

Womens rights for peace and security in post conflict democracies Africa

Within the framework of UNESCO's actions in favor of women living in post conflict situations, and building on its central objective of promoting research that supports evidence-based decision-making, the Social and Human Sciences Sector in collaboration with partners from the University of Hull, U.K. and the Center for Human Rights, University of Pretoria, South Africa, is undertaking a program of research on women's rights for peace and security in post conflict democracies in Africa.

The aim of this program of research is to develop policy recommendations on women's rights that would promote women's full participation in and contribution to peace and security in post conflict countries in Africa, as is called for in international and regional documents such as the United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1325, the Dar-es-Salaam Declaration on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women, the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Terms of reference:

Researchers specializing in women and gender issues would be contracted by UNESCO to prepare papers on the relationship between women's human rights and issues such as peace and security, and violence against women, presenting recommendations for the way forward addressed to policy- and decision-makers.

Draft research papers will be presented and discussed at a UNESCO-organized meeting to be held at the University of Pretoria during the third quarter of 2007, and final papers may be considered for publication online, in book format or in a journal by UNESCO in 2008; and may be used in elaborating UNESCO's Social and Human Science activities in post conflict areas in Africa.

In order to ensure timely circulation to all participants, first drafts of the research papers which will be discussed at the Pretoria meeting must be submitted to UNESCO no later than 1 July 2007. Final research papers, incorporating recommendations and suggestions provided at the Pretoria meeting and by program organizers must be submitted by 15 December 2007 latest.

Research papers will be submitted to referees for evaluation. Program organizers/ editors reserve the right to change manuscripts to ensure conformity

with house style, to improve accuracy, to eliminate mistakes and ambiguity, and to respect political considerations.

Prior to signing this contract, researchers will be required to submit an abstract of approximately 500-700 words on their chosen question, and will be paid USD \$800 upon submission of an acceptable first research draft (1 July 2007), and USD \$1,200 upon presentation of acceptable research papers no later than 15 December 2007.

UNESCO, in accordance with its standard operating procedures, will provide a round trip economy-priced ticket and daily subsistence allowance for researchers to attend the Pretoria meeting. The primary objectives of this meeting would be to present and discuss draft research papers, and to obtain feedback and recommendations for improving draft papers.

Other standard terms and procedures may apply.

Research papers must comply with the following requirements:

- Work must be original and should not have been published, or submitted elsewhere for publication.
- Research papers should average between 7,000 and 10,000 words and may be submitted preferably in English, or in French.
- Research papers should be submitted electronically in MS Word format using Times New Roman 12 point, and with 1½ line spacing.
- Research papers must include an Executive Summary; an Introduction that presents the problem where relevant and the research methods used, and appropriate headings and sub-headings in the main text.
- All papers must end with Conclusion and policy recommendations that point the way forward.
- Research papers must follow standard scholarly procedures for citation of works consulted, and contain a Bibliography or References Cited at the end.
- References should be presented in the order: Author's family name, first name or initials. Publication title (underlined). Place of publication. Name of publisher, and year of publication.
- Authors should provide an abstract (not exceed 500-700 words) of their proposed research paper prior to signing their contract.
- Researchers must provide a brief biography including their academic and professional qualifications, experience in gender and womens rights issues and current professional or academic status prior to signing a contract.

Other general style points to be followed include:

- Proper nouns used in the body of the article as well as acronyms are written out in full the first time they are used, e.g. the United Nations (UN).
- Footnotes must be numbered consecutively. Footnote numbers should be in superscript without any surrounding brackets.
- Words in a foreign language should be italicized.
- Quotations longer than twenty words should be indented and in this case no quotation marks are necessary. Quotations used within the indented quotation should be marked with single quotation marks.
- Dates should be written in the following format: Day/Month/Year, for example, 28 November 2001.
- Numbers up to ten should be written out in full; from 11 use numerals.

Research questions

1. According to the UN Secretary-General's in-depth study on violence against women, progress in the international legal and policy framework has not been accompanied by comparable progress in implementation at the national and local levels. States may not have yet adopted legislation that criminalizes all forms of violence against women and even where they have, existing legislation on violence against women is often inadequate in its scope and coverage, or may contain inappropriate or discriminatory definitions and remedies. Based on an analysis of the legal and policy framework of two or more countries, examine the extent to which existing legislation provides adequate coverage to victims of violence - domestic, rape, harmful traditional practices, "honor", trafficking, early or forced marriage, incest, sexual harassment, etc, - and sanctions perpetrators. What changes can be made to these legislations to bring them in line with the international legal and policy framework and to improve prevention, protection and restitution of rights of victims of violence against women?
2. Calculating the cost of violence is a strategic intervention to make policy makers more aware of the importance and effectiveness of prevention. The direct and non-monetary socio-economic costs caused by violence against women, as well as the economic multiplier effects and social multiplier effects, impose a tremendous burden on national resources and stunt growth in developing countries. Analyze the costs attributed to gender-based violence in the Great Lakes Region¹. What specific

¹ The Great Lakes Region refers to countries that are signatory to the Dar-Es-Salaam Declaration on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes (November 2004), namely Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia

intervention policies and strategies can be adopted at the community, national and sub-regional levels to prevent violence against women and protect the rights of women? What roles can civil society and faith-based bodies play? How can the state machinery including parliamentarians, criminal justice system, education, and social services be sensitized to play a more effective role in preventing violence, protecting women's rights, and in reducing the socio-economic costs? What can international organizations do to assist in preventing violence against women?

3. Statistics show that violence against women is overwhelmingly committed by men and it has been argued by some that men's violence against women is rooted in men's perceived right to patriarchal power, a sense of entitlement to privilege, societal permission embedded in social customs, legal codes and law enforcement practices, a male psychic character structure which promotes emotional distance, pressure exerted by society to prove one's manhood through aggression and violence, and past experiences learnt from growing up in households where fathers perpetuated violence against mothers and daughters. To what extent can men's violence against women be attributed to cultural and social values, norms, and practices? What national and sub-regional policies can be developed with men to have a positive impact on the prevention of violence against women? Are there practices which can help uproot the structural inequalities that exist between women and men and lead to the empowerment of women? What strategies, programs and services can be established to deal with the perpetrators of violence to break the cycle of violence as well as socialization patterns that promote men's aggression and violence?
4. In many countries, including in countries in the Great Lakes region in Africa, gaps have emerged between international and regional human rights laws and conventions regarding women and national legislation. Focusing primarily on issues of family law and women's property rights, examine the problems of incorporating human rights laws and conventions into national legislation. What is the relationship with and impact of statute and customary laws? What recommendations can be provided to parliamentarians and other decision-makers to effectively reduce legislative gaps and promote protection of women's rights?
5. Undertake a comparative analysis of the laws and legislation affecting gender equality in areas such as property ownership, divorce/ family laws, economic and political participation, education. How effective is the impact of existing laws and legislations? What improvements can be made in the local context to promote respect for women's rights in these areas?

6. Discuss the relationship (symmetries and asymmetries) that exists between national legislation governing socio-cultural institutions such as the family, and international human rights laws and conventions. Analyze and illustrate those aspects of culture and the law that impede women's empowerment and gender equality, and those that promote women's rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Present and analyze the different cultural resources available to advocate for or defend women's human rights, equality and empowerment.
7. It has been argued that education as is contributes much more to conflict than it does to peace and stability, as education is said to promote economic and social class division within societies, and social exclusion among already marginalized groups. Globalization and the spread of new liberal market ideologies have served only to increase the competitive ethos of education within schools, within and among countries. The polarization of achievement is directly linked to the breakdown of social cohesion. On another level, gender dimensions and the dominant versions of masculinities are reproduced in schools. While the gender gap in education participation and performance is closing in many parts of the world, it has not historically been the under-achieving women who have been mainly responsible for aggression and violence but men, adopting particular forms of masculinities that are strongly linked to militarization. What are the policy implications of the existing education systems in the national contexts of reconstruction and peace-building? What have been the gendered impacts? What sort of changes should be made to education so that it better contributes to the development of peace and security? What steps can be taken to move peace and conflict prevention to the very top of the education policy agenda and what would be its impact upon women's empowerment?
8. In light of the recommendations contained in UN Security Council Resolution 1325, undertake a comparative analysis of women's involvement in peace-building and reconstruction between "post" conflict, countries in the Great Lakes region and other post conflict countries in sub-Saharan Africa (for example: Rwanda and South Africa; DRC and Sierra Leone; Burundi and Liberia). In the aftermath of conflict has women's agency to end wars and promote peace and reconciliation been translated into women's empowerment and if so how? What has been the impact of this agency on women's involvement in formal decision-making? What lessons can be learnt from the experiences of women in the countries concerned and what steps should be taken to promote women's systematic involvement in peace and security issues in the region?

9. Truth, reconciliation and justice commissions have been established in many countries including in Africa to help discover wrong doing and resolve past conflict. One of the criticisms leveled against such commissions is that they may encourage impunity. Drawing on African experiences, analyze how truth, reconciliation and justice commissions have responded to women's experiences. How adequately have gender-based crimes been treated? What lessons may be learned to improve the sense of justice for women?
10. Undertake an analysis of women's strategic needs in peace-building and reconstruction in post conflict countries in the Great Lakes Region. To what extent are these being recognized and met, if at all? What measures should be undertaken to meet women's strategic needs and positively embed women's involvement in decision-making processes and institutions?
11. UN Security Council Resolution 1325 notes that reintegration of displaced women and girl soldiers is an integral component of sustainable peace in post conflict situations. What, if any, programs have been implemented to reintegrate displaced women and girl soldiers in post conflict countries? How effective have they been? What measures should be taken at the national and regional levels to ensure the success of re-integration programs?
12. It has been argued that if women's social capital - referred to here as the connections that exist among women in their private and public lives and the networks and contacts developed as a result- is properly defined it can help to show how gendered structures of power are reproduced and how they may also be challenged. Social capital may also furnish women with a certain degree of empowerment. What has been the impact of women's social capital in post conflict countries in the Great Lakes? How can this be mobilized to further empower women, to combat violence and promote their roles in formal decision-making, peace building and reconstruction processes?
13. The adoption of national legislation which criminalizes all forms of violence against women and incorporates human rights laws and conventions regarding women is an essential prerequisite for combating violence against women and protecting their rights. However, the effectiveness of such legislation depends upon how it is interpreted by the courts and how it is enforced by the police and other law enforcement agencies. For two or more countries which have introduced such legislation, examine how it has been interpreted and enforced. What are

the strengths and weaknesses of these processes? What factors influence interpretation and enforcement? How can interpretation and enforcement be improved?

14. Violence has frequently been used to deprive women of economic assets, deny them access to land and other property and obstruct their rights of inheritance. Women are particularly vulnerable to violent dispossession in situations of conflict. For two or more countries, examine women's experience of violent dispossession and analyze the factors which underpin it. What measures can be taken to prevent women being violently dispossessed? What protection are women offered by the law and by other agencies and social relations? How far do the processes of peace-building and reconstruction address the issue of violent dispossession? What can be done to strengthen women's rights and help women defend them?