

Summary record of the joint OECD-DAC GENDERNET, GOVNET and INCAF workshop

From analysis to action:

Ways forward for integrating a gender perspective into donor support to statebuilding

Wednesday 5th November, 09:00 – 17.30, Château de la Muette, Paris.

Rationale and Objectives of the Event

Notably since the adoption of UN Security Council resolution 1325 and its follow-up resolutions, the international community recognises that integrating a gender perspective into statebuilding is essential for achieving gender equality, development, peacebuilding and statebuilding goals. There is growing momentum for progress on this agenda in the donor community, as shown by an OECD survey which finds that addressing gender equality in peace and security is a priority for well over half of all DAC members.¹

A range of recent studies and discussions have explored how this can be done and their conclusions largely point to the same ways forward. This workshop therefore brought together members of the OECD-DAC networks on conflict and fragility (INCAF), gender equality (GENDERNET) and governance (GOVNET) as well as leading researchers and civil society representatives to identify and agree concrete next steps for putting this knowledge into action.

Session 1: Setting the scene: what are the key bottlenecks holding back progress?

The introductory session set the scene by highlighting convergence in recommendations coming out of recent work on gender and statebuilding and taking stock of how these are currently being addressed within donor agencies.

Following introductory remarks by Carolina Wennerholm (GENDERNET Bureau member and incoming Chair) and Melissa Brown (INCAF member, United States, and Task Team Co-chair), the GENDERNET (Emily Esplen) and INCAF (Diana Koester) Secretariats briefed participants on what recent work by the OECD has revealed about DAC members' support to gender and statebuilding. Clare Castillejo (FRIDE) outlined the state of knowledge, highlighting areas of consensus on important ways forward for gender-sensitive and responsive statebuilding.

Speakers emphasised the importance of **integrating a gender perspective into statebuilding right from the start**. Statebuilding transforms institutions, state-society and power relations and therefore offers important opportunities to embed women's rights in the new rules of political, social and economic engagement. Addressing gender relations and inequalities can also contribute to all internationally agreed peacebuilding and statebuilding goals (PSGs), whether by harnessing women's economic potential for recovery, ensuring security and justice for all, or achieving truly inclusive politics.

The **GENDERNET and INCAF aim to support members in seizing these opportunities**. To this end the GENDERNET is currently reviewing DAC members' gender equality-focused aid to fragile states. Preliminary results give cause for cautious optimism in view of an overall rise in aid to gender equality in fragile states since 2007. However volumes vary significantly between fragile recipients, while important financing gaps remain in areas such as economic empowerment, peace and security, and support to women's civil society organisations.

The INCAF has in turn developed a guidance on gender and statebuilding that provides a broad overview of key challenges, opportunities and ways forward for gender-sensitive statebuilding support. The INCAF has since discussed which joint initiatives could best help translate the guidance recommendations into action and the INCAF Director-Level Meeting preceding the workshop reiterated the need to integrate such activities into the work plan.

¹ 17 DAC members mentioned gender and peacebuilding/statebuilding as a priority. See: OECD, 2014. *From ambition to results: delivering on gender equality in donor institutions*. Paris: OECD publishing.

Presentations and discussion revealed **wide consensus as to the most important areas for progress**. These include the need to move beyond increasing numbers of women in formal political institutions to also strengthen their *influence* and *effectiveness* as political actors in these institutions. This requires **engaging more effectively with informal power and institutions** such as patronage networks and highly personalised political parties.

Participants further emphasised the need to **deliver better support to civil society as a key agent of change**. Civil society can, inter alia, help navigate informal barriers by providing a stepping-stone to formal politics, bypassing parties or serving as a corrective element for undemocratic power structures. Effective support requires **moving beyond elite partners, navigating the diversity of women's voices**, which often reflect wider political divisions, and **providing core funding** to women's rights organisations. Concerns were also raised about the increasingly difficult environment and shrinking space in which civil society operates in many fragile contexts, and the challenges this poses for donors in their support to civil society.

The discussion called for further efforts to **support women's participation at the highest level and at the critical moments of statebuilding**. Focusing on gender equality during **negotiations of the political settlement** is particularly important. However, donors tend to neglect gender equality in this context due to a short-term focus on conflict triggers which tend to be perceived as unrelated to gender equality and women's rights.

Participants further emphasised the need to **build broader coalitions with a wider range of stakeholders** including men and boys, the private sector and actors in different spheres (civil and political society, government, state, informal institutions). Linked to this is the need to re-frame women, peace and security not as a "women's issue" but as a collective concern.

Several preconditions for progress were highlighted. Recent research calls on donors to recognise and address the connections between gender inequalities and the wider political economy of statebuilding, including the political settlement, informal institutions and political cleavages. In practice, this would require **placing gender at the centre of donor political, power and conflict analyses**, which are currently often gender-blind.

Participants also emphasised the need to **strengthen expertise on gender and statebuilding within donor agencies**. Training and capacity-building is required across statebuilding sectors to address currently limited commitment, capacity and expertise. Drawing on strong context analysis, donors also need to ensure they provide the right people to the right place at the right time. Participants flagged that these issues should be considered as part of wider INCAF discussions on human resources.

Finally, the session highlighted that **building the evidence base on what works and why**, as well as on the **impacts of gender-sensitive statebuilding**, may help build wider coalitions by generating incentives and pressure for action and will be critical for seizing opportunities to reform the global peace and security architecture in 2015. Yet, there is currently little evidence collection or systematic lesson learning on gender and statebuilding.

Session 2: Integrating gender equality into security and justice programming: where are the entry points and opportunities?

The second session focused on security and justice, identifying blockages, good practices and ways forward in integrating a gender perspective into relevant donor programmes.

Following scene-setting comments by Carolina Wennerholm (GENDERNET Bureau member and incoming Chair, Sweden), UN Women (Nahla Valji, Policy Adviser and Officer in Charge, Peace and Security Section) shared lessons from the UN's experience on 'what works' in developing gender-responsive security and justice. These were followed by presentations of challenges and promising practices identified by Germany (Katharina Spiess, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development), Norway (Björg Skotnes, Coordinator for Women, Peace and Security, Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and Canada (Donica Pottie, Director, Conflict Policy Stabilization and

Reconstruction Task Force Secretariat, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development), and open discussion.

Discussions pointed to **several entry points for progress**. Participants agreed on the need to **build wider coalitions for gender-sensitive security and justice**, including men and boys, the media, civil society, south-south dialogue and, critically, customary institutions.

Women in fragile contexts (as in other environments) often prefer to approach **informal security and justice institutions** for protection and redress, so it is important that donors **engage with non-state security and justice mechanisms as well as state providers**. Yet, engagement with customary institutions can risk reinforcing patriarchal structures if it is not done carefully with a clear focus on reforming informal systems to uphold women's rights. Participants called for greater openness about the challenges involved in bringing informal justice institutions in line with international human rights, and further willingness to experiment to identify effective strategies for engagement.

All security and justice programmes must be guided by a **'survivor-centred' approach**, which respects and upholds the rights of women and girls, and be **responsive to women's specific priorities**. It is important to recognise that women's and girls' priorities for justice and redress may be different from those of local leaders, civil society and the state. For example, women often prioritise reparations in post-conflict contexts and yet this is consistently the most underfunded transitional justice mechanism.

Participants also called for **greater attention to communication strategies** to mobilise wider coalitions and political will. UN Women stressed the need to advocate for gender-sensitivity on the basis of operational effectiveness as well as women's rights. This may require building the evidence base and shifting our focus from the international and national levels to the local level where women's peacebuilding activities are often most visible.

The discussion also emphasised the importance of **holistic approaches**, complementing the recent focus on sexual violence especially in conflict with more attention to domestic violence, as well as to issues such as women's economic rights, basic education, and early marriage. More focus on the links between gender-based violence **before, during and after conflict** was seen as critical, recognising that "women's experiences of conflict do not end the day the guns go silent".

Participants further highlighted the need for **dedicated human and financial resources**. While the UN Secretary General has established a 15% target for post-conflict recovery funding to be dedicated to gender equality and women's empowerment, it is estimated that current levels only reach about 6-7%, and overall financing for security and justice remains low as highlighted in the forthcoming OECD Fragile States Report 2015.

It is also critical to invest in experts with the knowledge and experience required to sensitively address gender issues in fragile contexts. For example, Canada, through UN Women, developed a roster of gender-based violence investigators, which make a critical contribution to ensuring that crimes are documented and carried through in courts in a way that does not re-stigmatise and re-traumatise survivors. At the same time, it is essential to address the segregation that often exists within DAC agencies between those working on gender equality and those responsible for security and justice.

Participants agreed that **seizing opportunities for reform of the global gender equality, development and peace and security architecture in 2015** will be critical for addressing identified gaps by "making it more inconvenient to ignore women". Opportunities include the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the UN SCR 1325 high-level review, which will feed into the post-2015 negotiations, as well as the UN Peace Operations Review and the Third International Conference on Financing for Development.

Participants stressed that the three **DAC networks should work together to maximise these opportunities**, inter alia, by strengthening the evidence base, and bringing together good practices, evidence of results and implications for targets and indicators in areas such as gender-based violence

and economic empowerment. Participants stressed that there may be opportunities to learn from experiences in other sectors and non-fragile contexts.

Session 3: Gender and PEA: “The power relationship that Political Economy Analysis forgot?”

The third session discussed why and how Political Economy Analysis (PEA) needs to integrate gender in order to improve the effectiveness of donor support to statebuilding and gender equality.

Following introductory remarks by David Yang (GOVNET Co-Chair, United States), Per Nordlund (Lead Policy Specialist on Democracy and Human Rights) presented reflections on SIDA’s experience in integrating gender into power analysis and Lisa Williams (Senior Governance Fellow, Centre for Excellence on Democracy, Rights and Governance) offered USAID’s perspectives. On the basis of a case study scenario, breakout groups identified key questions that should be considered as part of any PEA to ensure that women’s and men’s specific needs, experiences and priorities are adequately taken into account.

SIDA recalled that despite the need to improve understanding of the links between gender relations and inequalities and the wider political economy of statebuilding, **PEA frameworks are currently largely gender blind**, as highlighted in a recent [GSDRC](#) helpdesk report on gender and PEA. The few PEA studies that do incorporate a gender analysis tend to focus on numbers of women in formal processes such as elections and parliament and lack a more nuanced analysis of how gender relations interact with the wider political economy.

SIDA highlighted the **need for more attention to the “invisible” dimensions of power in PEA analysis** (i.e. to the norms and values that shape social relations and internalised notions of self and others). For example, PEA may highlight economic and political drivers of women’s exclusion from peace negotiations but neglect the social norms that prohibit women from staying outside the house late at night and therefore from attending negotiations that often extend until the early hours of the morning. Power analysis has shed light on these “invisible” power relations which often drive gender inequalities.

Examples of more gender-sensitive power analyses include a study in Sri Lanka (2010), which addressed the politics of gender relations as a core theme; a study in Tanzania (2012) focused on decentralisation and gender relations; and a broad country study in Ethiopia (2003), which revealed how undemocratic political power structures are learnt through family power relations (men are superior to women, elders to younger) to influence behaviour in all spheres of society and work as invisible barriers to non-discrimination and gender equality.

SIDA highlighted opportunities and guiding questions for a combined approach to power and political economy analysis that would enable the full consideration of gender. More attention to the **socialised and internalised values and behaviours** that shape the limits of possible actions is critical. USAID shared their new PEA framework, which will soon be piloted in four countries.

Breakout groups and the ensuing discussion pointed to further key questions and issues to be considered as part of PEA in order to ensure that gender is adequately taken into account:

- **The impact of conflict.** How are gender relations shaping and being shaped by conflict? What do we know about gender relations/women’s situation and status before, during and after conflict (including levels of violence against women)?
- **Formal and informal rules of the game.** Where is power exercised and who holds the power? How are women represented in formal and informal institutions? How do formal and informal rules shape gender relations and inequalities and who are the drivers of change? Are we, consequently, focusing on the right spaces and actors? What are our entry points for working with them?
- **Interests and incentives.** What are the different needs and interests of the various groups of men and women? What barriers do they face? How do internalised gender norms shape the possible course of action of key agents?

- **Which women?** Women are not a monolithic group but are divided along wider political and socio-economic lines. PEA analysis therefore needs to disaggregate them and their interests and consider how their divisions relate to wider political struggles.
- **Masculinities and the role of men and boys.** How are masculine identities linked to the wider political economy and, in particular, to conflict? Male youth may require particular attention.
- **Women's activism and movements.** In what ways do women mobilise? Around what issues? What is the capacity of women's organisations and other civil society actors to advocate for effective action to address gender inequalities?
- **Violence against women and girls.** What are the main types and what is the extent of violence against women?
- **Role of the international community.** Where do donors themselves fit into the analysis? How do they directly and indirectly impact local gender relations and inequalities? It is important to apply a "do-no-harm" lens and map existing activities of donors and NGOs (mandate, synchronisation, value added).
- **Gender-sensitive research methods and sex-disaggregated data.** What are the sources of information, what is the research process and who is involved, and what are the implications for the gender-sensitivity of the analysis? What data is available about gender and men and women? Is it sufficient and if not, how can we generate more gender-specific data?
- **Results:** What are the pathways for change and how will programmes respond to this analysis?

The discussion highlighted the value for donor engagement of asking these kinds of questions. In Sri Lanka in 2006, for example, NGOs received bomb threats, female local staff received death threats and their families were harassed. These developments could have been better anticipated if there had been an understanding of the ways in which armed conflict compelled women to assume new roles and tasks, leading to backlash and a sense of disempowerment among local men after conflict, which was aggravated by the gendered impact of NGOs on the local labour market through the disproportionate employment of women. In Uganda and South Sudan, research has shown that understanding gender relations can be critical to counteracting cycles of inter-community violence. Such violence is driven by cattle-raiding which allows young men to pay bride price, get married and thus move up the male social hierarchy.

Session 4: Ways forward: What are the next steps for translating analysis into action?

In the final session, participants proposed concrete next steps to build on the opportunities opened up by this workshop:

- The **summary of key conclusions from the workshop** will be shared with the GOVNET/GENDERNET/INCAF as a basis for discussion of initiatives that can be taken within and between networks to follow-up on the workshop results.
- Depending on the level of interest from members and support from Network Bureau members, the three networks will explore the convening of a **second joint meeting on gender and statebuilding** at a strategic point in time regarding the global reviews of the gender equality, development and peace and security architectures. Having set the agenda with the inaugural meeting, the follow-up workshop could focus on more specific sub-themes, such as the post-2015 development agenda/high-level review of UNSCR 1325, financing, innovative partnerships (in particular with the private sector) and harmonisation of analytical tools. Relevant civil society experts could be invited.
- Participants expressed interest in forming a virtual **community of action** to exchange information about relevant guidance, new research, good examples from the field and opportunities to provide

feedback (a “challenge function” between networks) through regular email updates and a document repository. The GSDRC may provide support.

In line with the workshop discussions, it was suggested that priority themes for future collaboration between the Networks could include:

- 1. Strengthening the evidence base by sharing knowledge and good practices** including on tackling informal barriers to women’s participation in statebuilding processes (e.g. personal and patronage networks, political parties, exclusionary practices in informal non-state institutions such as community-based justice systems); the gender dimensions of political settlements; and other priority areas in view of the post-2015 agenda.
- 2. Addressing capacity gaps and strengthening analytical tools** including through support for targeted gender training for governance and statebuilding specialists and review, assessment and harmonisation of existing analytical tools used by conflict/governance and gender specialists.
- 3. Joining forces for global advocacy and action** including by exchanging ideas on how to engage senior leadership, build innovative partnerships for gender equality, ensure adequate financing and the best possible outcomes for the gender and statebuilding agenda in the reforms of the global gender equality and peace and security architecture in 2015. This might include identifying and sharing common strategic priorities and messages for members to use in international processes and negotiations in 2015.