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Peacebuilding Support Office

Bureau d'appui à la consolidation de la paix

## Outcome Report

### Consultation on Promoting Gender Equality in Recovery and Peacebuilding: Planning and Financing, Monitoring and Accountability for the Report of the Secretary-General on Post-Conflict Peacebuilding and Early Recovery

28 January 2009

United Nations Headquarters, New York

#### Background

The United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the United Nations Development Programme held a full day consultation to generate concrete recommendations for the Secretary-General's Report on Peacebuilding and Early Recovery in regard to two key issues: Building national capacity to ensure women's participation in early recovery and peacebuilding and obtaining adequate financing to respond to individual and community recovery needs in a gender-equal manner.

#### Context & Challenge

It is assumed that women benefit as much as men from "gender-neutral" investment and aid management, demobilization and revival of public services. Gender analysis, however, indicates that most gender-neutral investments do not have an equal value for women unless their needs are specifically assessed.

From 2006-2007, only 2.3% of projects submitted for funding in emergency "CAPs" and "Flash" appeals addressed gender issues<sup>i</sup> either including women as major beneficiaries along with others (e.g. women and child health projects) or in women-specific projects (e.g. addressing gender based violence). Just 1.7% of committed funds went to these areas.

The majority of both categories of gender projects (gender related and gender specific) fell into somewhat gender-stereotyped sectors – health and gender-based violence, suggesting that there is also a deficit of the planning and consultative processes in outlining women's needs for support in areas such as shelter, rehabilitation and integration of combatants and displaced populations, employment generation and more. While CAPs and Flash Appeals deal primarily with humanitarian response, this funding trend provides an indicative suggestion of patterns in early recovery response.

#### Key Questions Considered:

- ❖ *What are best practices in ensuring that women participate effectively in post-conflict planning forums (PCNAs, interim funding frameworks, PRS processes, donor conferences, National Peace Building plans)?*
- ❖ *How is national planning & expenditure monitored? What national & international (UN) capacities are needed to ensure women are engaged effectively in post-conflict planning?*
- ❖ *How do we ensure that women's early recovery and peacebuilding needs are covered when funds for post conflict recovery are allocated?*
- ❖ *How can we hold financial planners and fund managers accountable for meeting gender needs?*

In early recovery, there is evidence to show that women's specific needs are often neglected, because when 'everything is urgent', women's concerns tend to be postponed to a less desperate moment.

This approach relegates gender equality and women's rights to a 'special needs' category, instead of recognizing that gender profoundly shapes the needs of the entire population. Neglect of women's needs in particular for physical security, productive asset and income control, and access to decision-making can impose serious **costs** on recovery, undermining the credibility of efforts to reassert the rule of law, and slowing economic recovery.

## Summary of Discussions

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### ***1. Building National Capacity for Planning and Financing Responses to Women's Needs***

*"If you want to make women count – count what matters to women." – Ruth Ochieng*

- ❖ Gender dynamics usually change dramatically over the course of a conflict. Transition can offer a critical window of opportunity for women to capitalize on the changes in gender relations that occur during conflict – with women taking on community leadership roles for instance – to take a lead in post-conflict recovery and inclusive governance. It is an optimal moment for promoting affirmative action or quotas and for ensuring appropriate provision is made for demographic groups left particularly vulnerable in the wake of conflict, such as women heading households (including by securing their rights to property and expanding their employment opportunities and livelihoods). This makes sense not only from a democratic justice perspective, but also from an economic and social recovery perspective. Women leaders can bring to bear a broader range of perspectives on social needs in decision-making that can therefore support inclusive post-conflict planning and spending.
- ❖ Effective engagement of women in post-conflict planning requires a pre-positioning process. Well in advance of the end of conflict, women's leadership capacities must be supported and strengthened: in peace negotiations, constitutional revision, electoral processes, crisis management operations, including fast-tracking professional training /skills upgrades for women in senior civil and public service. In addition to the leadership capacities of individuals, local women's organizations should also be strengthened as they play an important role in holding their governments and the international community accountable. Participants in the consultation also urged increasing the number of women in UN mission operations and positioning them in places that will optimize their presence. Early recovery done correctly requires the inclusion of women and women's needs at the outset, not as an afterthought once the frameworks for peace talks and for post-conflict recovery have already been set.
- ❖ Visible and public initiatives made by international actors early in the recovery process can have a significant effect beyond their size and cost. For instance, during the PBC mission to Burundi in April 2007, mission leaders met with local women's organizations and learned there were no female representatives on the PBF Joint Steering Committee. As a result, women leaders are now part of the Committee, represented by a local NGO which coordinates a network of 37 women's organizations to monitor how projects are implemented and the impacts they have at the local level. When peacekeepers, aid agencies or humanitarian workers make special efforts to acknowledge and work with women leaders and to respond to women's needs as a priority, this sends powerful messages to a recovering society about an end to the abuse of women's rights. As one activist said: "We (the women on the ground) need to see women rubbing shoulders amongst the generals and the mediators sent to work with us. It shows that women are valued. If the UN values women, then women will be respected on the ground too." In addition to visible, public engagement with women and women-focused projects, such as visiting women's shelters and acknowledging women leaders, heads of early recovery missions could initiate quick impact initiatives that have a profound symbolic and real effect on strengthening women's rights (providing equipment and seeds for resumption of food cropping, rapid repairs to rural markets, building shelters for survivors of sexual violence, fast-tracking judicial treatment of cases of gender based violence, or building family support or women's response units in police stations for safe reporting of crimes against women).

- ❖ While *gender mainstreaming* is crucial to early recovery and peacebuilding processes, *gender specificity*, indicating women’s priorities, is as important, including the establishment of concrete plans to address women’s priorities and funding for implementation, monitoring and evaluating impact, especially in non-gender stereotyped areas.
- ❖ Early gathering and articulation of women’s recovery priorities and needs, such as access to employment, resources, property and land rights, must be reflected in gender responsive needs assessments. These assessments must be linked to robust costing exercises for concrete activities within each sector and sub-sector of the PCNA. These assessment processes should also be linked to building oversight and monitoring capacity of women’s groups and civil society to rank and cost priorities, to monitor public planning response, resource allocations and actual spending.
- ❖ Quotas for women have been recommended as a strategy by human rights experts and other bodies dealing with gender inequality and discrimination. The use of quotas for women in public office, in electoral processes, in national dialogue processes, in high-level appointments and in entry-level recruitment in all sectors was unanimously recommended by participants in the consultation. Participants also stressed the importance of ensuring that women and gender experts, both national and multinational, are a central part of UN mediation teams, especially those sent to donor roundtables.
- ❖ In sum, gender-specific national capacity deficits relate to two inter-related problems: a lack of women in decision-making roles representing women’s interests, and inadequate assessment, comprehension, and acceptance of the severity and importance of women’s early recovery needs and contributions.

## **2. Financing for Women’s Early Recovery and Peacebuilding Needs**

*“Gender inequality has been written into a society well before the conflict started. We need to empower those who can transform society.” – Winnie Byanyima*

- ❖ More accurate tracking of gender-specific expenditures can be facilitated by use of a *gender marker* as it is being used by OECD and UNDP to help measure the extent to which sectors and subsectors address gender issues or identify gender funding.
- ❖ Gender analysis across all sectors, including economic recovery, agriculture, industry/employment, governance, security and the rule of law, must be strengthened in post-conflict needs assessments. The lack of sex-disaggregated data must be addressed and not used as an excuse for failure to specify concrete actions for the benefit of women and girls.
- ❖ ‘Ring-fenced’ funding for women’s early recovery is vital in order to increase women’s empowerment and to correct historical gender imbalances, as well as the deficit in funding for women and girl’s needs, or for capacity-building for women’s organizations. Ring-fencing must occur overall *and* within specific areas in which it is difficult to generate funding such as support for survivors of sexual violence, fast-tracking professional upgrades for women, rural road networks to access markets and pre-natal health care needs.
- ❖ If assessments are done properly, earmarking for women’s needs is simply responding to a good, comprehensive assessment. Earmarking is a minimum requirement that helps to facilitate Member States and donors’ work in fulfilling commitments.
- ❖ Quick release of funding for women’s needs and priorities in the peace negotiation phase and early recovery is necessary. A quick fund allocated to peacekeeping/peacebuilding missions should be used, inter alia, to help enable local women’s groups and representative structures to organize. Quick, accessible, locally managed resource allocation (instead of funds funneled through larger international organizations) for local women’s organizations, networks, media and academics would also contribute to women having a voice locally at the time of peace negotiations and early recovery.

- ❖ Liberalization efforts can move faster than democratization and the restructuring of the economy can be well entrenched before women gain access to the market, rights to land and property, etc. This risks further marginalizing women if the new economy kicks in before women are able to claim a place. There is a need to bring main players such as UN, IMF and WB together to discuss women's rights across the board.

## **Working Group Recommendations for the Report of the Secretary-General**

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- ❖ **Gender Marker:** A more accurate tracking of the post-conflict gender spend can be facilitated with the use of a gender marker to measure the degree to which activities under various sectors support gender equality objectives. The existence and requirement to use the marker can have the positive effect of raising planners' awareness of the issues and of the need to bear in mind gender-specific needs in particular sectors.
- ❖ **Mainstreaming Gender into Assessments:** Gender analysis in needs assessments must be strengthened across all sectors, including economic recovery, agriculture, industry/employment, governance, security and the rule of law. Post-conflict needs assessments should be strengthened from a gender perspective (including sex and age disaggregated data) and strongly linked to financial allocations. Thus, in conflicts where assessments show that women have been seriously affected, for instance by sexual violence, displacement, loss of land and livelihoods, then significant fund allocations must be made. Gender expertise should be integrated into all assessments and every sub-sector should consider gender needs. It should be mandatory to have a senior gender expert working on needs assessments, policy formulation, costing, implementation, etc. PBSO/UNDP/UNIFEM should fund rapid and rigorous follow-up gender assessments in specific sectors as needed and to complement PCNA findings.
- ❖ **Ring-Fencing:** Ring-fencing must occur overall *and* within specific areas harder to fund such as support for survivors of sexual violence, fast-tracking professional upgrades for women, rural road networks to access markets and pre-natal health care needs. Participants recommended that the model of UNDP/BCPR's trust fund, which requires that a minimum of 15% of any country office proposal must be dedicated to realizing gender equality objectives should be reviewed for replication, as it promotes mainstreaming by urging inclusion of specific gender equality considerations in programming across various sectors.
- ❖ **Use of Quotas:** At the national level for women in public office, in electoral processes, in national dialogue processes, in high-level appointments and in entry-level recruitment in all sectors. At the UN level, for women and gender experts, both national and multinational, in UN mediation teams, especially those sent to donor roundtables, and in UN mission operations, positioning them in places that will optimize their presence.
- ❖ **Gender Advisors:** Special Representatives to the Secretary-General (SRSGs) and Resident Coordinators (RCs) need a senior level gender advisor (P-5 minimum) in peacebuilding countries. Ten senior gender advisers are currently being deployed by UNDP/BCPR to crisis countries and this pilot should be followed for potential replication.
- ❖ **Ensuring Women's Access to Existing Funds for Early Recovery & Peacebuilding:** Women must be able to access, input and monitor how funds are being spent and what is being spent on women in early recovery and peacebuilding. Member States and the UN must ensure that women (including women leaders from civil society) and gender experts have an active place within the decision-making structures responsible for the allocation of early recovery and peace-building funds (such as the PBF Joint Steering Committees) and that women representatives receive capacity training to enhance their skills in participating in and monitoring such structures.

- ❖ **Donor Conferences**: Member States are urged to ensure the inclusion of women's ministries and representation and input from civil society, especially women's groups, at donor conferences.
- ❖ **Corporate and individual incentive structures** within the international community for championing women's post-conflict recovery and peacebuilding needs must be strengthened to hold agencies and individuals to account for their performance on this issue.
- ❖ **Consistency of Messages**: Participants urged consistency in reflecting the recommendations of the consultation and other messaging across relevant UN entities and agencies currently working on the preparation of other SG reports (e.g. the DPA-led Report on Mediation and its Support Activities, the DPKO-led Report on SCR 1820, & the OSAGI-led Report on SCR 1325).

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<sup>i</sup> UN Relief Web, CAPS Database, accessed December 2008