UN WOMEN

WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT IN PEACE, SECURITY AND RECOVERY

Photo © Catianne Tijerina.

The issue

Capacities of countries to prevent violence, sustain peace and protect populations hinges on women's participation.

Current peace and security threats are more complex and pressing than ever before in the UN's history. The number of people in need of international assistance has tripled over the past decade, and 80 per cent of these are affected by armed conflict. Traditional conflicts are aggravated by new threats including climate shocks, global health pandemics, and a rising wave of violent extremist groups directly targeting women's rights.

There now exists an unquestionable evidence base that women's participation in peace and security processes is core to their operational effectiveness; strengthening the protection efforts of peacekeepers, improving prevention of radicalization, and accelerating economic recovery. Women's meaningful participation also helps the conclusion and implementation of more sustainable peace agreements.

Yet, fifteen years on, more than half of peace agreements continue to make no mention of women, UN peacekeepers remain 97 per cent male and data gathered by OECD-DAC finds that only 2 per cent of aid to peace and security targets gender equality as a principal objective.

The contribution of women and girls to peacebuilding continues to go undervalued and under-resourced, leaving untapped an incredible tool for transformative change and sustainable peace.

Our strategy for change

Women's engagement in Peace, Security and Recovery is one of UN Women's Flagship Programming Initiatives (FPIs).

Enhancing women's engagement for sustainable peace requires an integrated approach that simultaneously addresses conflict prevention, resolution and recovery, while strengthening national accountability and ensuring women's protection from all forms of human rights violations, including sexual and genderbased violence. UN Women has therefore identified the following five priority outcome areas to achieve transformative change:

1. Create an enabling environment for the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) commitments.

UN WOMEN'S FLAGSHIP PROGRAMME INITIATIVES
Women's Engagement in Peace, Security and Recovery is one of UN Women's Flagship Programming Initiatives designed to ensure that UN Women can deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This Programme will mainly focus on achieving Goals 5 and 16.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS PROGRAMME, CONTACT: Nahla Valji Deputy Chief, Peace and Security nahla.valji@unwomen.org

This includes support to civil society's advocacy work as well as enhanced capacities of Member States and the UN system to adopt, monitor and finance quality National Action Plans on Security Council Resolution 1325 that address emerging threats, including violent extremism.

2. Ensure women's participation in decision-making processes and responses related to conflict prevention. This means that favorable attitudes of all stakeholders towards women's conflict prevention need to be promoted and that women must participate in effective early-warning mechanisms (including for violent extremism) that are connected to national and international reporting and response systems.

3. Increase women's meaningful participation in formal and informal peace negotiations by raising awareness of mediators and parties to the conflict, making gender expertise available during negotiations as well as strengthening women's capacities and influence to engage in processes.

4. Protect women and girls' human rights, safety, physical and mental health and security through establishing operational mechanisms to prevent sexual and gender-based violence, ensuring women and girls' access to quality comprehensive support services and ending impunity by holding international, national and non-state actors accountable.

5. Promote the socio-economic recovery and political participation of women and girls in post-conflict situations through women's participation in peace-building and recovery planning, women's economic empowerment within recovery efforts, as well as promoting gender-responsive post-conflict institutions.

How the Programme works

The programme will be implemented through three parallel tracks:

• **The existing WPS Global Facility "From Resolutions to Accountability"** will be used to support the policy elements of the FPI, provide technical expertise, rapid deployment of capacity, seed funding, knowledge and research generation.

• **Regional/multi-country projects** will address the issue of engaging women in peace, security and recovery, including through support to relevant regional organizations.

• **Country projects** will be the focus of this Programme and will ensure comprehensive, multi-partner, coordinated WPS responses in line with the overall Theory of Change.

FACTS AND FIGURES - WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

• Women's participation increases the probability of a peace agreement lasting at least two years by 20%, and by 35% the probability of a peace agreement lasting 15 yearsAs of 2013, fewer than 3% of signatories of peace agreements were women.

• Only 3% of peacekeepers and 10% of UN Police are women.

• Analysis of 40 peace processes shows that when women were able to exercise a strong influence on the negotiation process, there was a much higher chance that an agreement would be reached than when women's groups exercised weak or no influence.

• Conflict-affected communities that experience the most rapid economic recovery and poverty reduction are those that had more women reporting higher levels of empowerment.

Source: Global Study on the Implementation of UNSR 1325, October 2015

The Global Policy Project will support global, regional/multi-country and country projects by developing programme design templates including gender assessment and analysis tools, and producing resource kits on several thematic areas. Synergies will be created with the Multi-Partner Trust fund "Global Acceleration Instrument on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action" to support regional and country level initiatives with a particular focus on women's organizations. Lessons learnt from existing programmes will be shared through convening communities of practice.

Partnerships for change

UN Women, as the coordinating entity on women, peace and security in the UN system, has strong existing partnerships with relevant entities.

Existing relationships with intergovernmental actors include *inter alia* DPA, DPKO, OHCHR, UNDP, the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council as well as regional organizations. Current relationships with key state institutions will continue to be strengthened and strategic partnerships with civil society organizations at the international, national and community levels will be reinforced.

COVER PHOTO: *The Bangui National Forum in 2015 concluded with the adoption of a national plan for reconciliation.*

Updated April 2016