



Summary Strategic Plan Framework

White Ribbon Alliance for Safe Motherhood: 2013-2018

I. Mission, Vision, and Goal

Our mission	Is to catalyze and convene advocates who campaign to uphold the right of all women to be safe and healthy before, during and after childbirth.
Our vision	Is a world where the right of all women to be safe and healthy before, during and after childbirth is upheld.
Our goal	Is to ensure that all women realize their rights to a safe pregnancy and childbirth.

ii Goals and Targets

The White Ribbon Alliance works to ensure that all women realize their rights to a safe pregnancy and childbirth.

In support of this overarching goal, the Alliance will focus on the following priorities and associated goals for 2013-2018. These goals represent measureable and achievable targets in support of the broader priority. Detailed activity plans at various levels are not included in the Strategic Plan but will be developed with a much higher degree of specificity based on context at the Global Secretariat and National Alliance level.

Priority 1: Demand accountability for safe pregnancy and childbirth worldwide.

***Overall outcome:** Increased support for quality health services, through policies changed and implemented and budget allocated and spent in WRA National Alliances countries by 2018, with at least three countries serving as the vanguard for approaches and learning across the whole Alliance*

Draft indicators:

- Evaluations of campaigns in Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzanian and Uganda clearly demonstrate impact on government policy and financial spending
- High impact campaigns are delivered in three additional National Alliance countries
- SDGs and Every Woman Every Child 2.0 include RMNCH goals
- SDGs and Every Woman Every Child 2.0 include citizen-centred accountability mechanism

Goals:

1. In at least eight countries, government policies are adopted and implemented and financial resources are allocated and disbursed, to support better provision of national reproductive, maternal and newborn health services as a result of advocacy by National Alliances.
2. NAs' and GS supporting staff's understanding of and commitment to WRA's theory of change is further strengthened, and additional tools are made available to support NAs to develop and deliver campaigns that reflect this approach
3. Reproductive, maternal and newborn health, and citizens' and civil society's role in further progress, are prioritized in global processes and mechanisms as a result of WRA's advocacy

Priority 2: Ensure financial viability to maintain the independence of the Alliance

Overall Outcome: Sustainable and flexible revenue stream for the foreseeable future.

Draft indicators:

- Unrestricted income increases by a minimum of 10% annually
- 100% of programmatic funding renewed or increased
- 100% of Board members have meeting their 'give/get' target annually
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2. Champions and Board members are actively contributing towards creating opportunities for the growth of the Alliance.

Priority 3: WRA has adequate capacity to support and sustain our movement to achieve its strategic goals.

Overall Outcome: WRA's structure, systems and accountability model strengthened to be more effective and strategic

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- Half of the National Alliances have institutional and financial homes or are self-managed and are in receipt of grants.

- At least five National Alliances have new composition and talent on their Board of Directors
- At least five National Alliances have a full-time national leader in place with at least three with a clear succession plan in place

Goals:

1. White Ribbon Alliance has strong governance and accountability structures in place to support the strategic goals of the Alliance
2. The Global Secretariat functions, structure and staffing are most fit for the purpose of effectively delivering on the strategy and supporting National Alliances with their work
3. The National Alliances are strengthened as institutions in their own right, so that they can coordinate the implementation of their national strategies, engage members, raise resources and leverage further contributions to sustain their collective work
4. Assessment and evaluation of the Strategic Plan is regularly conducted so that renewal and restructure can take place as needed to ensure effectiveness of interventions in achieving the goal.

Priority 4 –Core operations, compliance, financial management and planning

***Overall Outcome** Promote responsible resource allocation by strengthening core operations and optimizing financial management in compliance with donor and statutory requirements*

Draft indicators:

- 100% of donor statutory requirements are met
- Annual audit has an unqualified opinion
- Financial reports are produced for management and project managers no later than three weeks of the following month
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3. 2014 Audit completed so that statutory filings and WRA annual report are delivered
4. Grant cycle process is outlined so that all staff have a clear understanding of grants' processes from proposal to close-out

Strategic Plan: 2013-2018



FINAL VERSION AS APPROVED BY THE GLOBAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS - January 16, 2013

Updated November 2014

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I. Purpose

For the past decade, our rapidly growing network of individual members and organizations has been amplifying the voices of women and their communities of the crisis of maternal mortality. The White Ribbon Alliance for Safe Motherhood (WRA)'s strategic plan for 2009 – 2013 provided a sound foundation that has positioned the Alliance to be the preeminent voice on issues of safe motherhood. Much of the effort of the last few years, particularly within the Global Secretariat, has been on raising the visibility and increasing the pressure for commitments to maternal health, while mobilizing diverse actors to be a part of the movement.

We have reached and surpassed many of the original targets set out in that plan. Globally, we have played a critical role in highlighting maternal health and in securing important new commitments, including those made in the United Nation's Secretary General's Global Strategy for Women and Children (Every Women, Every Child) which now totals pledges of more than \$70 billion for women and children's health. At the same time, the White Ribbon Alliance network has grown rapidly.

In 2012, the White Ribbon Alliance reflected on who we are, where we are going, and what might need to change in order to make a difference, recognizing the significant contribution we have already made in putting maternal health on the global agenda in recent years.

In response to these achievements, WRA has decided:

- The Global Secretariat should make a strategic move away from initiatives designed to secure new commitments in the international arena, and instead place emphasis on supporting campaigning for national delivery of commitments.
- The Alliance should move beyond uniting people and organizations that care about this issue, to being far more strategic about what those diverse coalitions actually do to make an impact on the lives of women.
- Together, the Global Secretariat and National Alliances need greater clarity on our relative strengths, the focus of our work, and the impact of our work, so that we may increase our resources, inform and learn from others, and expand the reach of the Alliance in ways that will ultimately enable all members to articulate with pride how safe motherhood can be achieved through focused collective action.

Using the Proposition for the Future of the White Ribbon Alliance as a roadmap, the 2013-2018 Strategic Plan provides a focus for the organization, delineating where we will put our collective efforts, outlining our shared goals and how we will reach them, and providing guidelines as to how we'll know if and where we've been successful.

The WRA Global Strategic Plan does the following:

- defines the mission, vision, and goal;
- articulates the values and way of working;
- defines priorities and goals;
- sets out how WRA monitors and evaluates the process and its outcomes.

This Global Strategic Plan does not supersede National Alliance strategic plans, but it serves as a framework for the whole Alliance as a united global movement. Just as our most effective advocacy campaigns constantly adapt to the shifting political climate, our strategic plan will serve as a crucial navigational tool in the evolution of the White Ribbon Alliance.

II. Background, Context and History

Over a decade ago, WRA formed out of the realization that too often, the voices of women and families in countries with poor maternal health policies and systems were not being heard. WRA set out to do things differently, challenging the power structures that maintain the status quo and reclaiming women's rights by creating a tidal wave of change. The WRA is a movement that locates power with people at the community level – and which recognizes those people as the most effective agents of change in their own countries.

To achieve this change, the White Ribbon Alliance has developed a uniquely collective way of working, in which the aim of the leadership of National Alliances is to facilitate the actions of their diverse membership. In turn, the aim of the Global Secretariat is to support the leadership of the National Alliances.

The way that we do things has always been integral to reaching our goals. Accordingly, national strategies are determined by members in their own countries. The voices of WRA members, their experiences and their knowledge, comprise an impressive body of evidence that is now solicited, heard and respected nationally and globally.

Our diverse network and effective leadership has enabled our members to mobilize around a previously neglected issue and bring about policy change and unprecedented investment in women's and children's health. WRA has led a sea change in the perception of maternal mortality, not simply as an intractable health issue, but as a matter of global social justice and human rights, that belongs at the top of the international development agenda.

By 2012, the global picture of maternal mortality had changed significantly from the previous decade. Deaths during pregnancy and childbirth were reduced by almost 50 percent, maternal health has been placed high on the international political agenda, and women's and children's health has garnered billions of dollars in international commitments. White Ribbon Alliance has played a key role in achieving much of this progress, together with our wide range of partners.

However, there is still a long way to go. Childbirth remains the biggest killer of young women in many countries, while the poorest and most vulnerable women continue to be neglected and left without the health services that are their right. WRA has a significant role to play in the next five years.

III. Mission, Vision, and Goal

Our mission	Is to catalyze and convene advocates who campaign to uphold the right of all women to be safe and healthy before, during and after childbirth.
Our vision	Is a world where the right of all women to be safe and healthy before, during and after childbirth is upheld.
Our goal	Is to ensure that all women realize their rights to a safe pregnancy and childbirth.

IV. Values

The **way** that the White Ribbon Alliance operates is the foundation of the diverse network. The values of honesty, openness and integrity are central to all aspects of our work.

Honesty

- In order to realise our vision and goals, WRA staff and members will need to speak with openness and candour, able to challenge and critique ourselves and one another - but always with respect and kindness,

Openness

- WRA is open in communications and answerable to its members, actively soliciting their engagement and participation wherever possible.

Integrity

- All of WRA will hold themselves and each other accountable for excellence in their work and relationships, being driven at all times by honouring the vision and mission.

The following themes provide guidance about the structures, processes, conduct, decisions and overall work of the WRA that bring these values to life:

Bringing about lasting change

- The first step in bringing about change is to locate power at the community level and recognize citizens as the most effective agents of change.
- Lasting change in society comes about when enough people join forces to demand that their government adopts and implements the right national policies, and devotes sufficient resources to deliver those policies.

- Social accountability is essential to see progress. WRA has documented drivers of success, including generation of demand for rights and better services, leveraging intermediaries to legitimize the demand of poor and marginalized women, and sensitizing leaders and health providers to respond to women's needs

Collaboration

The White Ribbon Alliance:

- Promotes collaboration and the open exchange of information, ideas, and learning in ways that are appropriate in the local, national and international context.
- Actively seeks the participation of, and partnership with, women, men, their families and communities, professionals and practitioners from diverse fields, ranging from members of civil society, international agencies, donors, to all sectors of government.
- Respects, protects, and encourages individual, gender, cultural and social diversity.
- Is open for membership to any individual or group agreeing with WRA's mission, vision and values, and choosing to adopt the unifying symbol of the white ribbon.

Communication

The White Ribbon Alliance:

- Demonstrates respect for women and their communities whose voices are so rarely heard.
- Endeavours to feed back to members when and how their voices and perspectives have been shared and heard, and what impact this has had.
- Promotes transparency in the sharing of information on activities and operations.
- Endeavours to support a platform of easy information exchange, where advocates across the globe will have a means of communicating with each other and sharing best practices
- Adapts its communications and resources so that multiple audiences can understand and use them.

Accountability and Transparency

The White Ribbon Alliance:

- Demonstrates the highest ethical and professional integrity in every aspect of its work, including finance and operations.
- Maintains transparency and openness with stakeholders, partners and members.
- Is responsible to the larger membership for its decisions and actions.
- Will develop clearer systems and procedures for demonstrating and reporting on how we have brought all of these values and themes to life.

V. Our Approach

The following guiding statements further define and refine the White Ribbon Alliance approach to maternal health advocacy:

- Monitoring the effectiveness of campaigns for change is embedded in the WRA way of working.
- WRA does not directly deliver services, do research or offer clinical or technical expertise on maternal health but the Global and National Secretariats may facilitate or support this work by the membership.
- Each country or regional strategy is best determined by a local problem or priority that the National Alliance has identified, by an analysis of barriers to progress, by agreement on what the best tactic or activity in each local context is and clarity on who can bring about change.
- The Alliance recognizes the inherent and explicit links across the continuum of care but has decided to focus primarily on better provision of national reproductive, maternal and newborn health services
- The work of the Alliance is driven by the belief that human rights, gender equity, and social responsibility are essential to progress on reproductive, maternal and newborn health.

VI. SWOT Analysis

Below is a summary of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats identified by Global Secretariat staff, National Alliance representatives, and WRA members and used as a basis for the priorities and goals outlined in the next section.

Strengths

- Passion and commitment of our members, with a strong sense of belonging, identity and wish to act in the name of White Ribbon Alliance.
- Inclusivity – encompassing various professions, various nationalities, men and women of all age, White Ribbon Alliance offers a place for everyone.
- Nimble – with unity of goals, yet diversity of strategies, it's a huge advocacy advantage that WRA can quickly adapt and pivot.
- Strong national leadership that has engaged members on specific goals
- Presence of WRA members in so many countries with high maternal mortality. – 2015: this will connect with Big Issue on new alliances, reflection on what is needed for us to have most impact – where? Should we be proactive?
- Focus on advocacy to change or modify policies.
- Commitment of members from countries with low maternal mortality.
- The link between safe motherhood and human rights – 2015: continued reflection and adaptation to be most relevant and appropriate to changing narrative globally and nationally
- The involvement of celebrity supporters provides fundraising opportunities and potential spokespeople. – 2015: Big Issues – challenge where are with this, consideration of where we want to be, potential there or not?
- Established relationships with donors that are seen as legitimizers (USAID, Gates).

- Growing evidence base – 2015: ie within WRA of our approach having an impact.
- Cost-effective, collaborative approach – 2015: Big Issue – if we are claiming this what evidence would be provide to justify / support that?

November 2014 additions:

- In a number of National Alliances significant progress has been made towards the delivery of ambitious campaign plans. Specific and direct impact has been noted, and there is a growing momentum of focus on achieving long term change.
- Funding available to support full-time staff in some NAs – with clear role profiles – 2015: Big Issue / update on this – look in detail at where are currently on this, what is likely to change in next 12 months, potential over next two years?
- Revisions to the overall governance structures of the global alliance have taken place, leading to increased clarity of role and more defined responsibilities. – 2015: leading towards, work in progress – how will we know if this has been achieved? Metrics for governance?
- The profile and reputation of WRA at the global level, and a recognition of the change brought about at a national level, has been maintained and enhanced. 2015: Big Issue – raised within the system / sector, but not externally with ‘general public’ – what are implications of this on both sides, what does that allow us to do?
- Impact workshop in South Africa helped with the ‘evidence and communicate’ pieces of our work – and has resulted in much greater emphasis from NAs on reporting on impact rather than activity. 2015: Big Issue – where is that visible, how did it happen, reality check on how we get more of this, more widespread across NAs?
- With regard to women’s rights, progress in moving from Maternal Mortality focus, to wider focus including reproductive health and respectful maternity care
- Contribute to the debate and development of the Post 2015 framework - good work has been done on this as evidenced through national level dialogues and input to working group for Maternal Mortality target; globally through PMNCH and our new role as chair of CSO group
- Board of Directors with clear ‘give/get’ targets to support fundraising
- Beginning of outreach to partners for joint funding opportunities
- Monthly records in place for each NA, including monthly reporting out
- Better core grasp of place for learning – and it is more often evident in discussions and planning, with some specific learning review activities taking place. As a result previous experiences are more often incorporated into planning
- Accessible and timely info made available at project management and Management decision making level
- More analytical approach to financial scenario planning
- Higher level of financial transparency, including with new F&A committee
- Planning for financial reviews has linked better to project work – connecting with capacity issues etc, e.g engaging with a NA board on pros and cons of different approaches
- The significant successes achieved over the past 18 months through the funded National Alliances provide an excellent source of data and materials to use as the basis for promotional material, to document, illustrate our work and the impact it has.
- The profile of Citizen’s Voice at the UNGA and the associated increased recognition and profile of WRA as a vehicle for change, created a number of new opportunities for funding and partnership.
- Strong pro bono relationships across creative, branding, legal

- Growing group of Champions and Global Champions with influence at national and international level
- New Trustees in UK Charity with mandate to make changes needed to move forward
- Sublet of UK office to reduce costs of UK charity and more in line with staff needs - 2015: office now closed.

Weaknesses

- Dependence on volunteerism, which may seem like a strength but can lead to burn-out.
- Broad membership structure poses monitoring and evaluation problems. – 2015: current focus is on NA, but need to look at membership within NAs, and connect to whether or not we should be proactive in shaping what we do.
- It is very difficult to send a compelling and unified message to such a wide range of members.
- Some WRA members are very energetic and charismatic individuals; but quality of work can vary. Where a leader is a volunteer and not employed by WRA it is a challenge to assess their performance. – 2015: this connects to leadership piece that is work in progress
- WRA has a number of brand related issues, including the risk that we become too strong as a brand, so not highlighting the work of members themselves.
- The Global Secretariat and National Alliance have primarily relied on short-term, restricted funding.

November 2014 additions:

- The detail of our current Strategic Plan is not universally well understood across the global alliance, and not uniformly used to guide the activities within each National Alliance. – 2015 update: progress made on this, many NAs used as part of their strategic planning
- Some NAs have further to go with transitioning to more detailed advocacy and accountability campaigns – and ongoing funding crises and limited skills in writing grant and project proposals, constrain their ability to further this.
- Limited capacity in NAs & GS for national budget analysis, tracking & advocacy
- In a number of the NAs there are insufficiently robust mechanisms for institutional and financial support and management. This means that they are often ineligible to be considered as recipients of a grant, as they cannot manage the conditions that would be attached.
- Governance and accountability structures within a number of the NAs are insufficient. – 2015: yes but work is in progress, lead by the NAC, to address this
- Sustainable NA Leadership: To date very few NAs have full-time paid staff. When they do, it is very project-based and time bound. Without investment in Executive Director-type roles, most National Alliances will remain unable to engage in longer-term strategic planning, successfully embark on new partnerships and funding opportunities, and to recruit and retain dedicated and talented staff and volunteers. 2015 Update: – more thinking on this, TOR for leadership, looking at funding support for this work.
- Sustainable NA Leadership: Further, in a number of National Alliance countries leaders are now in their 60s and 70s and there is not a plan in place for succession. Other NA leaders face fatigue and burnout, trying to lead the Alliance in addition to their full time job. In

some cases, leaders may not possess some of the skills and traits to move the NA forward. 2015 Big Issue: – what will this mean in practice for GS support?

- At the Global Secretariat level we have very limited funds available to support fundraising / resource mobilization activities, including to cover the staff time to engage with this. There is also no funding to support general profile raising activities which have the potential to lead to funding later down the line, but are speculative initially. 2015 Big Issue: – resources more generally, model and structure to fund expansion of alliance
- Absence of skills in leading strategic communications work is limiting our ability to maximize the impact of progress in a number of areas. 2015 Big Issue – challenge question on who needs to know what, why, and how do we know if it worked – and have that inform what we do next..
- WRA’s cost structure does not appeal to donors who want all or almost all of their funding to go directly to national level – 2015 Big Issue: wider link to Res mob issues
- WRA necessarily spends time and energy working with donors and partners who want to align with WRA and benefit from their relationship with us, but they do not fund, or they underfund, our work – 2015 – as above, link to Res mob
- No unrestricted funding to support NAs at key moments in time – nor to address the huge need to support National Secretariats in raising funds, managing grants, and maintaining strategic donors
- GS Staff feel overworked and it is unclear if that is because processes and divisions of labor are inefficient or if because there is too much work
- GS Staff feedback indicated that day-to-day decisions are made too slowly resulting in bottlenecks.
- Limited capacity in NAs & GS for national budget analysis, tracking & advocacy

Opportunities

- Possible to make case on WRA’s value for money. – 2015 Big Issue / Challenge question – what is our key claim / USP – that we are cost effective, more sustainability, citizen involved? Whatever core claim is needs to shape evidence gathered. What do we do with the reports being developed using us as a case study..
- 2015: Can we use case study, WRA Tanz – what resources went in to providing the CEMonc as opposed to what if we had paid for a technical consultancy to have provided that analysis, and support to deliver – what are pros and cons of both in terms of sustainability – impartial perspective?
- Commitment of governments and political leaders to safe motherhood.
- Wide range of partners for collaboration, including on learning on measurement and presenting a united approach with donors about the need for convening and coordination amongst stakeholders.
- Consensus across many of our partners that the current model of evaluating advocacy doesn’t work; opportunity to lead and find new ways of measuring sustained change. – 2015: see above, global strategy has more recognition and consensus of need for this, but still work to be done on defining terms.
- Increasing recognition amongst development community that focus should be at the national level.
- Accountability work not yet clearly defined and understood but has potential to be the most direct route to impact

November 2014 additions:

- New Sustainable Development Goals emerging with clear focus on RMNCH and accountability
- Much work to be done on 'domesticating' global goals, targets, and initiatives
- Increasing funding opportunities being announced/released related to national advocacy and accountability and support to local institutions
- In the UK, working with experienced consultants and former staff who are now / becoming consultants gives flexibility and opportunities for renewed creativity
- Emphasis on our unique citizen engagement/social accountability approach, rather than on the issue of maternal health, is more accurate and more marketable as a USP. – 2015: challenge question – what do we most want to be seen for / identifiable with? What we do or how we do it and with whom? Implications – ie maternal health programme funding there has been progress here, to include advocacy focus..

Threats

- Donors are reluctant to fund advocacy and both donors and the public have a difficult time understanding it.
- WRA's definition of success – which goes beyond policy change - is sometimes out of the scope of donors. 2015: Connect to our USP, what are we seen as? Are we seen as doing the demonstrable change at facility level type work? ASSUME / REALITY piece relating to how donors see us, and our potential to influence
- Philanthropic environment; the MH space is becoming much more crowded but donor's see our capacity to deliver through a very narrow lens.
- (As we professionalise) there is a risk of losing buy-in from members and partners; WRA could be seen as of going after the same funding as members themselves.
- Public and political leaders may move on to next big development issue.
- Unclear what focus, if any, will be given to maternal health in the post-MDGs framework. 2015: this can be updated as now have clear idea of this.

November 2014 additions:

- No funds to bring staff together in order to discuss work, know and understand each other, develop collaborative working relationships leads to strain and diminishes mutual respect and loyalty

VII. Goals and Targets

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VIII. Evaluation

A component of this strategic framework is an evaluation plan: this tool will allow the Alliance to track impact and outcomes, measure and note change, and inform its members about the progress it is making toward its goals. A step-by-step action plan, based on the strategic framework, will be used to clarify these elements, including the activities and benchmarks along the way to our goals.

We will commit to reviewing this plan twice yearly, and to developing processes for systemically measuring effectiveness and progress towards healthier pregnancy and childbirth in countries in which we work. The White Ribbon Alliance has the unique ability to develop a method and means for creating true, lasting social change through effective campaigning, and the collection of evidence from the same communities and countries in which we advocate.