, health, and wellbeing. The MenCare Fatherhood Campaign is the primary intervention undertaken in support of this focus and works to create healthier family dynamics, a sharing of parental roles in a child's life, and gender-equitable relationships. At the policy level, in terms of this work, Sonke advocates for better parental leave, which gives men the opportunity to bond with their children while they are still infants. To encourage even wider acceptance of non-violent parent-child relationships, Sonke drives a multinational, multipronged campaign to prohibit and end corporal punishment in all spaces and to promote the use of positive discipline strategies by parents.

## Monitoring and Evaluation Unit

Sonke is committed to knowledge creation and evidence-based research. Over the past five years, Sonke has increasingly partnered with academic institutions to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of its community education and mobilisation model and other programmatic work implemented in South Africa and throughout the continent. In collaboration with all units and functions at Sonke, the Monitoring and Evaluation (ME) Unit collects, analyses and reports on performance data to measure the effectiveness and impact of our work. The gathered intelligence works to strengthen the evidence base on gender-transformative practice and policy, as well as inform, monitor and evaluate Sonke's programming and advocacy strategies. The unit also provides technical guidance on research design and methodology, and on improving and standardising the internal monitoring and evaluation process.

## Finance and Sub-Award Unit

This unit is responsible for the overall financial management of Sonke's financial resources. The unit produces comprehensive monthly financial reports and produces accurate and timely donor reports. It focuses on achieving clean audits and ensuring that Sonke is compliant with its own internal and donor requirements.

The unit has developed strong financial policies and processes for the organisation. Budget holders receive regular support and training during the year.

The unit works closely with the programme staff on managing grants to partners, mostly on the African continent. Partners are taken through pre-award assessments, followed by ongoing monitoring and support, and ending in a closeout visit. Sonke provides partners with capacity building in the areas of human resource management, financial management and resource mobilisation.

The unit has developed strong policies in support of its sub-award work. In addition to this, it has developed several risk-tracking tools to be able to establish improvements in specific areas of sub-grantees over a period. Sonke has managed more than 35 sub-awards since its inception in Africa, North America, South America and Europe.

Sonke has an administrative team that ensures the offices are run efficiently. Conscious of the challenges facing the planet due to climate change, Sonke strives to make use of the most advanced accounting and IT systems and takes measures to cut down on carbon emissions. Some of our strategies include: reducing travel by hosting virtual meetings; reducing printing; disseminating educational materials in electronic form; switching to an electronic procurement system that will allow us to move away from paper-based financial requisitions and motivations; reducing the use of air-conditioning; and reducing and managing the use of electricity and water in the offices.

## Human Resources Unit

The Human Resources (HR) Unit draws on employees' expertise to meet clearly defined objectives that are aligned with Sonke's vision and mission by strengthening systems, recruiting capable, flexible and committed individuals, as well as managing and rewarding performance and developing key competencies where required. Special emphasis is placed on recruiting individuals who have the skills, qualifications and experience to meet the needs of the organisation and to meet the employment-equity targets set by the organisation. Sonke has developed a detailed orientation programme to ensure they fully understand Sonke's way of working. The HR unit has strong HR policies in place to guide all HR processes. Sonke is committed to staff development, which takes many forms, including training and contributing to individual academic studies to equip staff with the knowledge and skills to perform their jobs effectively and efficiently. The Employee Wellness Programme focuses on improving the emotional and psychosocial wellbeing of staff through counselling, support and identified wellness interventions. Sonke is committed to being a learning organisation and an employer of choice within the NGO sector.

## Communications and Strategic Information

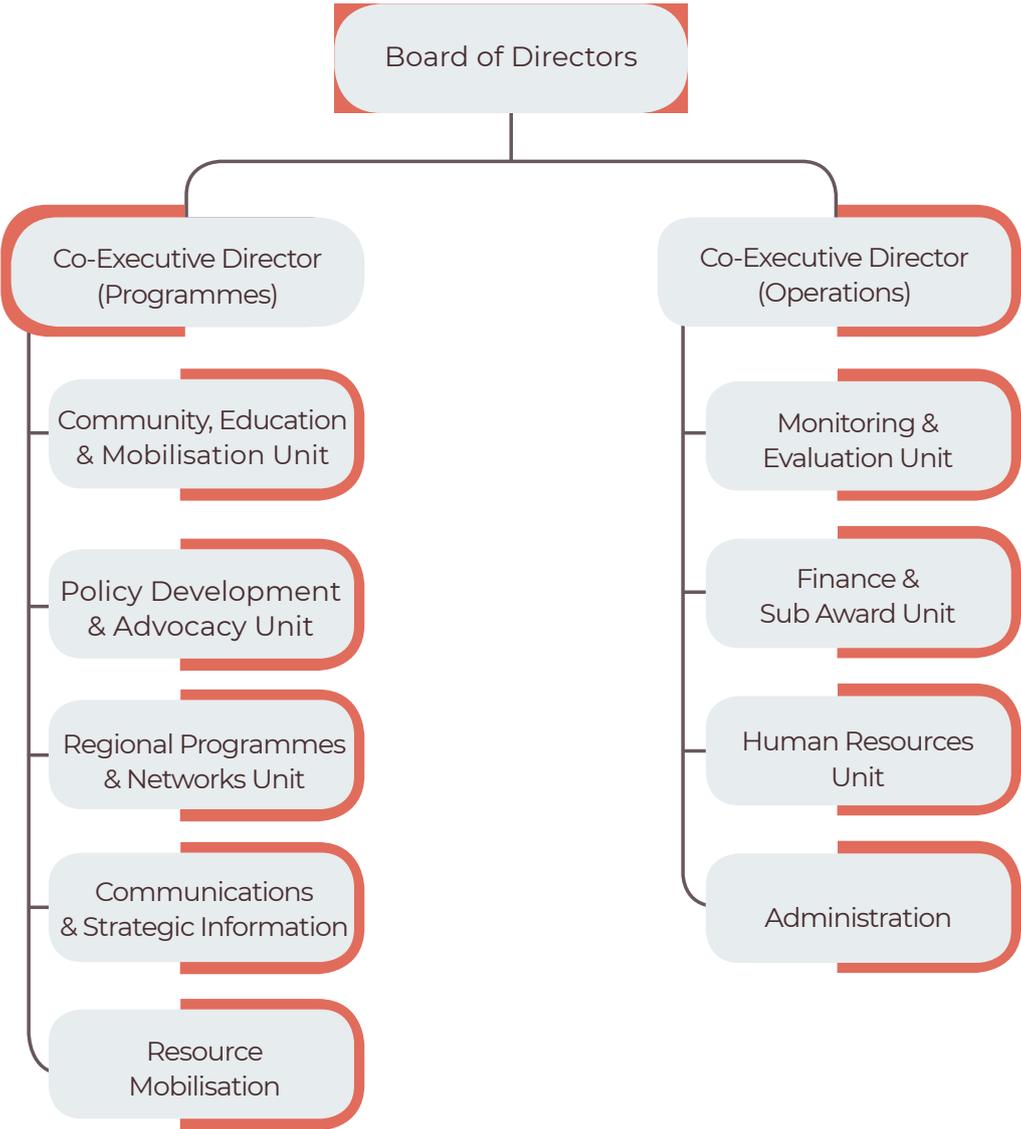
Sonke uses all forms of media to advance its work in promoting gender equality and human rights. Using debate and discussion, social analysis and research, crafted messaging, media training, and personal stories that advance tolerance and understanding, and encourage positive behaviour change, Sonke builds positive ideas around gender, health, sexuality and human rights. The media is a strategic tool to hold public officials accountable, while Sonke's extensive work with community radio

also raises awareness and increases public interest, facilitating the education and mobilisation of people to participate in public demonstrations and key events. Sonke staff write editorials reflecting on current issues relating to human rights and gender transformation, thereby building public understanding, strategies, and awareness on how to combat gender inequality, HIV and GBV. Also, Sonke staff members provide social commentary as guests on radio and television shows, films, documentaries, online and print articles.

## Resource Mobilisation

Sonke’s Resource Mobilisation strategy focuses on ensuring the financial, programmatic and reputational sustainability of the organisation via stable and diverse resourcing to support its programmes. This includes a commitment to value for money and we therefore continually assess our cost efficiency and effectiveness and look for innovative ways to do more with less, without sacrificing the quality and integrity of our work.

## Organogram



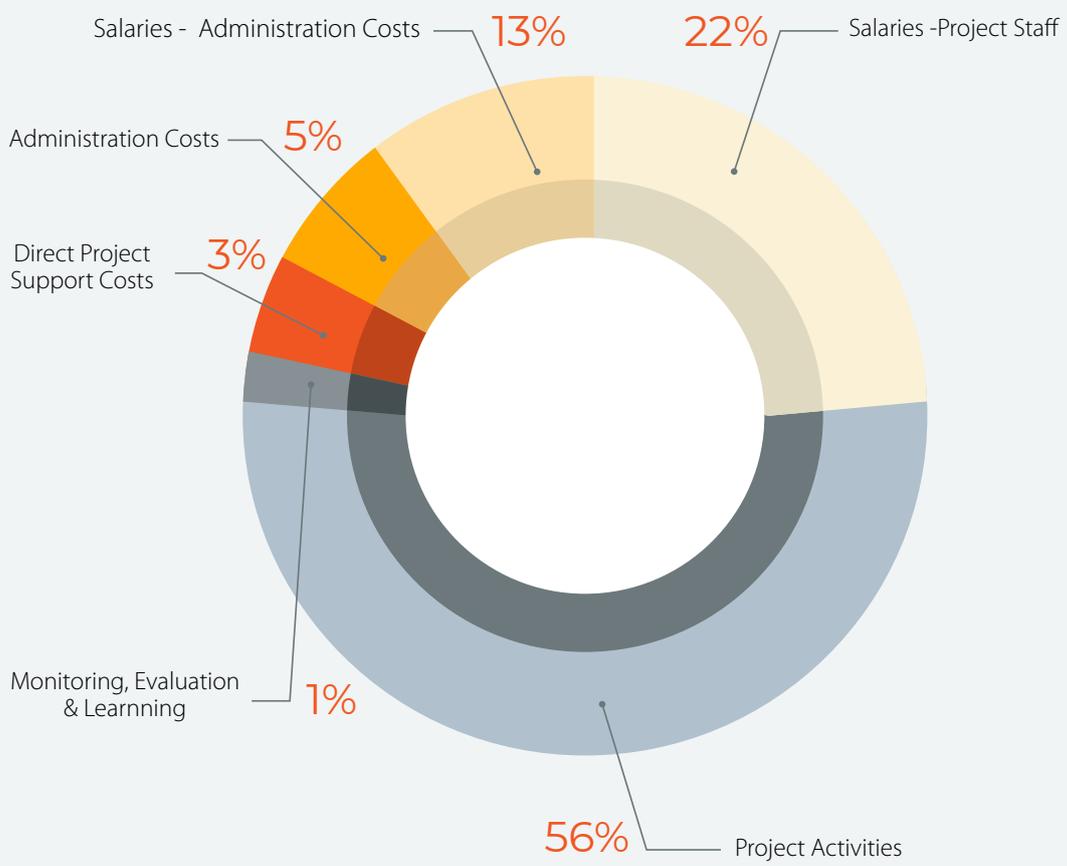


# OUR COSTS

**S**onke's goals and objectives have always been, and continue to be, ambitious. To build on the momentum and growth that Sonke has catalysed to date, it is critical to both increase and diversify the organisation's resources to facilitate that growth and move towards long-term sustainability.

Over the next five years, Sonke will require the following approximate financial resources to deliver on its Strategy.

All costs in ZAR	ANNUAL 2020/2021	ANNUAL 2021/2022	ANNUAL 2022/2023	ANNUAL 2023/2024	ANNUAL 2024/2025	TOTAL BUDGET
<b>I PROJECT COSTS</b>						
Salaries – Project Staff	17 579 801	18 458 791	19 381 731	20 350 817	21 368 358	97 139 500
Project Activities	44 855 709	47 098 494	49 453 419	51 926 090	54 522 394	247 856 108
Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning	284 956	299 204	314 164	329 873	346 366	1 574 566
Direct Project Support Costs	2 100 000	2 205 000	2 315 250	2 431 013	2 552 563	11 603 825
<b>Total Project Costs</b>	<b>64 820 467</b>	<b>68 061 490</b>	<b>71 464 565</b>	<b>75 037 793</b>	<b>78 789 683</b>	<b>358 174 000</b>
<b>II STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFORMATION</b>	<b>376 270</b>	<b>395 083</b>	<b>414 837</b>	<b>435 579</b>	<b>457 358</b>	<b>2 079 129</b>
<b>III OPERATIONS COSTS</b>						
Administrative Costs	3 838 525	4 030 352	4 231 869	4 443 463	4 665 636	21 210 278
Salaries – Operations Staff	10 470 998	10 994 548	11 544 275	12 121 489	12 727 564	57 858 876
<b>Total Operations Costs</b>	<b>14 685 794</b>	<b>15 420 084</b>	<b>16 191 088</b>	<b>17 000 642</b>	<b>17 850 675</b>	<b>81 148 285</b>
<b>TOTAL STRATEGIC PLAN BUDGET</b>	<b>79 506 261</b>	<b>83 481 575</b>	<b>87 655 653</b>	<b>92 038 436</b>	<b>96 640 358</b>	<b>439 322 285</b>





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