

Mainstreaming Gender in Peace Support Operations

The Women Peace and Security Network Africa (WIPSEN-Africa), ECOWAS Gender Development Centre (EGDC), and Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) through support from the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) organized a Training of Trainers' (ToT) Workshop on Mainstreaming Gender and Women's Issues in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations. The workshop was held on the premises of the KAIPTC in Accra, Ghana, March 31 – April 3, 2009, and it consisted of a three-day workshop and a one-day author's meeting, with participants drawn from selected sub-regional institutions such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), United Nations Field Missions, national security institutions and regional civil society organizations, including women's groups.

In many ways, the workshop is a direct response to UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2000). The United Nations adopted this landmark resolution to address the impact of war on women and spur greater participation of women in peace keeping and peace processes. The resolution grew out of the advocacy of women in war-torn regions who wanted a greater voice. This Workshop and the resulting Manual will provide women in West Africa with the opportunity for their narratives to be incorporated into efforts to promote and sustain peace in Africa.

The opening ceremony was chaired by Dr. Thomas Jaye, Senior Research Fellow in the Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution Department at KAIPTC, who in his opening remarks stressed the significance of this workshop and the overarching need to improve the mainstreaming of gender and women's issues in the context of multidimensional peace support operations. Dorcas Coker-Appiah, Board Member of WIPSEN-Africa, spoke on behalf of her organization and noted that the workshop is the final activity in a series of successful events coordinated by WIPSEN-Africa, KAIPTC/GTZ, and EDGC. She highlighted that the close collaboration among regional institutions, KAIPTC and NGOs has been mutually beneficial and a good model for cooperation on security issues for all of West Africa. Following the general remarks by implementing partners, the workshop heard keynote statements from Major General John Attipoe, Commandant of the KAIPTC and the Honourable Akua Sena Dansoa, Ghana's Minister for Women and Children's Affairs. The Commandant reiterated the Center's commitment towards the implementation of the workshop's outcomes, and his hope that the manual could become a core aspect of the KAIPTC's training curriculum. The Honourable Akua Sena Dansoa, Ghana's Minister for Women and Children's Affairs, added her political support to the Commandant's remarks.

The Training of Trainers' Workshop served three purposes: First, as a pilot course, the workshop provided the opportunity test a draft manual on *Mainstreaming Gender and Women's Issues in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations in West Africa*; Secondly, authors and participants were able to collectively review, enrich and improve each module within the draft manual; and, Thirdly, the review process itself resulted in the development of a new cadre of trainers from a variety of institutions in West Africa on mainstreaming gender and women's issues in peace support operations.

The Training of Trainers' Workshop addressed the myriad of issues specifically affecting women and girls during peace support operations and provided participants with the tools to use these lessons in their own institutions and organizations, using concrete sub-regional examples. Through discussions, debate and a review of the draft manual, participants were also able to provide vital feedback and suggest additional case studies that will be included to further enhance future courses through practical illustrations.

Upon publication, this region-specific manual will be a new, practical tool to strengthen institutional capacities on gender mainstreaming issues in the context of multidimensional peace support operations. In fact, KAIPTC already intends to use modules from this new tool in their upcoming Peace Support Operations course (IPSO) to be held at the Center in June 2009. We

expect that this is simply the first opportunity for ECOWAS countries to benefit from the manual, particularly given the prominent roles played by a number of West African countries in contributing personnel to peacekeeping operations throughout Africa as well as the training needs of ECOWAS in their continuing work towards the development of the African Standby Force.

For more information:

ECOWAS Gender Development Centre (EGDC)

<http://www.ccdg.ecowas.int/>

GTZ

<http://www.gtz.de/en/index.htm>

Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center (KA IPTC)

<http://www.kaiptc.org/home/>

Women Peace and Security Network Africa (WIPSEN-Africa)

<http://www.wipsen-africa.org>



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