



Operationalizing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda through inclusive participation and expanded engagement

Expert consultation, 13-14 November 2023

Conclusions and recommendations for international development partners

Preamble: *We, the participants of the expert consultation held on 13-14 October 2023 in Almaty, Kazakhstan,*

Expressing serious concern about the further escalation of armed conflicts, wars and militarism, violent extremism and terrorism, the imposition of radical fundamentalist values, the violation of human rights and human security, the departure from previously accepted international commitments to promote gender equality and the eradication of all forms of discrimination and violence,

Consider unacceptable the continued practice of excluding women from decision-making processes that have a direct impact on the quality of life and security, as well as the lack of effective measures taken to ensure the effective participation of women in official peace processes and dialogues to prevent and resolve conflicts at the decision-making level,

and

Recommend that international development partners pay attention to the following priorities in their program and advocacy activities in the Central Asian region:

Priority 1. Rethinking the existing peacebuilding architecture based on new challenges and threats, as well as the role of women in preventing and resolving conflicts in the region

Recommendations:

➤ Contribute to the **localization** of [the UN Secretary General New Peace Agenda](#) and the **inclusion of women peacebuilders in the development of a new peacebuilding architecture in the region.**

➤ Clearly define the **subjects and scope of preventive diplomacy, including people's diplomacy in the region, considering the views of women and youth** (focusing not just on training, but also on the inclusion and the impact of those trained on the processes).

➤ Conduct a **joint and comprehensive analysis of the factors and triggers of conflicts and tensions in the region**, reflecting the impact on human security and with a focus on women and youth.

- Support mediators and external actors facilitating negotiations and peace processes by **providing them with knowledge and skills on the gender dimensions of issues** discussed during negotiations for sustainable peace.
 - Facilitate **feedback from women activists** and responding.
 - Support **an intergenerational approach** to support regional networks. Refrain from creating networks owned by the UN (including the UN Women) without ensuring their sustainability and ownership. *Too many networks created by the UN are unable to continue their activities and connections once support ends.*
 - Create/organize **electronic (virtual) platforms for collecting ideas and requests from women's and youth groups** to fill the content of negotiations with information.
 - Promote **space for dialogue and cooperation for local women in divided communities** to share information about the vulnerability of their communities and provide specific recommendations on how they can work with women "from the opposite side".
 - Promote **open and impartial dialogues and encourage civil sector partnerships with the donor community.**
 - Ensure **fair involvement of the parties and that parties to the conflict are involved in conflict resolution activities.**

Priority 2. Greater efforts to address gaps and barriers to women's participation in peace processes and conflict prevention and resolution

Recommendations:

- Ensure the achievement of a new target - **50% of women's participation at all levels of international peace and security.**
- Support existing and encourage **new initiatives to promote women in peace-building processes.**
- Support the **establishment of women's advisory mechanisms and councils** to advance participation in conflict prevention, resolution and negotiation.



- Involve women's groups and leaders and facilitate their access to participants in formal and informal peace processes.
- **Invest in protection and security programs** for women human rights defenders, peacemakers, mediators and activists.
- **Provide capacity-building support to monitor, document, investigate and report on human rights violations** of women human rights defenders, peacebuilders and activists.
- Support **capacity-building in monitoring, documenting, investigating and reporting on human rights violations** of women human rights defenders, peacebuilders and activists.
- Support efforts to **strengthen the capacity and inclusion** of women human rights defenders, women's CSOs, peacebuilders and activists, including youth activists, in **flexible rapid response programmes**. Capacity development should include coaching and mentoring programs, skills development in negotiation, mediation and conflict resolution, leadership, communication, public speaking and advocacy.
- Promote the development of **skills among women's groups in developing and implementing programmes aimed at strengthening and protecting women human rights defenders**, with the participation and input of women human rights defenders and peacekeepers themselves. Programs should include issues of physical safety and security, digital security, environmental security, economic stability, as well as health and well-being.

Priority 3. Promotion and advocacy for investing in peace and development

Recommendations:

- **Expand funding** at the national, subregional, and regional levels for peacebuilding and the women's agenda, as well as initiatives for women human rights defenders, including on their security issues. Funding and programming should be prompt, flexible, timely, adequate, and long-term (at least for three years) and enable rapid adaptation to new emergencies and constantly changing regional conditions. Basic, bottom-up and long-term funding and support allow women's CSOs to plan their organizational growth and development based on the real needs of the communities they serve and a contextual understanding of the situation on the ground.
- Promote the dissemination of **the world's best practices in participation of women in peacebuilding** with a view to their further application in the Central Asian region.
- **Provide funding for research** on the status of women human rights defenders, women's right activists, women peacebuilders, mediators, and dialogue coordinators.
- Contribute to the **development of National Action Plans or programs to engage youth in the agenda of peace and security (YPS)** and strengthen the capacity of youth in the region.
- Prioritize **strengthening preventive actions** to avoid new and mitigate existing conflicts.
- Consider measures to **expand and involve various players** (business structures, private sector), including for the use of digital space and technologies for peacebuilding and ensuring inclusive and equal participation of women and youth in conflict prevention and resolution processes.
- Enhance the capacity of various key partners involved in the peacebuilding process in gender-sensitive risk analysis.

Priority 4. Responding to stability and security challenges related to the crisis in Afghanistan

Recommendations:

- **Support Afghan women** in Central Asian countries by including them in various processes and platforms of a regional nature in their respective host countries.
- Facilitate the exchange of information between countries on what governments and international organizations are doing to support women in Afghanistan.
- Promote the **creation of a new "human rights + security" narrative** to protect women and human rights in Afghanistan.
- Participate in the discussion of lessons learned from what is happening in Afghanistan regarding the violation of women's rights, the rise of extremism and fundamentalism to avoid spillover to Central Asia and surrounding countries.
- Support the **socio-economic initiatives of Afghan women** in Central Asian countries, as well as joint initiatives with women in the region.
- **Involve Afghan women** as equal participants in dialogues and processes regarding the future of Afghanistan.

Priority 5. Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) as a future model and example of equal participation and representation of women and men and intergenerational ties

Recommendations:

- Consider conducting a **gender audit** based on existing practices of gender audit of diplomatic bodies to identify barriers and gaps in relation to equal opportunities and access to participation and decision-making.
- Set a **goal of 50/50 representation at the decision-making level** in the organization itself.
- In the context of strengthening inclusive participation, encourage the participation of national experts and specialists, considering intergenerational continuity.
- **Include mechanisms of people's diplomacy** as part of preventive diplomacy.
- Promote a better understanding of how preventive diplomacy contributes to conflict prevention and resolution, as well as the results achieved with a view to future partnership and engaging the potential of women's civil society in the region.
- **Include into the Center's work plan measures to help achieve the global goal** set by the UN Secretary General - *to allocate 15 percent of funds for mediation support of women's participation*. Besides, to help achieve the goal set by the UN Secretary General - *to mobilize 300 million dollars for women's organizations in crisis and post-crisis situations over the next three years*.
- **Conduct at least one WPS field mission per year and an annual multi-stakeholder meeting on women's participation in peace and security issues in the region.**