gender equality
peace, justice,
and strong
institutions

**Communications
Strategy**

GENDER
JUSTICE &
SECURITY
A GCRF HUB

Communications Strategy

PART I: The Gender, Justice and Security Hub

A. Background to the UKRI GCRF Gender Justice and Security Hub

The UKRI GCRF Gender Justice and Security Hub is a multi-partner five-year research project working extensively with local and global civil society, practitioners, governments and international organisations to advance gender justice and inclusive peace. The Hub engages global challenges in three areas: Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 on gender equality; SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions; and the implementation of the United Nations (UN) Security Council Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda.

The Hub's research comprises 32 projects under six themes: Transformation and Empowerment; Livelihood, Land and Rights; Migration and Displacement; Masculinities and Sexualities; Law and Policy Frameworks and Methodological Innovation.

B. Communications Introduction

The research agenda of the Hub is underpinned by five outcomes: the creation of new knowledge and conceptual frameworks, developing research methods and sector good practice; the creation of new knowledge and advocacy networks; institutional reform in focus countries, underwriting inclusive security and just peace; the production of research that effects local and global policy change on SDGs 5, 16 and the Women, Peace and Security agenda and consolidated and extended capabilities of all Hub partners.

Effective communication of the Hub's work is vital in ensuring the Hub delivers on these outcomes, and is a point of engagement, to ensure that civil society organisations, practitioners and governments become involved in the research at the level of implementation.

This strategy outlines how the Hub will build these relationships with our stakeholders and engage them in the interaction process. The strategy uses a participatory model of communication focused on relationship building and is designed to be reflective of the feminist ethics that are central to the Hub's practices and in line with the Hub's principles of integrity, responsibility and accountability.

C. Hub Communication Principles

The Hub's communication will be accessible, responsible, equitable and ethical (CARE).

Accessible

- Recognition of knowledge variation between stakeholders. Communication outputs are produced for multiple stakeholders and speak to specific interests, rather than being created as if for a homogenous group.

- Communications are localised. Key communication documents, social media posts and areas of the Hub's website will be translated into the core Hub languages: Arabic, English, Kurdish, Sinhala, Spanish and Tamil.

- Hub communication is accessible, specifically using digital platforms designed to function in a low-connectivity environment.

Responsible

- The impact that any dissemination practice has on our Hub researchers, Hub partners, research participants, their families and associates and their organisations will always be considered*

- Care will be taken to minimise the possibility of misuse or misrepresentation of research findings to push certain agendas.

- Support will be given to Hub members who may be subject to online commentary or abuse. The Hub's reporting procedure for this will ensure that all researchers and partner organisations are clear on who should be contacted in case of negative outcomes.

*The Hub's Co-Investigators are responsible for making the participants aware of research outcomes and the communication of these, aligned with their institutions research ethics process. Co-Investigators will also maintain a risk register and any changes in their assessment of risk will be communicated to the MICA team where public communication will be reviewed should a risk be posed.

Equitable and Ethical

- Equal coverage is given to all partners and research projects.

- Communication of the Hub's work will be truthful, accurate and honest.

- Hub communications support freedom of expression and the diversity of perspectives on the areas being covered in the Hub.

- Decision making behind our communications is transparent and inclusive.

PART II: Hub Stakeholder and Communication Model

"Communication is a two-way process between researchers and the research users, recognising where our stakeholders have specific knowledge on a topic and the political climate in which they are working can feed into our communications, though this the Hub can understand the influence of our stakeholders and the position they are in to effect change."

The Hub takes a multi-modal communication approach and acknowledges that communication is a two-way process between researchers and the research users, recognising where our stakeholders have specific knowledge on a topic and the political climate in which they are working can feed into our communications, though this the Hub can understand the influence of our stakeholders and the position they are in to effect change.

The following outlines the models of communication the Hub will use and the stakeholder mapping process.
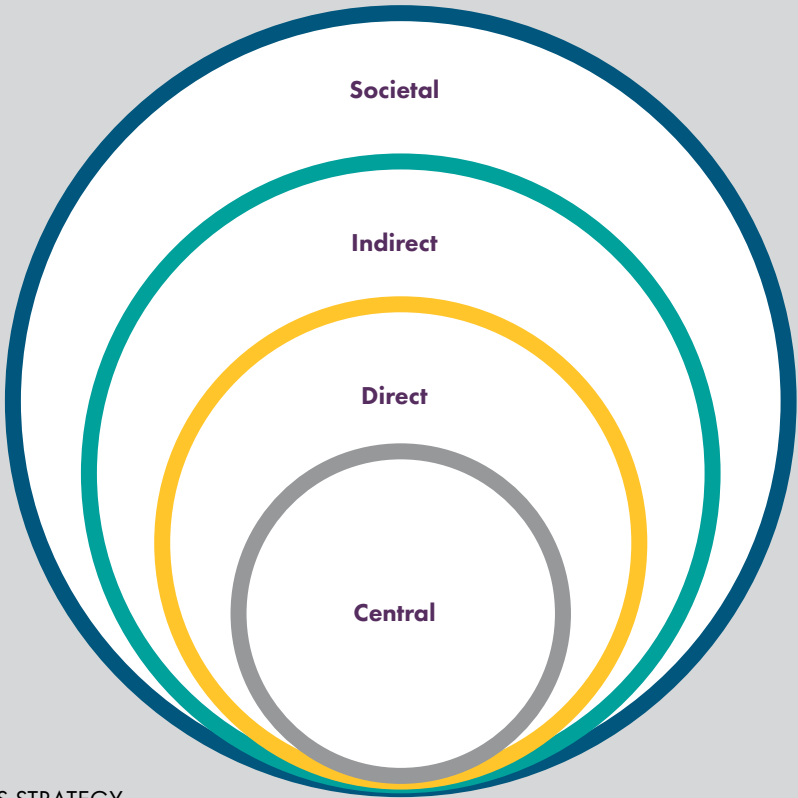
A. Model of Communication

The Hub's communication will take a research lifecycle approach, meaning the Hub documents the research process in its entirety, capturing and communicating the process of collaboration as the research is conducted including the fact-finding and the analysis, through to the knowledge exchange and the outcomes. This approach is also one where the values of research methodologies, information gathering and ethics are understood and documented, and the Hub's communications reflect and communicate these values.

FIG.1: STAKEHOLDER SEGMENTATION

B. Stakeholder Segmentation: central, direct, indirect and societal

The Hub's stakeholders will be segmented into four categories: central, direct, indirect and societal. After which an Alignment, Interest and Influence Matrix (AIIM) will be applied to each group, allowing Hub members and researchers to see how aligned they are with Hub interests and objectives, and how much resource and influence they have within the field. By doing this we are able to prioritise which of our stakeholders we can best engage with at what point, and with whom we can develop a dialogue. Beyond this, it is also important the Hub's communications reach an audience that does not currently hold the Hub's values, in order to make progress beyond the immediate sphere of influence. This will be particularly salient for Hub outcomes concerning institutional reform and local and global policy change.

It is important to note here that the below segmentation is not a reflection of importance as a stakeholder, or distance from the fields of gender justice and security, rather it means by addressing our stakeholders by how central these fields are to their work, as well as identifying who holds influence and which stakeholders have the means to implement institutional and global policy change.

Central:

The Hub's central stakeholders are those who directly interact with the Hub's research and are involved in the delivery of the projects.

The Hub's central stakeholders include, but are not exclusive to, the following:

- Hub co-directors, co-investigators, and research partner organisations
- Hub Management, Impact, Communications and Administration team
- Hub advisory board members
- Hub champions
- Hub funder – UK Research and Innovation and the Global Challenges Research Fund

Direct:

The Hub's direct stakeholders are those that are not directly involved in the research process or the management of the Hub, but those who are a key stakeholder in the gender justice and security and feminist fields and who have a large influence.

The Hub's direct stakeholders include, but are not exclusive to, the following:

- Women's groups and advocacy organisations that extend beyond our research partner organisations
- UN Agencies, international organisations focussing on the WPS agenda and Sustainable Development Goals
- Policy makers with responsibility for implementation of SDG and WPS agenda
- Community and faith leaders

Indirect:

The Hub's indirect stakeholders are one of the Hub's larger audiences and an important group to reach as a vital stakeholder for the *implementation* of institutional reform and the creation of structural change. This is an audience where the Hub's research can be implemented by them, but where an explicit gender justice, or security focus is perhaps tangential to, or implied within, their wider work, rather than forming a core organisational focus.

The Hub's indirect stakeholders include, but are not exclusive to, the following:

- Government departments, parliamentarians, civil servants, ministers and all-party parliamentary groups
- Military and security forces
- Research institutions and think tanks
- Lawyers and legal advocates

*there are invariably some stakeholders that sit across direct and remote. Taking lawyers and legal advocates as an example, legal advocates working specifically on gender and women's rights are an indirect stakeholder as they are not part of the Hub team, but their work is directly connected. Legal advocates that are the Hub's remote stakeholders would be those who are working on human rights more broadly for example, without necessarily being focussed on gender.

Societal

The Hub's societal stakeholders are those who are not necessarily directly affected by the Hub's work in a personal capacity, or even a professional capacity, but have an interest or background in gender justice and security and/or the research methodology and therefore will spread the Hub outputs across their networks and are likely to attend events, exhibitions and film screenings at a public level.

The Hub's societal stakeholders include, but are not exclusive to, the following:

- National and local media
- Local communities in the area of study
- UKRI GCRF Hubs
- Social media followers of the Hub, its partners and researchers

# PART III: Communication Activities and Platforms

A. Hub outputs

Hub outputs are created with identified stakeholders, collaborators and potential partners in mind. The outputs here are based on current projections from each research stream, as the research develops there will be changes to the number of outputs – they may increase or develop in style.

In addition to outputs listed here there will be activities which also contribute to knowledge exchange and towards achievement of the Hub's outcomes. These include, but are not limited to, the participation of researchers at key WPS milestone events, conferences and workshops.

One of the most significant outputs of the Hub will flow from the publication of the Global Gender Justice and Security Report in 2023. The report will bring together the research that has taken place within the Hub and set the agenda for national and international law and policy on goals 5 and 16 and WPS into the future, as well as for international group and communities and women's organisations with a global reach.
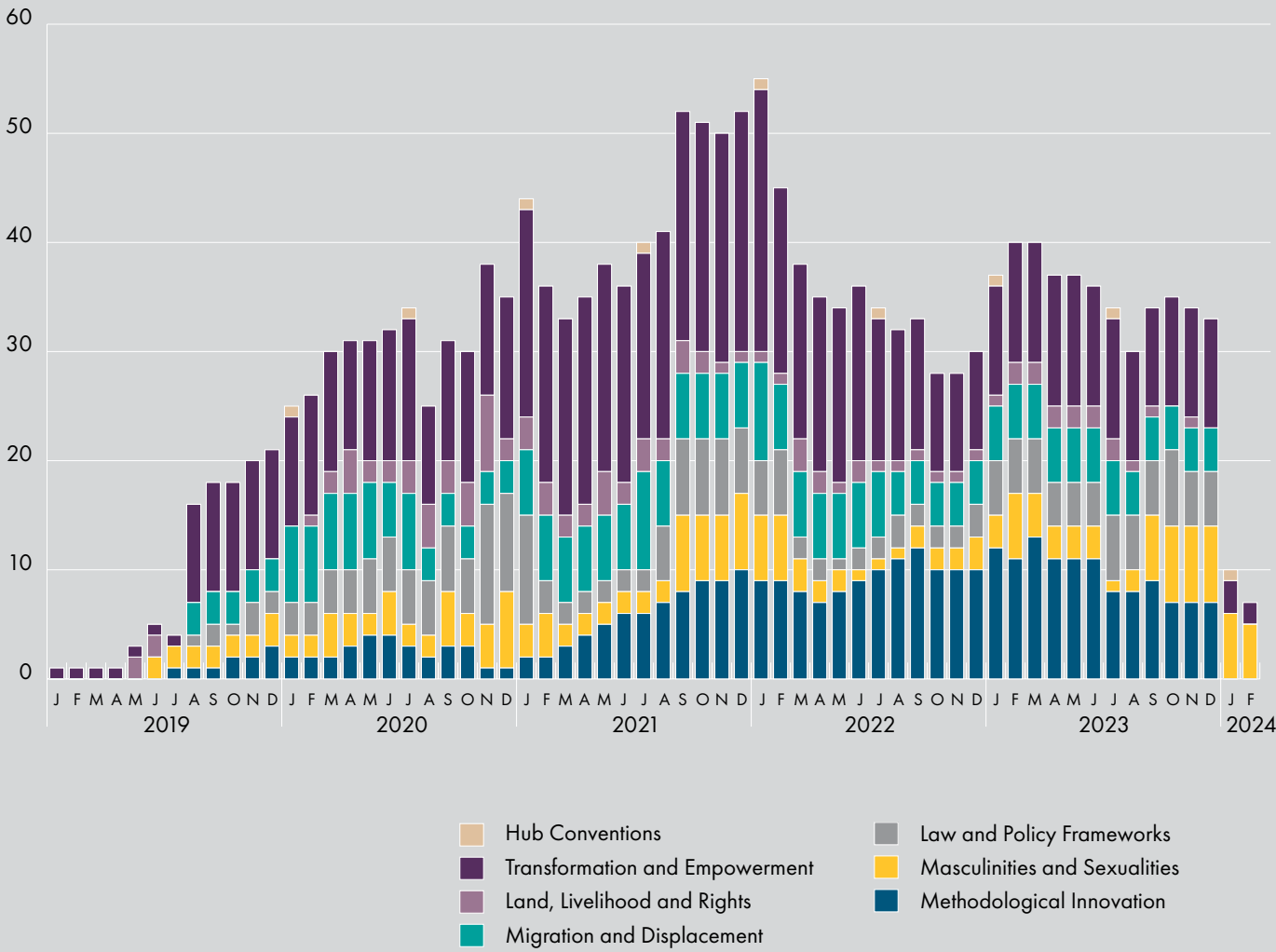
Figure 1: Hub Outputs

Exhibitions

Workshops and events

Dataset

Working Paper

Academic paper

Hub outputs breakdown
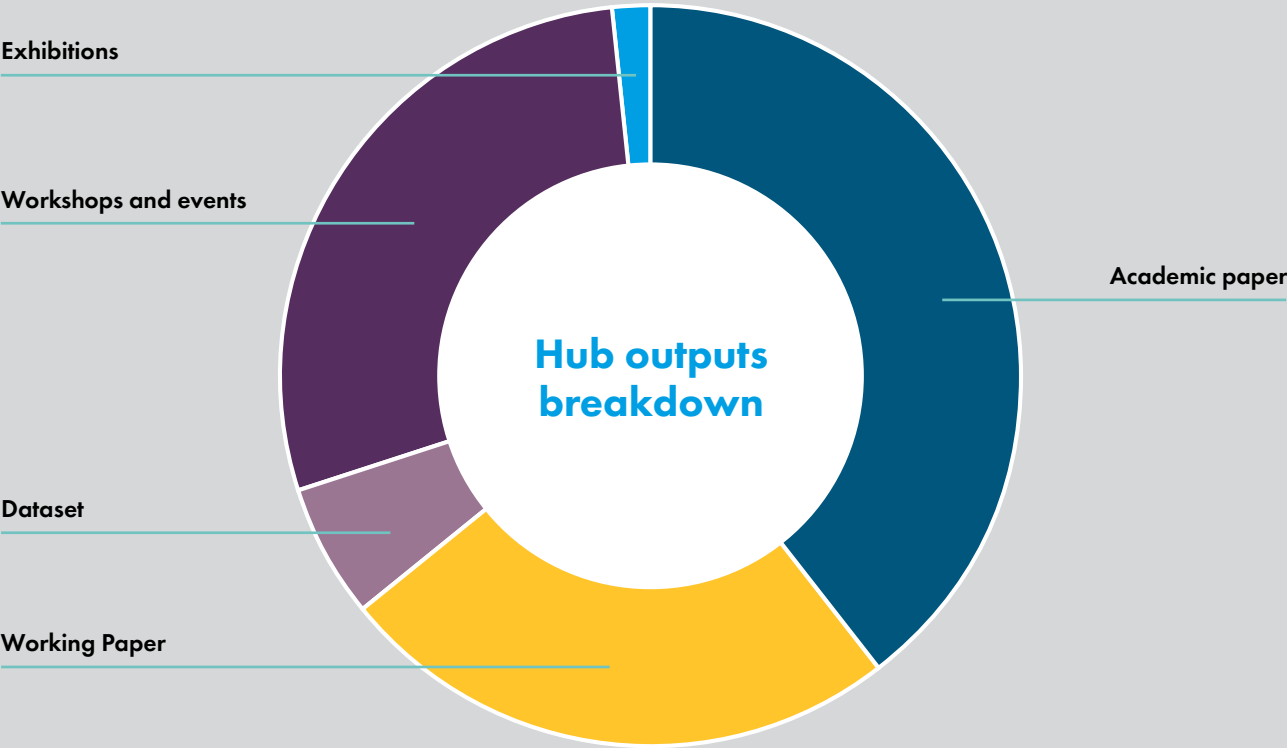
B. Outputs and Communications Timeline

This graph is an aggregate of the projected dissemination activities from the six streams across the five years. The data covers all the planned visual dissemination activities identified in Figure 1, together with Hub Conventions and activities relating to communication of research, such as dissemination meetings, network-building activities, developing journal articles, visualising results, hosting workshops and filming for the production of documentaries etc.

Figure 1.2: Aggregated Hub Outputs

- Hub Conventions
- Transformation and Empowerment
- Land, Livelihood and Rights
- Migration and Displacement
- Law and Policy Frameworks
- Masculinities and Sexualities
- Methodological Innovation

Rainatou Sow
Make Every Woman Co...

"Effective communication of the Hub's work is vital in ensuring the Hub delivers on its outcomes, and is a point of engagement, to ensure that civil society organisations, practitioners and governments become involved in the research at the level of implementation."

C. Hub Conventions

The Hub Conventions are peak internal and external communication points across the five years of the Hub. Held twice a year, they promote and facilitate knowledge exchange, research development and co-authorship across the Hub and between research partners in different countries, contexts and disciplines. They provide a space for the development of Hub outputs and for capability-building, training and networking opportunities for Hub participants and academics and activists in focus countries.

The Communications Manager will work closely with the Impact Manager aligning the communications strategy around each Convention to the planned activities, which will include activities such as: meetings with policy makers, rights activists and civil society groups; presentations; site visits to the areas of research; and public engagement activities.

D. Media Engagement

It is important that the Hub engages with both broadcast, print and digital media outlets through targeted media content that positions the Hub as a voice of authority in the field. In order to engage with the media and journalists in a meaningful way the Hub will consider what has news value and is relevant throughout the research lifecycle. The Hub will communicate research to the media where the content we wish to communicate fulfils the following:

- Is easy to explain – it can be read and taken in by the reader without the need for specialist knowledge

- Is relevant to current news events and has a societal frame of reference

- Is culturally relevant, relatable and fits within the communities' socio-cultural frame of reference

- It is surprising or offers new insight on long held views or policy

The media and journalists are representatives of public interests and by extension they are advocates for transparency and freedom of speech, something the Hub values and mirrors in its own communication. Whilst the Hub accepts and respects the independent role of the media, the hub does however acknowledge that not all media outlets are politically neutral, and private media companies may have a commercial goal underpinning their reporting. With this in mind, considerations such as the safety of our Hub members and participants, or the possibility of the Hub being mispresented will always take precedence over media engagement.

E. Communication Platforms

Social media channels

The Hub will use the social media platforms of Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.

There are well-known concerns about protections afforded to users (in terms of user privacy, online conduct and extremist/ hate speech) and Hub members may or may not choose to use these platforms to promote their work. The Communications Manager will monitor reports around social media platforms and will keep up to date with measures taken to protect the rights of users.

▶ Twitter:

Twitter is key to the dissemination and visibility of our outputs. Not only will Twitter generate a greater awareness of the Hub's work and allow the Hub to express our research and ideas concisely and in multiple languages, but research indicates that by sharing academic work across twitter, the likelihood of that work being picked up and shared increases significantly.

Given the prevalence of academics on Twitter, 40% of the Hub's members and an estimated 1 in 40 scholars on Twitter, with many academics on the platform seen as 'influencers' within their field bringing key issues to the fore, the Hub is making Twitter its core social platform.

It is however, important that the Hub avoids becoming passive in the development of our engagement with our stakeholders and whilst we should use Twitter to broaden our audience and make use of the tools built in to track our social media output, the Hub will use these metrics as a dissemination statistic only, not as a scholarly indicator or substitute for research impact.

f Facebook:

Facebook's huge user base for building networks around themed topics is important for the dissemination of the Hub's research to both academic and non-academic stakeholders. Facebook posts have more longevity than those on other social platforms, and therefore the content on here will be a mixture of 'evergreen' (continually relevant) posts that maintain our identity and status within the field and help to retain our existing stakeholders, and new content. All posts will link to more information (e.g. an article/ blog post) to increase stakeholder interaction and encourage opinion sharing.

▶ YouTube:

As the Hub develops video will be used to engage stakeholders with our work, and as a visual means of making the research more accessible, particularly in engaging communities in the countries of focus, where videos will be subtitled into the local languages.

The Hub's videos are a mixture of 'talking head' interviews and news style videos, with the content being issue-led and people focused

www Hub Website:

The website will be the Hub's primary digital platform. It will be the source of information on Hub partners and researchers, activities and goals. Projects will be organised thematically, providing for accessible, focussed, engagement. Research summaries, reports and publications (or links) will be posted in this one central repository. The website is also a key point of localisation of the Hub's work, with areas translated into core Hub languages.

The website will meet the AA standard of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1), an internationally recognised set of recommendations. By following these recommendations, the Hub website will be accessible to all, including users with impairments to their vision, hearing, mobility and thinking and understanding.

" **The Hub Conventions are peak internal and external communication points across the five years of the Hub. Held twice a year, they promote and facilitate knowledge exchange, research development and co-authorship across the Hub and between research partners in different countries, contexts and disciplines.** "

PART IV: Evaluation and Monitoring

A. Measuring success: analytics, metrics and engagement

The Hub will measure the success of its communications activity by two means: quantitative data gathered from analytics across our external and internal digital platforms, giving some indication of reach and stakeholder engagement, and; harder to quantify - tracking of the development of relationships, evidence of change in awareness and attitudes and collaborations that continue beyond the project.

The nature of the Hub and a focus on methodological innovation within our research also gives us a chance to extend these principles and research into our communication practices also. To do so means we can critically reflect and interrogate how we approach, define, measure and evaluate the impact of the Hub's communication and how we consider in what way this has contributed to the projection of critical research in the fields of peace, security, justice and gender equality.

Across all the Hub's communications outputs we will think about what we are communicating and why, through what means we are doing this and how the communication of evidence-based knowledge and research to the right audience contributes to gender justice and inclusive security in conflict - affected societies.

B. Communication Reporting

Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) of the Hub's communications activity is critical to keep the communications plans in line with the strategy and on track to achieve the strategies objectives and to identify and mitigate challenges and changes. Monitoring and evaluation of the Hub's communications work is aligned with the Hub wide MEL strategy:

Stream Co-Directors are responsible for monitoring the progress of projects and with support from MICA, for evaluating and tracking progress towards Hub Outcomes. The Communications Manager will maintain contact with the Co-Directors and across the MICA team to feed research-related project monitoring into the overarching communications monitoring from which the Impact Manager will measure impact against the Hub's theory of change and projected outputs, as well as cross-referencing with the targets of goals 5 and 16 and the WPS agenda indicators to evaluate how the Hub's communication is contributing to the Hub's impact and outcomes.

Reporting on Communications will align with the Hub's reporting timeline, with the Communications Manager producing a 6-monthly report for review by the Executive Group, accessible to all Co-Investigators. A communications summary will be prepared for the annual report to the funder.