

Gender, Peace and Security Programme

Operational Framework

The UN INSTRAW Gender, Peace and Security programme is one of the three thematic areas within the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW). Following UN-INSTRAW's institutional objectives, the programme promotes applied research, facilitates information sharing and networking, and supports capacity building in order to promote an inclusive peace and human security for women and men, girls and boys, around the world.

1. Conceptual framework

Gender relations and roles affect the way in which men and women, boys and girls experience violence, behave in situations of peace and conflict and deal with insecurities. Women and men experience armed conflict differently and have different vulnerabilities, security needs and coping mechanisms. Furthermore, armed conflict and transitions to peace transform gender roles and relations as both women and men often take up roles during conflict that they might not do in peace time.

Violence against women in all societies remains one of the largest global threats to human security. Security sector institutions and personnel do not only often fail to protect, but are themselves often a direct threat to security. Addressing gender issues does not mean simply focusing on women. It requires us to examine socially constructed gender roles, norms and power relations. Dominant conceptions of masculinity grant men positions of power in society, yet make them vulnerable to many kinds of violence in the public sphere. Conventional conceptions of femininity, on the other hand, not only make women vulnerable to abuse especially within the private sphere, but also often limit their agency and access to justice. A gendered understanding of violence and security should not simply highlight women's victimization: women are also agents in conflict and peace, both as perpetrators of violence and as peace-makers, and both men and women are victims of gender-based violence.

Gender-based violence, however, rarely stops when peace agreements are signed. In fact, gender-aware approaches to conflict and security show that peace is often an arbitrary concept: the absence of armed conflict does not necessarily mean the end of violence, particularly against women, men (e.g. those marginalised by their ethnicity, race or sexual identity), girls and boys. Recognising that the absence of

armed conflict neither guarantees a safe environment, nor full enjoyment of human rights and physical safety, we use the concept of inclusive peace to refer to a situation where human security and freedom from fear for all men, boys, women and girls have been achieved.

2. Aims and objectives

The goal of the UN-INSTRAW Gender, Peace and Security programme is to promote an inclusive peace and human security for women and men, girls and boys, around the world.

Its specific objectives are three-fold:

- To promote the implementation of the Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.
- To promote the inclusion of a gender perspective in all spheres of security sector reform (SSR) processes.
- To promote more effective gender training for security sector personnel.

3. Thematic areas of work

The GPS programme works to reach its objectives by working in three thematic areas and three strategic areas. Our thematic areas are as follows:

3.1 Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UN SCR 1325) is one of the most important international mandates in the realm of issues regarding gender, peace and security. It calls for the full and equal participation of women in all peace and security initiatives, along with the mainstreaming of gender issues in the context of armed conflict, peacekeeping and reconstruction.

Since the UN SCR 1325 was passed in 2000, there has been only limited progress in its implementation, with varying results. The Gender, Peace and Security programme endorses the key recommendations of the Resolution 1325 and works to promote its implementation within the UN system, by national governments and by non-state entities. This work includes support for the development of national action plans on the implementation of the resolution, as well as research into different aspects of the resolution, such as mainstreaming of gender perspectives into peacekeeping operations. In 2006, the programme published a guide for policy-makers to formulating national action plans for the implementation of SCR 1325, which has been used extensively in advocacy efforts. Moreover, the Gender, Peace and Security programme is a member of the United Nations Taskforce on Women Peace and Security in order to support a system wide implementation of UN SCR 1325. The programme will continue to work on analysing the opportunities and challenges in the implementation of UN SCR 1325 in both developed and developing countries and engaging policy makers to support its full implementation in the future.

3.2 To promote the inclusion of a gender perspective in all spheres of security sector reform (SSR) processes.

Security sector reform (SSR) is increasingly recognised as a crucial part of development, peace building and democratisation. The core security sector includes all the organisations that have the authority to use, or order the use of, force, or the threat of force, to protect individuals, groups and the state. The security sector does however also include other organisations and actors that have the responsibility to monitor the core security sector institutions, such as statutory oversight bodies, judicial institutions and civil society organisations. Security sector reform initiatives aim to build more effective, legitimate and democratically accountable institutions.

There is a strong recognition by security sector reform practitioners and donors that gender should be mainstreamed in SSR, but there is often a lack of political will, clear policy articulation, legislative frameworks and practical implementation instruments. As a result, many SSR initiatives fail to take into consideration the need to ensure women's participation in decision-making processes and to mainstream gender issues. The UN-INSTRAW Gender, Peace and Security programme works in the field of security sector reform to ensure that gender perspectives are analysed, addressed and mainstreamed into all SSR initiatives to ensure the right to security for women, men, girls and boys. The work of the programme has focused on developing practical tools for the integration of gender issues in security sector reform, and it will publish a joint toolkit on the topic in the autumn of 2007. In the future, we plan to extend our research into private security companies and to analyse potential legal frameworks and mechanisms to promote gender mainstreaming within them.

3.3 Gender training of security sector personnel

Gender training is meant to sensitize and raise awareness among security sector personnel and to improve their ability to respond to gender-specific security needs. In order to build effective, non-discriminatory and representative security sector institutions, it is essential to provide security sector personnel with gender training. It may help prevent sexual harassment and gender-based violence perpetrated by security forces, as well as create a respectful and healthy work environment for male and female staff. A number of international documents, such as the UN SCR 1325 and the Windhoek Declaration, call for gender training of security personnel. Till date, however, there has been lack of political will and human and financial resources to implement gender training initiatives systematically. In cases where gender training has been implemented, experiences have rarely been documented, assessed or evaluated.

The UN-INSTRAW Gender, Peace and Security programme works to document experiences and best practices, to build communities of knowledge among gender training practitioners and to formulate guidelines and recommendation for the promotion of systematic and effective gender training within the security sector. The programme has published a tool on gender training in the security sector and a website on gender training opportunities for peacekeepers in autumn 2007. In the future, it aims to develop and implement methodologies for the monitoring and evaluation of gender training initiatives within the security sector and implement UN-INSTRAW's own training-of-trainers programme for military and police in member states

4. Strategic areas of work

The work of the UN-INSTRAW Gender, Peace and Security programme in all three thematic areas is informed by two core values:

- All work should be *integrative*, in the sense that it considers both men and women, and girls and boys, and thus focuses on gender structures and relations, rather than 'women's issues' in isolation;
- All work should be *participatory* and involve consultations with a number of stakeholders, such as other UN entities, governments, academic institutions and civil society organizations.

The UN-INSTRAW Gender, Peace and Security programme works within three strategic areas to increase knowledge, to raise capacity and to advocate for more gender-responsive policies.

4.1 Action-oriented research

The UN-INSTRAW Gender, Peace and Security programme engages in applied practice-oriented research that aims to inform policy-makers and advocate for more gender-responsive policies. The programme aims to develop new methodologies, conceptual frameworks, case studies and other research tools for this purpose. In order to ensure the greatest possible impact, opportunities to promote and support gender-responsive policies are taken into account early in the development of research agendas so that research findings can be relevant to decision-makers and other stakeholders. In its future work, the UN INSTRAW Gender, Peace and Security programme aims to strengthen links with academia and other research institutions and to continue bringing together experiences from practitioners as well as those with a background in research. A broad range of civil society actors should moreover be included at all stages of research in order to increase the demand for the final outputs.

4.2 Knowledge management

The UN-INSTRAW Gender, Peace and Security programme makes great use of information and communications technologies to create global networks of academics and practitioners working in the field of gender, peace and security. The aim is to create 'knowledge communities' or 'communities of practice' in order to foster the exchange of experiences and knowledge and to support decision-making and policy actions in the field of gender, peace and security.

Since late 2004, the programme has implemented four virtual discussions on integrating gender issues into different aspects of security sector reform, initiated and moderated the Gender and Security Sector Reform Network – which brings together almost 200 individuals and representatives of organizations, to exchange information and ideas on integrating gender into security sector reform processes. The programme also hosts a Global Directory of Gender, Peace and Security Research Institutions, which lists those governmental and non-governmental research institutions that are working on gender, peace and security issues.

4.3 Capacity building

The UN INSTRAW Gender, Peace and Security programme builds capacity among practitioners and advocates working for more gender-responsive practices and policies within the security sector by facilitating networking and the exchange of experiences and ideas through virtual networks and discussions. These exchanges are not only important for our research and knowledge management work, but they also allow practitioners to reflect on their own experiences and to learn from others.

We also work for better capacity building and training within the security sector through our applied research on best practices in gender training for security sector personnel. This research allows us to collect good practices and examples of lessons learned from the field and make recommendations for more effective training practices. One of our priority areas of future action is the development of training materials and the implementation of a training-of-trainers programme for police and military in member states. Finally, the UN-INSTRAW Gender, Peace and Security programme aims to further its collaboration with other UN agencies (such as already established with UNDP BCPR, UNIFEM, UN DPKO), international, national and local academic institutions, training centers and women's organisations around the world to increase the capacity of such actors.