

## MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** U.S. governmental agencies involved in drafting the U.S National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security

**FROM:** U.S. Civil Society Working Group on Women, Peace and Security

**RE:** Guidance for the U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security

**DATE:** February 15, 2011

We, the undersigned organizations dedicated to advancing the rights, security and participation of women in the prevention of and response to conflict, welcome the Obama Administration's commitment to developing a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. We believe that concrete actions undertaken by the U.S. under the Women, Peace and Security umbrella will make the world a more secure and prosperous place, and will advance an American foreign policy that is at once more effective and efficient at preventing conflict and promoting peace, development and security.

As experts working with women and other groups affected by conflict around the world, we are committed to helping the U.S. Government craft an unparalleled national action plan. To that end, we have organized ourselves into a working group that stands ready to consult, advise and inform as appropriate. We are also ready to support and facilitate efforts by the U.S. Government to seek the essential input of civil society in countries affected by conflict on the U.S. National Action Plan.

We appreciate our meetings with several U.S. governmental offices and agencies, and in response to their prompting, we offer this memo as a beginning to further discussions. It outlines four benchmarks against which actions can be evaluated. These benchmarks are a tool to ensure that the U.S. National Action Plan contains concrete commitments, rather than intangible aspirations.

The recommended benchmarks are as follows:

- **Gender Analysis:** The action is designed with adequate analysis so as to inform the intervention and measure its impact on both men and women. In this regard an interagency commitment to sex-disaggregated data is critical.
- **Inclusion:** The action is developed and executed in consultation with relevant stakeholders, especially women who are active in their communities and women affected by the conflict.
- **Resources:** The action has a budget with an up-front estimate of how much the action will cost and whether it will draw upon new or existing resources; the proposed action indicates whether it is a new activity or continues an existing practice.
- **Accountability:** The action is tied to clearly-assigned individuals, offices and/or agencies responsible for leading in its implementation, and appropriate deadlines are stipulated for when said action will be executed, monitored and evaluated.

Together, these four benchmarks provide a solid framework around which the effectiveness of a national action plan can be assessed. In Annex I (attached), we offer some concrete suggestions of how to think about the benchmarks within the context of specific actions. In Annex II (attached), we suggest thematic recommendations as to the substantive content of the U.S. National Action Plan.

We welcome the U.S. government's effort to codify its commitment to Women, Peace and Security through the penning of a national action plan. We encourage this memo to be disseminated widely among U.S. governmental agencies who will be involved in the process and implementation of the U.S. National Action Plan. We look forward to continued collaboration in this process, and providing input to a draft in coming weeks.

U.S. Civil Society Working Group on Women, Peace and Security

CARE USA  
Catholic Relief Services  
Church World Service  
Global Gender Initiative, Elliott School of International Affairs, The George Washington University  
Institute for Inclusive Security  
International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)  
International Rescue Committee (IRC)  
Peace X Peace  
Refugees International  
United Nations Association National Capital Area (UNA-NCA)  
Women for Women International  
Women In International Security (WIIS), Georgetown University  
Women's Refugee Commission

Please direct any responses to this memo to the working group's convener:  
Kathleen Kuehnast, Director--Gender and Peacebuilding Center, U.S. Institute of Peace, at  
[kkuehnast@usip.org](mailto:kkuehnast@usip.org)

***“Women should have access to the same opportunities and be able to make the same choices as men. Experience shows that countries are more peaceful and prosperous when women are accorded full and equal rights and opportunity. When those rights and opportunities are denied, countries often lag behind.”*** US National Security Strategy, 2010, p. 38

***“Women are usually the ones left behind, so the QDDR's emphasis on ensuring that both women and men's unique circumstances are considered in the breadth of all U.S. foreign policy and aid is a landmark change.”*** Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, 2010

**ANNEX I**

*Example 1*

An action under the pillar of “protection” may relate to the training of U.S. forces prior to deployment to conflict areas.

Application of benchmarks to assess the effectiveness of this action:

<b>Gender Analysis</b>	Will a preliminary assessment of the differential security and protection needs of women and men be undertaken to inform the training?
	Will the proposed training benefit both men and women?
	Will sex-disaggregated data be collected so as to measure the impact of the training on the forces and the community?
<b>Inclusion</b>	Does the action define how to ensure affected and active women in the communities in question have been consulted to inform the training?
<b>Resources</b>	How much will this cost?
	Are resources available to conduct the training?
	Are these new or existing resources?
	If new resources are required, what is the plan to secure adequate funding?
<b>Accountability</b>	Which office is responsible for executing the training?
	What individual within this office is responsible?
	How is implementation measured, monitored, and evaluated?
	Will the person responsible be held accountable for implementation of the action in her or his performance evaluation?

*Example 2*

An action under the pillar of “participation” might relate to the inclusion of women on all negotiating teams, inclusive of teams assembled by the U.S. and those assembled in countries affected by conflict.

Application of benchmarks to assess the effectiveness of this action:

<b>Gender Analysis</b>	Will an analysis be conducted to determine how women and men are affected by events and who (men or women) has influence and will be constructive contributors for a positive outcome for peace?
	What has been the impact of the inclusion of women on the content of the negotiating agenda?
<b>Inclusion</b>	What targets have been established to ensure adequate representation of women peacemakers as parties to the negotiations and in the existing negotiating teams?
	Does the action specifically stipulate that women who are active in this community and affected by this conflict are included?

	Have suggestions been included for how to incentivize women's inclusion on negotiating teams?
<b>Resources</b>	How much will this cost?
	Are there any funds set aside to ensure women peacemakers have equal access to the negotiations?
	Are these new or existing resources?
	In the case of the former, what is the plan to secure adequate funding?
<b>Accountability</b>	What office or individual is responsible for meeting this goal?
	Is the inclusion of women part of the mandate of the office or individual responsible for structuring the negotiations?
	How will this office or individual be held accountable?

## **ANNEX II**

The U.S. Civil Society Working Group on Women, Peace and Security proposes that the following areas of focus be addressed in the U.S. National Action Plan.

### **PARTICIPATION**

#### Diplomacy

- Women's inclusion on US mediation and negotiation teams.
- Training on the value of women's participation for Foreign Service Officers, USAID mission directors, and US ambassadors.
- Women's participation in US-funded training programs for foreign police, judicial, and military personnel, as well as exchange programs, seminars and conferences.
- Systematic consultations with women's groups for all U.S.-mediated or U.S.-supported peace processes, including direct assistance to civil society organizations working on women, peace and security in fragile states.
- Financial support for the participation of women in peace negotiations, donor conferences, and other related decision-making fora.

#### Humanitarian, post-conflict reconstruction and economic growth programming

- Gender analysis required as a component of all proposal solicitations issued by US Government agencies.
- Consultation with women in the design and implementation of humanitarian and post-conflict reconstruction and economic growth programs
- Women from displaced communities, returning refugee and formerly internally-displaced communities are included in all efforts to strengthen participation.
- Sex-disaggregated data collection on women's participation in the security sector and in post-conflict reconstruction and economic growth programs.

### **PREVENTION AND PROTECTION**

#### Conflict and peacekeeping

- Gender perspectives included as an element in theater campaign plans, guidance and strategy.
- Gender-based indicators incorporated into conflict early-warning systems and protocols for gender analysis in conflict mapping and reporting.
- Support for women's coalitions working to mitigate conflict.
- U.S. pressure for UN peacekeeping missions to have strong mandates on civilian protection and their role in protection against sexual and gender-based violence.
- Pre-deployment training for all troops and police on women, peace and security, international human rights standards, their role in preventing and responding to violence against women and sexual exploitation.

- Integration of civilian gender, peace, and security experts into planning for military and peacekeeping operations.
- Female police, military officers, military observers, doctors, nurses, and interpreters deployed to international military operations and peacekeeping missions

#### Other protective measures to ensure women's rights during humanitarian crises

- Systematic full implementation of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee 2005 Guidelines for Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings through robust funding for effective measures to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence.
- Systematic full implementation of guidelines set out in the 2006 Inter-Agency Standing Committee Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action to ensure that women and girls can secure equal access to resources (such as food and non-food distributions), accompanied by an independent evaluation of gender integration in humanitarian operations within one year.
- Civilian response teams that address women's urgent needs in humanitarian settings, including use of the Minimum Initial Services Package for reproductive health, sanitary materials and livelihood opportunities.
- Support for tracing and family reunification efforts for refugees, internally-displaced persons and other conflict-affected populations.
- Combating trafficking of women and girls.
- Education programming as an integral part of the US emergency response.
- Effective and safe livelihoods programming and vocational training for displaced women and girls.

#### Post-conflict reconstruction and economic growth programming

- Legal systems developed that comprehensively solidify women's rights under international law, e.g. land ownership, voting rights, personal status laws, nationality rights, and protection from gender-based violence.
- US support for security sector reform that includes requirement of gender analysis, recruitment and retention of women into these forces, units specially trained on protection and GBV issues.
- Emergency and basic health services designed to be accessible, affordable and sustainable, with particular attention to maternal and child health services, duly equipped to treat the consequences of sexual violence.
- Primary education prioritized for all children, with special measures to support girls' attendance and retention, while emphasizing secondary education and vocational training opportunities.
- Individuals, leaders and communities, involving men and boys, engaged in challenging attitudes, practices and social norms that contribute to gender-based violence