

Briefing paper: Financing and resource allocation for resolutions on women, peace and security¹

Lessons from the Gender Action for Peace and Security Network (GAPS) UK, October 2013

Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS) is a UK-based expert network of peacebuilding, human rights, humanitarian and development NGOs, academics and grassroots peacebuilders. Through research, campaigning and advocacy, we work to bridge the gap between the realities of women in conflict-affected countries and UK decision makers and practitioners working on peace and security. GAPS members include: Action Aid, Amnesty International UK, CARE International, International Alert, International Rescue Committee, Northern Ireland Women's European Platform, Oxfam GB, Saferworld, Soroptimist International, United Nations Association – UK, UN Women UK, Widows for Peace through Democracy, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), Womankind Worldwide, Women for Women International, and independent consultants.

This paper pulls together the experiences, lessons and recommendations from the GAPS secretariat and members. It takes as a starting point the UK context, and uses examples from our partners and country offices. It makes recommendations for the financing and resourcing of women, peace and security activity at regional and national levels to national governments, multi-lateral agencies and civil society.

Background: the UK context

The UK was amongst the first countries in the world to produce a National Action Plan (NAP) on women, peace and security in 2006. In November 2010, the renewed and much strengthened 'UK National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 Women Peace and Security' (UK NAP) was launched, providing a framework to ensure that UNSCR 1325 is incorporated into the UK government's defence, diplomatic and development policy and activity, with the Department for International Development (DFID), the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and Ministry of Defence (MOD) holding joint responsibility for its development and implementation. It has bilateral sections, with specific commitments in Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo and Nepal. A section on the Middle East and North Africa was added to the February 2012 NAP revision in response to recent revolutions and uprisings.

The UK government is currently evaluating its NAP, and developing a new one to be operational 2014-17. GAPS is sharing our combined experiences and recommendations with the UK government to support the strongest possible consultation, development and implementation of the UK NAP.

The funding picture

The UK NAP states that "there are a number of avenues for funding for WPS projects and expenditure is drawn from a variety of budgets across the three government departments, including the Conflict Pool, FCO Human Rights and Democracy Fund, DFID programme funding and Arab Partnership funding." Whilst this commitment to funding WPS work is welcome, UK civil society continues to advocate for a specific budget to be attached to the NAP.

Evidence from civil society organisations in conflict-affected countries, and in particular women's rights organisations, suggest that funding for women, peace and security work remains piecemeal, project-tied and difficult to access. Funding tends to be short term in nature and restricted to specific project areas, such as livelihood training or counselling. In addition, the funding received is generally not provided through a full-cost recovery model, meaning that core organisational costs are not provided for, and organisations struggle to set their own agendas, often influenced by the funding preferences of donors. The increasing focus on 'value for money' has also resulted in less support for longer term outcomes, including

¹ Written by Lee Webster, Head of Policy and Influencing at Womankind Worldwide, and Chair of the GAPS Management Committee, on behalf of the GAPS Network. This paper is a collection of views and does not necessarily represent the views of every GAPS member or partner.

organisational capacity-building, often becoming the first component to be cut in budget negotiations between NGOs and donors.

“A barrier to our work is constraints in terms of funding. FEDO can only provide services and advocacy at a certain level, which is dependent upon the amount of funding received by donors. [This] restricts what FEDO can provide to the female Dalit community in terms of women, peace and security work.” Durga Sob, President, Feminist Dalit Organisation, Nepal.

“Inadequate funding is one of the major barriers for our organization in delivery of women, peace and security work. Also, the UN agencies in country focus on high profile organizations who cannot reach a high percentage of grassroots’ communities – this poses a barrier to smaller organizations who are in direct contact with communities.” Estella Nelson, Liberia Women’s Media Action Committee (LIWOMAC)

“There is money available [for Libyan CSOs] but it can take a lot of time and effort to access. A select few groups/individuals in Libya did manage to successfully access funding but it then became the ‘usual suspects’ as it was easy for donors to keep giving to them and remained hard for newer groups to get funds. There is a massive need to support women (and men) human rights defenders, professionals and civil servants (across the country and socio-economic levels) to build peace and contribute to the constitutional drafting processes... with money and other resources to facilitate Libyan solutions to Libyan challenges.” Layla El-Wafi, Women for Libya.

“It is essential to have a speedy and easily accessible fund with minimum hassle to access, especially for new conflicts or the early stages of a conflict. We saw in Libya that although the promises were made, there was little free money, readily available to human rights defenders and women’s organisations that were valiantly playing their part on the ground. There needs to be greater risk taking with funds at early stages of conflict - and that donors can mitigate that risk by co-ordinating their funding better and fund directly as well as bi-laterally” Inge Relph, founder member, GAPS

The added value of civil society and women’s rights organisations in building peace has been widely recognised², yet they do not receive a level of donor support commensurate with the substantial contribution they are able to make implementing UNSCR1325. For example, OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) data shows that just 1.3% of all DAC screened funds dedicated to gender equality in the 2010 budget went to women’s rights organizations and women’s ministries³.

Recommendations

- All National Action Plans should have attached to them clear budgets, and funding streams that provide core funds for the implementation of women, peace and security activity.
- Funds that are flexible and quick to access for civil society organisations should be optimised to ensure that civil society organisations contributing to WPS and peacebuilding are resourced.
- International NGOs and donors need to ensure they partner with local, grassroots civil society organisations, including emerging organisations.

² See a) Comic Relief, *What added value do organizations that are led and managed by women and girls bring to the work addressing the rights, needs and priorities of women and girls*, 2012 b) CARE International *From Resolution to Reality*, 2010 c) Womankind Worldwide, *Leaders for Change: why support women’s rights organisations?*, 2013

³ Tolmay, S. 2012. *Financing ForGender Equality: Rhetoric Versus Real Financial Support*, Association for Women’s Rights in Development (AWID)

The Secretary General's commitment – a global campaign for 15%?

“While spending on gender equality and women’s empowerment in peacebuilding has increased, it rarely reaches the 15 per cent minimum set by the Secretary-General’s Seven-Point Action Plan on Gender-Responsive Peacebuilding” - Phumzile Mlambo-Nguka, director of UN Women, at adoption of UNSCR 2122, October 2013.

The UN Secretary General’s 7 Point Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2010)⁴ includes “a goal of ensuring that at least 15 percent of UN-managed funds in support of peacebuilding is dedicated to projects whose principal objective is to address women’s specific needs, advance gender equality or empower women”. This noble ambition is important, and Womankind Worldwide has been campaigning in the UK for a similar commitment from the UK government. We believe that there is a good opportunity for a joined up global civil society campaign calling for 15% of donor peacebuilding funds to be directed specifically towards women, peace and security, including resourcing for women’s rights organisations.

Recommendations

- In line with the UN target, a minimum of 15% of all funds (multilateral and bilateral) in support of peacebuilding should be dedicated to activities whose principal objective is to address women’s specific needs, advance gender equality or empower women – including resourcing to women’s rights organisations and women human rights defenders.
- Civil society at global and national levels should campaign together for the global implementation of the 15% commitment.

Mainstreaming women, peace and security into other funding streams and practices

Whilst specific, ring-fenced funding for women, peace and security is optimum, it is also important that other funding streams incorporate a WPS and/or gender perspective. In the UK in the current NAP period (2010-2013), funding streams and programmes have not fully taken account of the NAP and the principles in it. Dedicated staff to lead work on the National Action Plan are few, and awareness of the NAP amongst staff in the three departments, and in country missions, remains low. A number of new innovative funding and policy frameworks are being developed to address governance and stability issues in conflict-affected countries which could offer exciting opportunities to address WPS-related priorities, but at present it is not clear if and how the connections between the NAP and WPS-related project funding would relate to those. Whilst the UK government has taken a welcome global leadership role on women, peace and security, there is scope for greater mainstreaming of their WPS commitments into funding, programmes and workplans of key staff.

Recommendations

- Donor governments should ensure that there is a dedicated gender lead on all funding boards, and that all development and peacebuilding projects and programmes under go a “NAP check” to ensure they incorporate the principles and commitments of 1325 and related resolutions.
- Dedicated staff to lead on WPS should be appointed in all relevant departments, and include a remit to build the knowledge and capacity of colleagues.
- Specific training on WPS is rolled out to all civil service staff in donor countries whose portfolio covers working on or in fragile and conflict affected states.

For further information about the contents of this report, Hannah Bond (Director of GAPS) on hannah.bond@gaps-uk.org or Lee Webster (Head of Policy and Influencing at Womankind Worldwide) on lee@womankind.org.uk.

⁴ http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/pbso/pdf/seven_point_action_plan.pdf