



Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa
Programme des Relations Islamo-Chrétiennes en Afrique



DMCDD
danish mission council
development department

ENDTERM EVALUATION REPORT

FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF PROJECT (FORB)



This report represents findings and recommendations of the Freedom of Religion or Belief in Africa (FoRB) Project Evaluation whose data was collected between November 2022 and Jan 2023. The evaluation was based on FoRB Project implementation between 2019 and 2022. FoRB was designed to promote freedom of religion or belief in Africa.

This evaluation was commissioned by Procmura in partnership with CKU and conducted by Taabco Research and Development Consultants.

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ACRONYMS

| | |
|----------|---|
| AGM | Annual General Meeting |
| AU | African Union |
| AI | Appreciative Inquiry (AI) |
| CKU | Centre for Kirkeligt Udviklingssamarbejde (Church based Development) |
| CISEA | Centre for Interfaith Studies in Africa |
| DMCDD | Danish Mission Council Development Department |
| EU | European Union |
| FoRB | Freedom of Religion or Belief |
| FGD | Focus Group Discussion |
| IRC | Interreligious Council |
| NCC | National Council of Churches |
| Rev. | Reverend |
| RFP | Religions for Peace |
| KII | Key Informant Interview |
| PROCMURA | Programme for Christian–Muslim Relations in Africa |
| TAABCO | Transforming, Accompanying, Analysing, and Building Change Organisation |
| ToT | Training of Trainers |





The overall purpose of this evaluation was to assess the effectiveness, relevance, sustainability and impact of the Project on Building Capacity to Promote Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) in Africa, which was designed to be implemented by the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA), from January 2019- to December 2021. The evaluation exercise was conducted by the TAABCO Research and Development Consultants team between November 2022 and February 2023.

The specific objectives of the project evaluation exercise were:

- To measure PROCMURA's performance during the project period and provide an analysis of the outcomes and results achieved and develop a gap analysis.
- To assess the strengths and weaknesses of PROCMURA structures, processes and systems that could have affected (or contributed to) the achievements of the project objectives, identify reasons for the deviation (if any) from our approaches & strategies and use these in the formulation of the forward strategy.
- Assess the relevance of PROCMURA's Vision, Mission and overall goal to its mandate and its role in promoting freedom of religion or belief in its constituencies and in Africa.
- Assess impacts and outcomes of PROCMURA's activities in addressing religious freedom or beliefs of the beneficiary countries, regions and indeed the entire African continent, including factors that facilitate and/or hinder the progress in achieving the outcome, both in terms of the external environment and those internal; weaknesses in design, management, and human resource skills; draw key lessons learnt, best practices and high impact success story or stories of change for replication and scaling up in the new strategy.
- Assess the effectiveness, appropriateness and efficiency of the project design and strategies including management, coordination and staffing at the lower level of implementation with the Area Committees.
- Assess emerging trends, issues, challenges and opportunities that are relevant to the project.

The FoRB project targeted 16 countries in Africa. The primary target group included religious leaders, women, youth, media representatives, academics and government officials in the four regions in Africa.

Methodology

The methodology applied for this evaluation was guided by the Terms of Reference which was provided by PROCMURA. The Evaluation was conducted in accordance with the OECD DAC criterion which seeks answers to: (1) Relevance (2) Coherence; (3) Effectiveness; (4) Efficiency (5) Impact and (6) Sustainability. The specific approach consisted of a literature review of relevant documents, interviews with FoRB project participants through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs); PROCMURA staff; donors and partners through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs).

Key Findings

The project has been successful in achieving the intended results; its implementation was founded on both theological and legal grounds across the continent in Christianity and Islam both of which recognise the rights to exercise freedom of religion or belief. It was guided by PROCMURA's vision of promoting freedom of religion or belief in its constituencies and in Africa as a whole. FoRB contributed in highlighting PROCMURA's position on violation of human rights and the international covenant on civil and political rights as spelt out in Article 18 of the Universal declaration of human rights and the international covenant on civil and political rights. The findings confirmed the close alignment of the project with PROCMURA's mission to promote "An African Continent where

Christians and Muslims uphold the principles of religious freedom and all that it entails” by identifying and working in tandem with Inter-faith Organisations which are operating in the FoRB countries with similar objectives.

The evaluation noted several successes during its implementation; FoRB contributed to capacity-building for PROCMURA’s technical staff, her constituencies and strategically selected partners in promoting its principles. In particular, The NoFoRB online learning platform provided an opportunity for anyone to learn about FoRB. The Training of Trainers (TOT) course and other subsequent training activities on FoRB were conducted to enhance the capacity of area committees to support FoRB; The training culminated in the creation of the Sub-Sahara Africa Trainers Network; Most of the trainees expressed satisfaction with the mode of learning adopted by PROCMURA in delivering training sessions; Secondly, 21 (twenty one) action plans were developed and adopted during regional conferences confirming the FoRB values adoption at the regional level; the project rolled out capacity building activities at both the continental and regional level; Third, Area committees developed and adopted commitments through statements that tied participants with a sense of responsibility to ensure application of FoRB knowledge acquired through the training sessions.

In order to ensure efficient implementation of FoRB, the key stakeholders worked together to address and mitigate challenges. The steering team at PROCMURA worked in close consultation with donors and key stakeholders in the target countries. FoRB project implementation team ensured that religious leaders pledged and reaffirmed willingness, determination and commitment to remain in solidarity with each other within and across religions, and to collaborate with Governments to promote FoRB. The evaluation also noted that project presented a great opportunity to expand the concept on the continent of Africa particularly after being integrated in PROCMURA’s strategic plan. This is a positive step towards sustainability.

Further, the project has enabled a deeper understanding and demystification of the FoRB concept previously perceived by religious extremists as an attack on religion and unpacking it as indeed a concept at the very core of religious teachings and expectation and a convergence similarity within the different religions. That respect for freedom of religion or belief of the other is a fundamental part of major religions especially Christianity and Islam. This can be confirmed from a statement captured from a participant during their FoRB training sessions, “We have been sitting with PROCMURA for years talking about peace and how we can bring it, but this is the only time we have touched on the real issue.” FoRB has indeed enabled conflict resolution to thrive

Another unique finding is embedded in the approach of the delivery of FoRB by PROCMURA. The approach has enabled interactions across faiths without pushing for creation of joint faith structures but rather keeping and respecting the independence of each. The targeted faith structures are key in decision making and developing positions on FoRB on behalf of their greater and strategic constituencies. This is where impact has been created and felt. It is the promise of sustaining FoRB as a position and practice within the various religions participating in the project.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the evaluation developed a set of recommendations for the FoRB project implementing agency PROCMURA, partners, and CKU which will be useful in strengthening FoRB in the future. Ranging from project design, documentation, communication, coordination, sustainability, collaboration, partnerships, monitoring and evaluation, here are some of the evaluation recommendations that have been broadly covered in the report:

- The evaluation recommends that PROCMURA and other project partners continue working closely with the women and youth groups in order to incorporate and integrate FoRB into other peacebuilding initiatives on the continent considering that these categories are instrumental and important in addressing issues at the grassroots;
- There is need for further collaboration with faith-based networks such as CKU. PROCMURA’s approach to FoRB is based on religious freedom which provides a strong pillar for its intervention strategy. Thus continuous working with like-minded partners will provide the necessary support for FoRB across the continent and beyond
- There is need for continuous capacity building was considered to be pivotal in implementation of FoRB and should be enhanced further to strengthen knowledge acquisition and strengthening of the FoRB agenda. Capacity building activities therefore have to be deliberate, planned and budgeted for within the larger plan of roll-out of FoRB within countries. This should be extended to key agencies such as learning institutions and schools to

enable awareness enhancement among the young generation on FoRB as they hold and shape the future of other generations

- Replication of such a project should feature extensive lobbying for policy change and advocacy for key government agencies and legislations.
- Media plays a critical role in creating awareness of FoRB. the evaluation highly recommends expanding its involvement in all PROCMURA target countries. We recognize that media engagement is costly in many parts of the African continent but we also realize that it is critical for dissemination of knowledge especially where mass sensitization is required as is the case of FoRB.

In general, the performance of the FoRB project was impressive having realised its core aim of enhancing understanding between Christians and Muslims when it comes to matters freedom of religion or belief. It provided an opportunity to articulate and discuss sensitive issues between Christians and Muslims such as interfaith marriages, inheritance laws and the right of choice concerning faith and worship among others. It also opened doors to further strengthen the relationships between the two religions.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

The Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA) is a pan- African Christian organization founded in 1959 with the objective of building good relations between Christians and Muslims in the continent. PROCMURA visualizes an African continent where freedom of religion and all that it implies becomes the norm, not the exception. PROCMURA believes that when the right to freedom of religion is violated and people are discriminated against, religious identities are exploited in negative ways, leading to intolerance and subsequent conflicts. In their previous work on the continent, PROCMURA unearthed a reality in which some religious groups and individuals violate the rights of others as they practise their own religion. There was also a realization that Africa is characterized by various kinds of violent conflicts, leading to violations of human rights. Interestingly, Africa is a religious continent with the majority of its population being either followers of Christianity, Islam, traditional African religions, or others. Despite this reality of religious plurality, freedom of religion, which is a fundamental human right, is still facing some challenges. On the continent, most governments, individuals, and religious organizations regard freedom of religion or belief as absolute, but the manifestation of religion or belief in principle and practice is sometimes subject to restrictions of an indescribable magnitude.

The Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) project was therefore envisioned, designed and implemented as a remedy to this situation. PROCMURA, in partnership with DMCDD which is currently named CKU, initiated the 3-year project in Africa. The overall development goal of the project was to promote an East, West, and Central Africa where Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) is respected and celebrated. The Project was designed to be implemented from January 2019- to December 2021.

1.2 Project Context

The African Continent accounts for one-fifth of the Earth's total land area, consisting of fifty-four (54) countries. Africa is rich in natural and human resources but is still facing underdevelopment challenges. Poor economic growth and poverty demonstrated through images of thousands of African youth drowning in the Mediterranean in search of opportunities abroad best describe the economic situation. There are thousands of homeless people, unemployment is very high, and many other people lack social security. Africa as a continent is seriously affected by Climate Change, which carries the potential to affect interfaith relations negatively in the struggle for arable and inhabitable land.

Africa is going through a “power crisis” of change of political power. Political leaders in several countries have consolidated power to the extent of becoming dictators. The dictatorial spirit has promulgated poverty and disenfranchised people from living in peace. In the period between the four decades; 1960s and the 1990s, Africa experienced about 80 violent changes of governments and different types of civil conflicts, and wars. The situation is not getting any better in contemporary times. Power struggle in states such as South Sudan, Zimbabwe, Cameroon, Nigeria, Central Africa Republic, DR Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea has continued to infringe on the rights of individuals.

The continent is also faced with a number of human rights challenges including cultural practices, such as unjust widow inheritances, early and forced marriages and female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Although recognized as violations of human rights by most people, others do not agree to that and have continued with these practices at the expense of women. Another human rights challenge of particular relevance to this project is the rise of radicalization and violent extremism which has engulfed the continent in recent times, and whose actions contravene human rights; Freedom of religion or belief, including the ability to worship in peace and security, is a universal human right which is enshrined in both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, among other key human rights documents. Violation of such rights have resulted in thousands of people being homeless, killed and denied the right to worship.

The African Continent is thus confronted by both socio-economic and political challenges that have not only affected peace and development of the continent but also the living conditions of individuals. African humanity is facing diverse human rights challenges as a result of the socio-economic and political condition of the continent.

Considering religion in Africa is multifaceted and has a lot of influence on the day to day human interactions and livelihoods, interreligious cooperation is therefore seen as a proper approach to strengthen relations. Further FoRB is founded on Goal 16 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals which is designed to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

1.3 Project target groups

The FoRB project targeted 16 countries in Africa as follows: Anglophone West (Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Liberia), Francophone West (Benin, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Togo, and Guinea-Conakry), East and Southern Africa (Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Malawi Madagascar, Uganda, and South Sudan), Central Africa (Cameroon, Central African Republic, and Rwanda). The primary target group included religious leaders, women, youth, media representatives, academics and government officials in the four regions in Africa. Approximately 40% were women and youth and 60% were men. The religious leaders were drawn from Christian and Muslim institutions in each country. A balance was sought between the two main religions with participation of African traditional beliefs leaders (or another religion if not available) at the regional conferences. The ecumenical make-up of the Christian delegations was to be largely Catholic, Protestant and other denominations. In terms of right-holders and duty-bearers, the main target group was a mix of both. Whereas government officials were the formal duty bearers of FoRB in their respective countries, religious leaders were both right-holders and duty-bearers. On the one hand, together with the religious community they represent, they hold the right to practise their religion or belief. On the other hand, they are moral duty bearers of FoRB in the sense that they are to respect the FoRB of other faith communities. And within their religion or belief, they have the duty to protect the rights of individuals, who desire to practise their religion or belief in a different way. Women and youth formed part of the main target group as representatives of the primary right-holders. The secondary target group was the respective co-religionists of the religious leaders and citizens of the countries where they live. It was also a mix of right-holders and duty bearers. FoRB's project objectives included:

- The Capacity of PROCMURA's technical staff, her constituencies and strategically selected partners has been built in the area of promoting FoRB.
- FoRB is being promoted in the 16 targeted countries where PROCMURAs constituencies are present.

1.4 Project implementation

In an effort to realise the set project objectives, FoRB implementation featured to rollout a number of activities as follows:

- **International training of trainers (TOT) workshop on freedom of religion or belief (FORB)**

This was the first phase of the three-year projects on FoRB, which targeted PROCMURA's technical staff and constituency. Participants included Area advisers and associates from each country in Africa where PROCMURA has a presence. That is the regional coordinators, selected General Secretaries of the Christian Council of churches, and Area Committee members. The training was held from the 1st -3rd of July 2019 in Nairobi Kenya and participants were drawn from eighteen (18) African countries. The specific objective of this programme was to build the capacity of PROCMURA's technical staff and constituency on FoRB.



- **Central Africa Regional Training of trainer's workshop on freedom of religion or belief (FORB).**

The Central Africa Training of Trainers on Freedom of Religion or Belief was hosted in Cameroon in its economic capital of Douala from the 24-27th February 2020. The training brought together thirty (30) participants from the religious divides, traditional rulers, media, women, and youth from Rwanda, Chad, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, and the Republic of Mali. The main objective of the regional training was to disseminate the concept of FORB in the PROCMURA regions by enhancing the capacity of religious leaders, government and media agencies, women, and youth to identify FORB violations and work towards promoting FORB for all.

- **Anglophone West Africa Regional Training of Trainers (TOT) Workshop on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB)**

PROCMURA embarked on a three days training of trainers workshop on FoRB, focusing on the Anglophone West Africa Region with the main objective of enhancing the capacity of religious leaders, women, and youth, the media, and government agencies on FoRB. The hybrid TOT workshop (physical and virtual) which took place from 29th November to 1st December 2021, brought together 85 participants from Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. Participants were trained on how to identify FoRB violations, and also on skills in promoting FoRB for all among others. FoRB was approached from both faith (Christian and Muslim) and legal (Human rights) perspectives.

- **The Francophone West Africa Regional training of trainer's workshop**

The Francophone West Africa Regional training of trainer's workshop on FORB is part of the entire FORB project. 25 participants (Christians, Muslims, women, youth, Media, government officials, and traditional leaders) were selected from Burkina Faso, Benin, Togo, Senegal, and Guinea to go through 3 days of training on FoRB.

- **The East and Southern Africa regional training of trainers**

The East and Southern Africa regional training of trainers on FORB is the fourth regional training organized by PROCMURA on FORB. The TOT took place in Kampala Uganda from the 14th to the 17th of August 2022. The training brought together 46 participants made up of religious leaders, women, youth, legal practitioners, and the media from Five (5) East and Southern African Countries of Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Tanzania.

- **Country programmes**

Community sensitization meetings have been carried out in the five targeted countries; Cameroon, Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria, and Senegal. Interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with Christians and Muslims, religious and traditional leaders, women and youth on FORB, and Sensitization meetings were held and facilitated by area advisers and contact persons to map the way forward for the country [programmes; media/radio campaigns and cultural and religious celebrations.



EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

2.1 About the Evaluation

This evaluation was conducted by an independent external review team from TAABCO Research and Development Consultants. The team comprised John Okanga, Lucie Sewe and Alvin Andanje. Data was collected from November 2022 to Jan 2023 with an aim to assess and document the effectiveness, relevance and sustainability of the FoRB project and the impact on its target audience.

The specific evaluation objectives include:

- To measure PROCMURA's performance during the project period and provide an analysis of the outcomes and results achieved and develop a gap analysis.
- To assess the strengths and weaknesses of PROCMURA structures, processes and systems that could have affected (or contributed to) the achievements of the project objectives, identify reasons for the deviation (if any) from our approaches & strategies and use these in the formulation of the forward strategy.
- Assess the relevance of PROCMURA's Vision, Mission and overall goal to its mandate and its role in promoting freedom of religion or belief in its constituencies and in Africa.
- Assess impacts and outcomes of PROCMURA's activities in addressing religious freedom or beliefs of the beneficiary countries, regions and indeed the entire African continent, including factors that facilitate and/or hinder the progress in achieving the outcome, both in terms of the external environment and those internal; weaknesses in design, management, and human resource skills; draw key lessons learnt, best practices and high impact success story or stories of change for replication and scaling up in the new strategy.
- Assess the effectiveness, appropriateness and efficiency of the project design and strategies including management, coordination and staffing at the lower level of implementation with the Area Committees.
- Assess emerging trends, issues, challenges and opportunities that are relevant to the project.

2.2 Methodology

TAABCO utilized a mixed methods approach to the evaluation, where both qualitative and quantitative data was collected and analysed. This also included both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through *Key Informant Interviews* (KIIs) and *Focus group discussions* (FGDs) with targeted key informants. Secondary data was largely collected from project documents availed by PROCMURA. Additionally, the *Most Significant Change* (MSC) and *Appreciative Inquiry* approaches were applied in this evaluation. Rollout of the *Most Significant Change* (MSC) stories involved generating and analysing personal accounts of change, targeting the project stakeholders, and deciding which of these accounts is most significant and why. On the other hand, *Appreciative Inquiry* (AI) was used to deliberately focus on what is working well, and how things could be made even better, rather than on problems and difficulties.

The evaluation utilized a purposive sampling approach informed by respondents' level of engagement and participation in the project and availability. In total, there were 40 participants in the evaluations' Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and Key Informant Interviews were conducted with FoRB project participants. The interviews were conducted using open ended guides, which were tailored based on the informants' role and participation in the program and were administered via Zoom.

PARTICIPANTS DEMOGRAPHICS



Evaluation participants from West and Central Africa

50%

Evaluation participants from East and Southern Africa

50%



Gender representation

Female

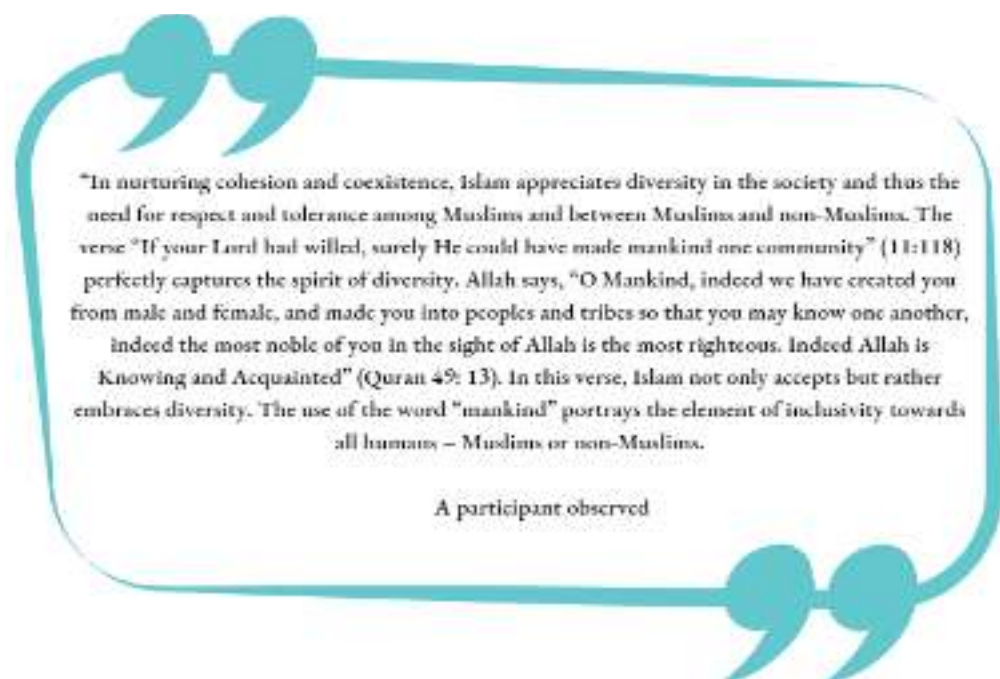
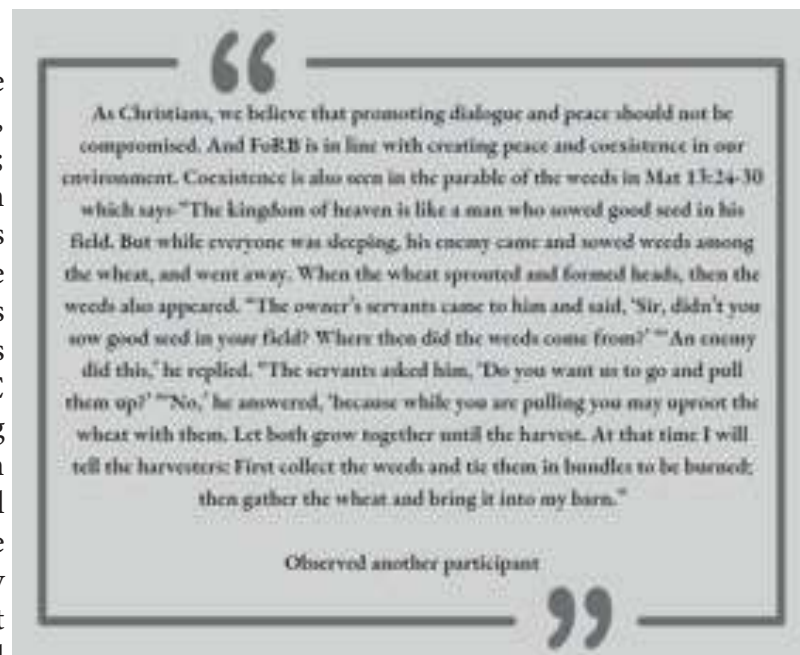
Male

40%

60%

3 KEY FINDINGS

This section provides an in-depth analysis of the evaluation encompassing: FoRB literature review, including documented progress and achievements; and findings based on data collected from November 2022 to Jan 2023 through interviews with FoRB project participants (through an online survey and FGDs); PROCMURA staff; donors and partners through KIIs. The Evaluation was conducted in accordance with the OECD DAC criterion that seeks answers to the following main questions: Relevance (Is the intervention doing the right things?), Coherence (How well does the intervention fit?), Effectiveness (Is the intervention achieving its objectives?), Efficiency (How well are resources used?), Impact (What difference is the intervention making?) and Sustainability (Will the benefits last?)



3.1 RELEVANCE

The evaluation sought to establish the extent to which FoRBs objectives and design responded to rights holders, countries’, and institution’s needs and the likelihood to continue doing so if circumstances change. The evaluation noted that FoRB’s implementation was augmented by both theological and legal grounds across the continent. Article 18 of the Universal declaration of human rights and the international covenant on civil and political rights are some of the conventional legal provisions that subscribe to FoRB’s vision. Also, there is theological grounding for FoRB in Christianity and Islam by the fact they both recognise the rights to exercise freedom of belief and spread unconditional love to each other.

More importantly, there were many examples of rights violations which justify and underscore the importance of FoRB and its implementation. This was noted in participants’ recounts of the different experiences in their countries with contradictory laws, religious extremism and human rights violations. In countries such as Ghana,

Uganda and Senegal, there was already co-existence between Muslims and Christians, while in parts of Cameroon and Nigeria, criminalisation was so severe that people would be persecuted for belonging to a different religion with some reporting difficulty for children of either religion finding it hard to attend schools established by the opposite religion. The evaluation revealed cases of both Muslims and Christians who initially believed that they had a religious duty to try to attract and convert people from other religions into their own faith while also protecting their own from being converted to others.

“Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 18: Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.”

3.2 Coherence

The evaluation sought to investigate the extent to which FoRB is compatible with other interventions in target countries and relevant sectors or institutions. It sought to identify any existence of synergies and interlinkages between the FoRB and other interventions carried out by PROCMURA and CKU together with other actors in Africa. The findings revealed that FoRB’s vision lies squarely into PROCMURA’s mandate as noted during literature review and qualitative data. In its previous works that span over 60 years, PROCMURA has sought “An African Continent where Christians and Muslims uphold the principles of religious freedom and all that it entails”. All projects and initiatives implemented by PROCMURA have been concerned with peaceful existence between Christians and Muslims, and remain indifferent to any phenomenon that will jeopardize the peace and development of the continent. This is founded on a common religious principle and responsibility of promoting peace in society. As observed by some of the FoRB project participants, a common objective exists between organisations such as the Ghana-based Centre for Interfaith Studies in Africa (CISEA) which has a broader focus on interfaith engagement with emphasis on Christian-Muslim relations. Similar initiatives include the Inter-religious Council of Uganda (IRCU) and the Justice and Peace Commission in Cameroon. However, it was noted that these viable platforms continue to struggle with the advancement of freedom of religion or belief which cements the need for FoRB’s integral role in the whole process.

“As for our case, we have an interreligious council that has activities similar to FoRB’S. However, they have often been accused of being political which takes away impartiality sometimes. Political infiltration of such noble aspirations is what takes away trust from relevant actors making it difficult to advance freedom of religion or belief,”
Observed one participant from Uganda

3.3 Effectiveness

As a crucial element of the evaluation process, evaluators sought to understand FoRB’s performance based on its outcomes and expected outputs. The project generally aimed at enhancing the capacity of participants to promote freedom of religion or belief in Africa to the level that it is recognised, respected and protected. This section therefore details FoRB’s achievements based on its outcomes as listed below:

Outcome1: The Capacity of PROCMURA’s technical staff, her constituencies and strategically selected partners has been built in the area of promoting FoRB.

Outcome 2: FoRB is being promoted in the 16 targeted countries where PROCMURA’s Constituencies are present.

3.3.1: Performance on Capacity building

Under this outcome, the evaluation sought to understand the extent to which FoRB enhanced the capacity of

PROCMURA's technical staff, her constituencies and strategically selected partners in promoting FoRB principles. Performance analysis was guided by crucial indicators namely: Level of knowledge about FoRB, degree of attitude change towards FoRB and variety of skills applied in promoting FoRB. To point out changes based on the above-named indicators, the evaluation analysed the following outputs under outcome 1: PROCMURA's technical staff, Area Advisors and Regional Coordinators have increased their capacity to promote FoRB and PROCMURA's strategically selected partners have increased their capacity to promote FoRB.



Capacity of PROCMURA's technical staff, Area Advisors and Regional Coordinators to promote FoRB

As has been indicated earlier, FoRB's implementation featured roll out of training to technical staff, identified area advisors and regional coordinators who play a crucial role in realisation of the project's goal. Project records indicated that FoRB targeted to implement a single three-day Training of Trainers (TOT) event during which the said target groups would receive knowledge on FoRB. This was achieved in 2020 where an International TOT for PROCMURA'S technical staff was conducted. Additionally, the project recorded achievement as it managed to attract 6 individuals associated with PROCMURA into the NORFoRB's online training module. Geographical representation of these trainees was fair with participants drawn from Kenya, Ethiopia, Liberia, Guinea, Tanzania and Nigeria. Furthermore, inculcation of FoRB issues during PROCMURA's events was also investigated as a measure of awareness levels. On this, the project had targeted 5 to 10 issues for FoRB to feature during PROCMURA's Annual General Meetings. During the implementation period, 5 countries presented FoRB follow up reports at the Annual Meeting on FoRB violations. The countries included Togo, Nigeria, Liberia, Cameroon and Benin. More importantly, participants interviewed expressed satisfaction with rollout of capacity building events based on the following aspects.



Improved understanding of roles: KII and FGD participants exhibited a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities in conducting FoRB activities. Most participants attributed this level of understanding to the FoRB trainings which were conducted at the regional and continental levels.

Improved knowledge and skills on FoRB: Over 80% of sampled trainees expressed satisfaction with the mode of learning adopted in delivering training sessions. They exhibited a clear understanding of what FoRB entails and what FoRB is not. There was however concern that there was still much to be done to ensure that some of the trainees, area advisors or area committee members are fully equipped with knowledge and skills.

"I had the same experience when I took the FoRB TOT training through the NORFoRB online platform. Before my training in FoRB, My understanding of FoRB was reduced down to an attempt to legitimize all forms of belief systems. The training on FoRB gave me a deeper understanding of the concept of FoRB. My knowledge of FoRB has made me understand that FoRB does not legitimize and belief system or religion but protects people from discrimination of any sort. Truly, I am a FoRB trainer."

A FoRB trainer observed



Capacity of PROCMURA's strategically selected partners to promote FoRB

Investigation of project records reveals a crucial role of partnership in promoting freedom of Religion or Belief. It is on this basis that FoRB implementation intentionally featured building the capacity of select Procmura partners. This was achieved through rollout of regional conferences conducted on FoRB as compared to a targeted one. 1 partner participated in NoRFoRBs online training module in 2022 against a targeted 10 which represents a 10% fulfillment. The Presbyterian Church in Nigeria is one of PROCMURA's partners with 5 people already having gone through NoRFORB training. Furthermore, development of action plans during

regional conferences was a crucial indicator on the level FoRB values adoption at the regional level. The project recorded the targeted 21 number of action plans developed at regional conferences representing 30% overachievement on this front. Specifically, five (5) action plans were developed from the Central African regional training, 5 from the Anglophone West Africa regional training, 5 from the francophone West Africa regional training and 6 in the East and Southern Africa regional training

3.1.2 Promotion of FoRB in the 16 targeted

Number of PROCMURA partners participating in the NORFORB online training platform

10%
Fulfillment



In recognising how crucial FoRB promotion has been, a participant from Northern Cameroon recounted how they had worked closely with area committee members and area advisers to advance FoRB in the region. The participant narrated that there are parts of Northern Cameroon where Muslim house owners would refuse renting them out to Christians. This had resulted in a situation where government workers such as teachers of Christian belief would not have access to housing in the region; something that was negatively impacting development in the region. When they organised some of the FoRB activities including cultural dances, music and drama, the locals started to trust one another and their housing situation has now improved.

countries in PROCMURA's constituencies



Under outcome 2 of the project, the evaluators sought to understand achievement on how targeted countries had adopted and embraced FoRB through rollout of activities. Performance under this outcome was based on investigation of two major indicators; degree of implementation of action plans and the total number of initiatives taken by PROCMURAs constituencies and/or their partners to promote FoRB. Area advisers reported a 60% performance on the degree of implementation of action plans and a total of 32 initiatives undertaken by targeted countries. Some of the activities included a FoRB meeting on with Christians and Muslims leaders in the northern region of Cameroon, a meeting for women Christian leaders on FoRB in Rwanda, a meeting on how to address the issue of FoRB in Ghana and a consultative meeting on organizing FoRB event on cultural and religious celebrations in Nigeria. The evaluation further investigated project performance based on the intended outputs under this outcome as discussed below.



Acceptance of FoRB in 5 pilot countries

The evaluation noted that, under this output, the project had recorded promising results. Specifically, the number of social cultural events aimed at promoting FoRB in the five pilot countries were 8 in total. Also, the number of public/media broadcasted dialogue meetings addressing FoRB was recorded to be 10 against a targeted 10 translating to a 100% success rate. As for the number of activities targeting youth or women, a success rate of 60% was registered with 6 events organised against a targeted 10.



Action taken to promote FoRB in policies and education in any of the 16 targeted countries

To determine the success in rollout of these outputs, the evaluation investigated the number of incorporations of FoRB in academic curricula and the number of petitions for amendments to government policies or policy practices. As for the first one, there was only 1 reported case against a targeted 3 which featured a brainstorming session with the university leadership on the incorporation of FoRB in learning institutions, representing a 33% success rate. As for the second one, project records reveal that 5 communiqués/statements of commitment were issued by participants calling on their governments to recognize FoRB as a universal human right and Guarantee this in their legal instruments. There is still much to be done on policy lobby and influencing as observed by many participants during the qualitative phase of this evaluation.

Another participant narrated that!

“For our case in Liberia, we had a situation where Christians were calling for Christianity to be a state religion from the existing secular nature of our state. There was outrage with Muslims complaining of victimization bearing in mind that they are the minority in the country. We were called upon as area advisors working with the area committee and because of the FoRB training and tools that we got, we were able to identify the contextual situation, analyse and prepare a response. This included building and offering FoRB knowledge to youth who had been influenced to have a radicalized mentality. This really helped alleviate a situation which was dangerously turning violent.” An FGD FoRB trainer narrated.

“For instance, in Uganda we were able to push for a policy on the universality of education (IMPACT). We had a situation where, because many of the schools had a founding denomination, students of other religions or beliefs could not access education there. So we pushed for this and continue to advocate for the universality of education where any child can access education in any school.”

An FGD participant from Uganda narrated

Technical and moral support is given to the implementation of Action plans

Under this output, the evaluation assessed the level of technical and moral support offered towards implementation of set action plans. Specifically, the evaluation sought to understand the level of communication from PROCMURA regarding the action plans and the number of applications from DMCDD members and their partners to DMCDD for support to national action plans. It was noted that the frequency of communication from PROCMURA regarding action plans was not recorded in 2018. In 2019 it was recorded biannually and quarterly in 2020 against a desired monthly period. It was further noted that 2 applications from DMCDD members and their partners to DMCDD for support to national action plans had been recorded against a projected 3. Participants also noted that support had been adequately availed from the central office and even donors to ensure that some of the action plans are actualised in the different countries

“We are in a generation where there is an increase in religious ideologies, these give birth to radicalization and violence against people who do not buy into those ideologies. This is why we appreciate Procmura for working so hard to promote good Christian and Muslim relations- FoRB has therefore helped highlight some of these violations which emphasize PROCMURA’s position.” One participant observed.

3.4 Efficiency

The evaluation assessed the utilization of resources on FoRB implementation and sought to draw lessons that could inform usage of resources for similar projects in future. To be specific, the following aspects of the project efficiency were assessed.



Resource input and distribution

- **Time and Labor**

As project records indicate, implementation of FoRB was planned to take place between 2019 and 2021, but due to the Covid-19 pandemic, some of the activities were delayed and rescheduled. As for utilization of labour, the resilient steering team at PROCMURA head office in Nairobi did an admirable job with support from area advisors and area committees who largely supported project roll-out on a voluntary basis. This approach ensured that the limited funds available could be deployed to target activities and not on salaries for staff in target countries.

- **Efficiency of resource distribution**

Utilisation and distribution of resources as per the needs in the following categories: Project activities, Local

administration, Personnel costs, Donor monitoring, Investments and other costs. In total, the approved budget for FoRB stood at 355, 022 USD. The project's expenditure as of March 2022 was 255,800 USD. Of this, 62% was spent on implementation of project activities which the evaluation finds to be impressive considering the level and quality of activities already mentioned earlier. Another 24.6% went to personnel costs which included allowances for field coordinators, technical team and staff at the central office. Additionally, 2.9% and 3% was spent on Reviews and Donor monitoring costs with local project administration taking up 5.6%.



As indicated in the illustration above, the project expenditure was impacted, especially for activities, by the COVID-19 pandemic beginning early 2020. This affected travelling from country to country with lockdowns being introduced by several countries in the continent. The evaluation however finds the level of flexibility and understanding between project staff, the donor and other partners quite admirable as it allowed smooth transition from physical meetings to virtual/hybrid meetings. The evaluation finds this as a positive unintended outcome which permitted larger training groups through online communication facilities and implementation to continue albeit budget readjustments.

- ***Efficiency of problem solving structure***

Implementation of FoRB was efficient based on this criteria with key stakeholders closely working together to ensure concerns are alleviated and challenges mitigated within time. The steering team at PROCMURA worked in close consultation with donors and key stakeholders in the different target countries. The level of satisfaction on communication across board was commendable. A great example was when the Covid-19 pandemic devastated nearly every aspect of program planning and implementation all over the world. PROCMURA was able to readjust the budget allocation, in close consultation with CKU, on how to alter implementation from complete physical meetings to hybrid meetings and fully virtual meetings at times. This re-organization and adaptation of project plans at such a critical point made it possible for the project to achieve the outcomes as set out in the log frame with minimal deviation from set targets. The evaluation team commends PROCMURA for such innovation and creativity during these unprecedented times.

3.5 Impact

The project was set to realize an East, West, and Central Africa where FoRB is respected, protected, and promoted. This section of the evaluation details findings on the performance of the project in line with the anticipated impact.

Impact on FoRB being respected

To ensure that FoRB is respected across the target regions on the continent, the project rolled out capacity building activities at both the continental and regional level. The Training of Trainers (TOT) course and other subsequent training activities on FoRB were intended to enhance the capacity of area committees to support FoRB. The trained individuals were then to cascade the knowledge down through different platforms and spaces and to create an understanding of the FoRB concept. It has to be noted that, investigation of the project based on this

criterion established that indeed there have been admirable steps made. Project participants and members of local communities recognise the significant steps taken to ensure people were aware of the need to exercise freedom of religion or belief without fear of victimisation. There were many instances where beneficiaries who had in some way accessed FoRB knowledge had drastically changed their perspectives on how to interact with people of different faiths and how to respect their perspectives. For instance, one participant noted a case of an elder who also doubled as a religious leader in Sierra Leone who had been inciting young people to wage violence against people from a different religion, transformed and began to appreciate the existence of other religions.

Impact on FoRB protection

Another intended impact of the project was to ensure that people's rights of religion or belief is protected in one way or the other. This evaluation revealed the extent to which the project has encouraged protection of religious freedom. In some instances, this was exhibited through written commitment to live and practise FoRB while others entailed pushing for legal frameworks that guarantee religious freedom in the different communities. The evaluation noted a concern by respondents in respect to the legal protection of FoRB as a good step towards the right direction. However, there is still much to be done to ensure these laws are reinforced. There is one FGD participant who observed that:

Religion is interlinked and we find that there could be some conflicts that were arising on lands issues due to religious, for instance, there is a part in Uganda called Arjumani, it is very far from Kampala, and also has a majority of Muslims and very few Christians. When issues to do with climate change come up, Muslims in the region would lead the agenda and Christians because they are the minority, they could let them do it even if it's not the best. However, I'm still working on a baseline to understand the legal challenges that affect the right of religion and belief.

An FGD participant from Uganda narrated.

"Just recently, we had an altercation in Sierra Leone where Christians and Muslims engaged in a violent conflict. I remember a church was stoned with most of its equipment vandalised by some youth. We were called upon as area committee members and FoRB trainers to try and work with the local chief to alleviate the situations. We were able to bring the groups together working with elders and sheikhs by utilizing the FoRB training. We are proud to report that we helped them reflect on what the causes were and what solutions would work for each side. I even remember some youth mentioning that one elder from a mosque near the church was the one who triggered and incited them to attack the church. A Muslim area chief even gave an example of how some of his daughters are married to pastors, and he is always okay with attending their cultural functions and offering support. This helped underline the need to allow children to choose their own religion and highlighted the need for more education. It is interesting that the area chiefs are now even requesting for additional FoRB trainings."

A FoRB trainer from Sierra Leone narrated

Impact on FoRB promotion

A crucial aspect of FoRB objectives was to ensure that religious freedom is promoted across the continent. This evaluation noted that FoRB had ensured that religious leaders pledge and reaffirm willingness, determination and commitment to remain in solidarity with one another and collaborate with the Governments in working tirelessly for the promotion of FoRB. For instance, there were instances where FoRB had resulted in beneficiaries joining hands to fight against religious extremism and radicalisation as evident in the adjacent narration by one of the evaluation's respondents.

Discussions with respondents suggest that the main value added by the project was its capacity to raise awareness of FoRB, and to increase interest in promoting it further. There is evidence of progress on FoRB as people have acquired knowledge and changed attitudes towards other religions. Some expressed willingness not to act against their children in the event that they converted to other religions. To a large extent this was enhanced by the participatory approach of project implementation which brought together all stakeholders in the training and workshop activities. Several respondents confirmed that they had observed attitude and behavioural changes among the beneficiaries of the project including a level of understanding and interpretation of the FoRB concept.

"It was coincidental that FoRB was conceived at the same time when Procmura was reviewing its strategic plan. This meant that FoRB was included as part of the plan making it easier to direct workload towards it. Some of the Procmura staff at country level were FoRB trainers working under some religious structures."

A KII participant observed

3.6 Sustainability

This section of the evaluation purposes to detail how the project incorporated sustainability mechanisms to guarantee continuous impact.

- **Embedded in PROCMURA's mission**

A crucial aspect of the project that ensures its concepts will continuously feature in programming is PROCMURA's mission and vision of an African continent where freedom of religion and all that it implies becomes the norm, not the exception. To this extent, PROCMURA believes that when the right to freedom of religion is violated and people are discriminated against, religious identities are exploited negatively, leading to intolerance and subsequent conflicts. Having been implementing projects towards this end for many decades, it is almost certain that FoRB aspirations will continue to feature in PROCMURA line of work. It is worth noting that PROCMURA integrated FoRB as a key programmatic focus in its five-year strategic plan. Despite the fact that it is not possible to redirect funds from other projects towards FoRB activities, it is almost certain that PROCMURA will find room to assimilate some FoRB activities in their other works. Further, the evaluation revealed that PROCMURA continues to enjoy support from some of its key partners who are members of CKU. These members can now utilize CKU's open financing window specifically earmarked for supporting FoRB related issues.

- **Availability of the training material online**

A foundational component of FoRB was conducting training across the continent. PROCMURA's corporation with NoRFoRB, which is a learning resource platform that avails skills and tools for FoRB trainings, will go a long way to ensure continuous access to this knowledge. NoRFoRB was initiated by CKU together with sister organisations in Sweden, Norway and Finland. Through this platform, individuals have been trained and it's striking that PROCMURA has become one of its crucial coordination alumni network in Africa. It is therefore encouraging that anyone can attend the online training which is available on the NoRFoRB learning platform. This consistency in availability of the training material almost guarantees access by potential beneficiaries anytime.

- **Criterion adopted for choosing area advisors and area committee members**

Another aspect that excites prospects of FoRBs continuity is the criteria used to select trainees. Most of the ones chosen were religious leaders, faith group leaders and theologians. For instance, the PROCMURA's Area Adviser must be Christian with a Bachelor's Degree in theology, studied Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations up to a Master's Degree Level. The person must also study Islam in an Institution where the study of Islam is not one-sided. Implementation of FoRB also featured nomination of Area Committee members for respective countries by National Council of Churches (NCC) which house them. These groups of people work within established structures and in close contact with local communities or even congregations. It is certain that these leaders will continue to utilize their platforms to promote FoRB beyond the projects' implementation period.

- **Presence of a community of practice**

PROCMURA has established a community of practice for all trainers in the form of a WhatsApp group. This platform is managed by the project officer at PROCMURA and collates all information of what is happening in the regions. People are free to share experiences and learn from each other on the emerging FoRB trends while at the same time are kept up to date by the head office. So far, participants noted that this platform has been a great channel for instant feedback on matters related to FoRB.

- **Influence on Policy Change**

FoRB project participants through these religious institutions are engaging policy makers to entrench and operationalize FoRB within their national legislations. The evaluation noted that some of the target countries began to engage their national institutions which have the capacity to influence change. In particular, respondents from Uganda indicated the engagement of the Orthodox Church of Uganda, the Catholic Church as well as the Seventh Day Adventist Church; Senegal began to engage the Presbyterian church in the advocacy work while Ghana was already engaging the National Interreligious Council.

- **FoRB roll-out and utilization of religious institutions**

Religious institutions that FoRB project engaged, mainly churches and Islamic structures have a promise of being around for the foreseeable future. By building capacity of leaders and members of these institutions and structures on FoRB and attaining level of confidence in FoRB that has been demonstrated by evaluation participants, it is definite to conclude that this knowledge and understanding will stand the test of time since these are self-made structures and institutions that are have become a way of life of the people. More however may need to be done especially in entrenching FoRB in training curriculums in theological and Islamic studies institutions.



4 PROJECT SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

4.1 Successes

The evaluation established the following specific successes from the implementation of FoRB project in the target countries:

- **Establishment of a network of FoRB trainers in the region:** The FoRB project has created a reliable network of trainers who can continue cascading this knowledge and skills at the regional, national and grassroots levels across the continent.
- **Identification of FoRB violations:** ; in the various constituencies where the project was held participants have been able to identify FoRB violations which have been documented for action by duty bearers
- **Enhanced capacities in identifying FoRB violations:** Participants gained a significant level of knowledge on how to map out and identify the different forms of FoRB violations which is an important first step towards triggering action against these violations in various contexts.
- **Improved awareness on FoRB in the region:** Generally, the evaluation noted a remarkable positive change in attitudes and perception towards FoRB among leaders and local communities.
- **Adaptation of FoRB due to diversity in contexts where the project was rolled out:** Introduction of the same concept in different contexts was effective due to informed context analysis and respect for prevailing cultural and other social values.
- **Establishment of a common space/platform for better understanding contentious FoRB issues between Christians, Muslims and African traditional religion followers:** FoRB has provided the much-needed space to discuss tough issues such as interfaith marriages, inheritance laws, the right for places to worship and clothing restrictions. The focus of interreligious conversation is gradually expanding beyond what unites Christians, Muslims and African traditional religions to incorporate other contentious matters that were feared and therefore left out of the FoRB discourse.
- **Safe Spaces:** Cultural groups can now be able to open up and self-identify their traditional beliefs without any discrimination.
- **Strengthened relationships between Christians, Muslims and Traditional religions:** “We are now seeing both religions taking part in joint activities. Once we host such an activity, we don’t see any challenges of segregation or Muslims and Christians not working together.”
- **Positive steps towards inculcating FoRB in schools:** This is well summarised in a respondent’s own words, “As for me in Uganda, with the youth activity we held in Namugongo, we managed to form FoRB clubs in different schools, which are now carrying out FoRB activities. We even managed to put up university chapters trying to embrace FoRB activities.”
- **Country action plans:** Generation of country action plans enabled determination of priority issues for each context and helped to guide the roll-out of FoRB events.
- **Commitment statements:** Development and adoption of commitments statements was an admirable approach that tied participants with a sense of responsibility to ensure application of FoRB knowledge was acquired through training sessions.

4.2 Challenges

The evaluation noted that FoRB project evaluation faced a number of challenges that included:

- **Varied FoRB interpretation for different contexts:** The variety of interpretations of FoRB for the different societal sectors such as government and private sectors posed a challenge and called for clarifications of the same within the overall project understanding. To some of the respondents, “This is where PROCMURA and FoRB have a hill to climb”.
- **COVID 19:** The project activities were adversely affected by the emergence of the dreaded COVID 19 pandemic especially after it led to impositions of travelling and gathering restrictions. PROCMURA navigated technically out of this challenge and as one respondent put it, “We have however managed to navigate these challenges by ensuring the commencement of the country programmes, although they were initially planned to take place after all the regional programmes. Since we could not have the regional programmes because of COVID, we worked with the area advisers on the ground to carry out the sensitization meetings. They have now planned for the media campaigns and cultural/religious celebrations.”
- **Tense political environment:** some of the countries are going through political tensions and conflicts which made the environment tense. Tanzania for example is going through a cold conflict between religious and political leaders. This has contributed to the postponement of the media campaign of FoRB as stakeholders on the ground feel that this is not the appropriate time to begin such a conversation in the media.
- **Limited resources to support country action plans:** Action Plans developed for countries from the Regional ToTs have not been fully implemented due to inadequacy of resources.
- **Women and Youth participation:** The challenge of women participation is a recurring issue that needs intentional efforts to ensure FoRB implementation is not dominated by men only. The central office, regional staff, area advisers and area committees might need to embrace approaches that will see better representation of women and youth.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our findings, we offer a set of recommendations to the FoRB team, partners, and CKU. The evaluation team identified some lessons learned as well as important follow-up steps which would be useful in strengthening FoRB in future.

On Project design

- Work more deliberately with women and youth- design interventions with them on the table as respondents highlighted the importance of working with the youth as well as women groups which have hitherto been marginalised or excluded in other peacebuilding initiatives on the continent. The involvement of these groups is considered a significant step in integrating the FoRB agenda into the broader development agenda.
- Integration of peace building work of PROCMURA without losing the place of FoRB.
- FoRB also adopted advocacy as an approach towards realizing its objectives which is something that many participants expressed interest in. Existing regional and continental structures such as the African Union can provide a platform for high-level participation by key stakeholders on issues of FoRB. They can enable fast track vital policies on FoRB respect, protection and promotion.

On Project Coordination and Communication

- The media played a critical role in creating awareness of FoRB in some countries. Media engagement should be encouraged and expanded at regional and continental levels.
- The need to devise the means of holding trained candidates, their churches or the related NCC accountable for ineffective or absconded graduates

On Collaboration and Partnerships

- PROCMURA continues to work in close collaboration with a cross section of faith-based networks such as CKU. Increased involvement of religious leadership which includes heads of churches, mosques, Imams and Sheikhs at the national and regional levels should be encouraged. Secondly, the initiative to extend the partnership to include parliamentarians and law-makers in the FoRB and PROCMURA pragmatic approach will only enhance visibility and add value through high-level participation and policy influence.
- There is also need to enhance engagement with Europe by activating a PROCMURA's liaison role/office.

Sustainability

- **Continuous capacity building**– At the core of FoRB project design is the aspect of knowledge acquisition and application. This is an aspect that this phase of implementation achieved very well. There is need to continue having training sessions to increase the number of trainees which will ensure FoRB reaches every corner of the continent. Several respondents recognised training as a very important activity which should be encouraged and rolled out to other countries as well as other societal constituents and structures which contribute to the vision of PROCMURA.
- To enhance the capacity of Faith actors and religious organisations and provide them with basic knowledge and skills
- Lobby for Policy change and advocacy for key government agencies and legislations – It encouraging to note the FoRB project participants through religious institutions are engaging policy makers to entrench and operationalize FoRB within their national legislations. However, these efforts need to be intensified through lobbying and advocacy to stand a chance at influencing policy change.
- **Mentorship of trainees and certification:** It is impressive the pool of individuals who were selected to attend training sessions bearing in mind that it comprised of respected religious leaders with theological grounding. However, the three day period set for trainings especially at the regional level and national level might not be

enough for any person to fully grasp the FoRB principles and be able to comprehensively implement it in their different spaces. It might therefore need further mentorship of trainees. Considering this has cost implications, collaboration and training with learning institutions can assist enhance the mentorship with a guiding curriculum in place.

- **Awareness raising for key agencies** – Considering the crucial role theological institutions play in furthering religion and belief on the continent, it would be important to engage such institutions with an intention of having FoRB inculcated into the syllabi. This can also be extended to other secular institutions of higher learning, secondary and primary schools will enable the young generation to be aware as they hold and shape the future of other generations

On Documentation

- PROCMURA should consider translation of the facilitators guide on promotion of FoRB into selected local languages beyond just English, French and Arabic to allow several people to learn about FoRB.
- There is also need to intensify collection of stories of change which are quite numerous as the evaluation noted from brief engagements with participants.

On Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Qualitative insights:** FoRB should consider emphasizing on qualitative data collection methods, which have proven most effective in soliciting the level of nuance needed to understand complex processes of capacity strengthening, knowledge uptake and implementation. For example, this may include encouraging Area advisors and Area committee members to share what is working for them, including sharing of their success stories that emerged as a result of FoRB training – similar to what is shared on the WhatsApp groups. For instance, there could be a need to introduce outcome diaries for documenting significant changes/feedback as reported by area advisors and area committees.

6 CONCLUSION

Freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) is a universal human right. This is globally envisaged by the United Nations in its Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR Article 18) which states that “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship, and observance.” Article 18 of the international covenant on civil and political rights also states that “Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion.” Africa is characterized by various kinds of violent conflicts that have in most cases led to human rights violations. Even more notable is the fact that the continent is a hugely religious one. The majority of the people are followers of Christianity, Islam, traditional African religions, or others. Despite this reality of religious plurality, freedom of religion, which is a fundamental human right, is still facing some challenges. On the African continent, most governments, individuals, and religious organizations regard freedom of religion or belief as absolute, but the manifestation of religion or belief in principles and practice is sometimes subject to restrictions of an indescribable magnitude. There are even some cases where religious groups and individuals violate the rights of others in their attempt to practice their religion. It is on this backdrop that PROCMURA, DMCDD, now CKU initiated a 3 years project in the four PROCMURA regions in Africa on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB). The overall development goal of the project was an East, West, and Central Africa where Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) is respected and celebrated. Though the project was set to run from January 2019- to December 2021, rollout of the same was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic which meant postponement of some activities to 2022.

This project’s end term evaluation report therefore has presented key findings and recommendations for future similar projects. It was an attempt to reflect at crucial elements of FoRB implementation based on the OECD DAC criteria that assesses a project’s relevance, coherence, effectiveness, impact, efficiency and sustainability. The report also lists some of the key challenges and success that were experienced throughout the implementation period. Among the key successes of FoRB included:

1. Establishment of a network of FoRB trainers in the region.
2. Enhanced capacities in identifying FoRB violations.
3. Improved awareness on FoRB in the region.
4. Successful adaptation of FoRB due to diversity in contexts where the project was rolled out
5. Establishment of a common space/platform for better understanding contentious FoRB issues between Christians, Muslims and African traditional religion followers:
6. Strengthened relationships between Christians, Muslims and Traditional religions
7. Positive steps towards inculcating FoRB in schools curricula
8. Development of country action plans
9. Commitment statements by religious actors

However, there were also notable challenges that any organisation that wants to adopt this project should be aware of including:

1. Varied FoRB interpretation for different contexts
2. Pandemics such as COVID 19
3. Tense political environment
4. Limited resources to support country action plans.
5. Women and Youth participation

The evaluation also described a number of recommendations that can be considered for implementation of similar projects in future in the following areas: Project design, documentation, communication, coordination,

sustainability, collaboration, partnerships, monitoring and evaluation. Generally, FoRB performance was impressive having realised its core intention by enhancing understanding between Christian and Muslims when it comes to matters freedom of religion or belief. Rollout of project activities uncovered tougher issues between Christians and Muslims such as interfaith marriages, inheritance laws, the right for places to worship and clothing restrictions. The level of realisation on the importance of having conversation around these issues between interreligious stakeholders at the grass root or regional levels is admirable; organisation that wish to roll out another phase of FoRB will find PROCMURA's initial phase very insightful and encouraging.

Key notes on this evaluation process

- **Methodology:** This evaluation largely adopted a qualitative approach with minimal inclusion of quantitative data. KII and FGD data therefore formed a huge part of the findings.
- **Representativeness:** Our data collection was not able to include the full universe of direct participants associated with FoRB. We cannot definitively determine the extent to which our findings are representative of this wider pool of beneficiaries. However, the sample who participated as interviewees or survey respondents in this phase of the evaluation were diverse in geography, language and organizational maturity, which is something that might be considered in future evaluations.
- **Response bias:** We have sought to address the risk of response bias by carefully protecting the confidentiality of respondents. We have found that interviews offer the greatest leverage for gathering thoughtful and candid responses because we were able to pose questions in different ways, follow up with clarifications, and more accurately read the tone and body language of respondents during the KIIs and FGDs.

7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Thank you!

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