

Preventing and eliminating violence against women

**United Nations system activities
on violence against women**

UPDATE
February to September 2008

This UPDATE complements the information contained in the *Inventory of United Nations system activities on violence against women* of July 2007, and of January 2008.

The Inventory was originally prepared in July 2007, available at:

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/Inventory.update.oct.2007.as%20posted.pdf>

A first update, covering the period of July 2007 to January 2008, is available at:

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/Inventory%20Feb%202008.pdf>

Prepared by the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, on the basis of inputs provided by United Nations entities, as part of the activities of the Task Force on violence against women of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality.

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Department of Political Affairs (DPA)

Policy development

In July 2008, the Executive Committee on Peace and Security (ECPS), chaired by DPA, discussed the issue of sexual violence in conflict and Security Council Resolution 1820 (2008). ECPS was briefed by the Chairperson of the Steering Committee of UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict on the activities carried out to date, and it was agreed that ECPS would continue to receive regular briefings. The Under-Secretary-General of DPA subsequently sent a note to all ECPS members and relevant field presences requesting them to include a paragraph on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1820 (2008) in their reporting to the Security Council.

Awareness-raising and advocacy

In December 2007, the Under-Secretary-General of DPA drew the attention of the heads of all DPA field missions to the initiative – UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict, and to the Security Council's Presidential Statement calling on the Secretary-General to include in his reporting to the Council information on violence against women and girls. He noted the Department's commitment to the principles on which UN Action was based, and requested staff's compliance with the Security Council's request.

Future activities

- DPA will continue to collaborate with other United Nations entities at Headquarters and in the field, and with national authorities, local NGOs, women's groups and the media to sensitize them, and raise awareness about the issue of violence against women and girls.
- Field missions will continue to organize training programmes for police, which will include gender sensitivity training and cover the issue of sexual violence against women and girls.

Department of Peacekeeping Operations/ Department of Field Support (DPKO/DFS)

Policy framework

On 19 June 2008, the Security Council adopted resolution 1820 (2008) on women, peace and security, which recognizes the use of sexual violence as a threat to international peace and security.

The DPKO/DFS Policy Directive on Gender Equality in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (November 2006) highlights DPKO/DFS obligation and commitment to address and prevent sexual and gender-based violence against women in post-conflict contexts, including sexual exploitation and abuse committed by civilian and uniformed personnel.

Awareness-raising and advocacy

In February 2008, DPKO/DFS sent a Code Cable to all DPKO/DFS Field Offices on improved and systematic reporting on sexual violence to the Security Council, as had been requested during the 2007 open debate on resolution 1325 (2000). A further Code Cable was sent in June 2008, following the adoption of Security Council resolution 1820 (2008).

In May 2008, DPKO/DFS partnered with UNIFEM and UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict and organized a conference at Wilton Park on the theme “Women targeted or affected by armed conflict: what role for military peacekeepers?” In June 2008, DPKO/DFS developed Guidelines for integrating gender perspectives into the work of United Nations Police in peacekeeping missions and a checklist of gender equality considerations in addressing sexual and gender-based violence. In August 2008, DPKO/DFS briefed Heads of military components of peace-keeping during their annual meeting at United Nations Headquarters in New York on Security Council resolution 1820 (2008) and the role of the military in its implementation.

Future activities

In response to Security Council resolution 1820 (2008), DPKO/DFS intends to develop guidance and improved standards for training for all peacekeepers, improved response to sexual violence in conflict and clarity and guidance on the role of United Nations military peacekeepers in protecting women and girls against sexual violence. It will report to the Security Council on progress in implementation.

DPKO/DFS will review and update training materials for pre-deployment training of peacekeepers. In collaboration with UNIFEM, DPKO/DFS will finalize the “Analytical inventory of responses by peacekeeping personnel to war-related violence against women”. DPKO/DFS Field Missions will continue collaborating with partners in efforts towards combating violence against women.

**Division for the Advancement of Women/Department of Economic and Social Affairs
(DAW/DESA)**

Policy development/research

DAW prepared reports of the Secretary-General to the sixty-third session of the General Assembly on intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women (A/63/214), trafficking in women and girls (A/63/215), and eliminating rape and other forms of sexual violence in all their manifestations, including in conflict and related situations (A/63/216).

In September 2008, DAW sent a questionnaire to Member States on measures undertaken to address violence against women, for the purpose of obtaining information for the coordinated database on violence against women (A/RES/61/143, para. 19).

In collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), DAW organized an expert group meeting on good practices in legislation on violence against women at the United Nations Office at Vienna, from 26 to 28 May 2008. The report of the expert group meeting includes guidelines for the development of legislation on violence against women, as well as a framework for such legislation.

Awareness-raising and advocacy

DAW completed the first issue of *Words to Action*, a quarterly newsletter designed to disseminate information about measures undertaken to address violence against women by: intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations; expert bodies, including the human rights treaty bodies; entities of the United Nations system; and States at the regional or sub-regional level. *Words to Action* will be distributed to Member States during the sixty-third session of the General Assembly and is available online.

DAW produced an informational brochure on the coordinated database on violence against women and the related questionnaire, which will be distributed to Member States during the sixty-third session of the General Assembly and is available online.

DAW continued to disseminate the Secretary-General's study on violence against women. For example, the Economic Commission for Africa will make it available at the African Development Forum which will take place from 19 to 21 November on the theme "Action on gender equality, empowerment and ending violence against women in Africa".

DAW participated in the closing conference of the Council of Europe Campaign to Combat Violence against Women, including Domestic Violence, in Strasbourg, France, in June, and in the 13th International Conference on Violence, Abuse and Trauma in California, United States of America, in September 2008.

Future activities

In March 2009, DAW will launch the coordinated database on violence against women.

Statistical Division/Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNSD/DESA Statistics)

Policy development and research

The United Nations Statistical Commission, at its thirty-ninth session held in February 2008 in New York, approved the formation of a “Friends of the Chair” group to conduct an in-depth technical review of proposed indicators to measure violence against women, and requested the group to report back to the Commission at its fortieth session. The work of the group is based on the proceedings of the Expert Group Meeting on Indicators to Measure Violence against Women, held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 8-10 October 2007. The group consists of representatives from eight Member States (Botswana, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Ghana, Italy, Mexico and Thailand), and is chaired by Mexico. Observers include representatives from United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and the World Health Organization.

The Statistical Division is providing substantive and technical support to the Group.

Department of Public Information (DPI)

Awareness-raising and advocacy

DPI provided communications support for the launch of the Secretary-General's global campaign to end violence against women, on 25 February 2008, including generating awareness about the role of the United Nations in efforts to end violence against women. DPI coordinated an inter-agency communications group and produced multimedia information materials on the issue. Guidance on the campaign was disseminated to field offices to ensure that the communications campaign is prioritized and adapted at the country level in the months to come, in close collaboration with UN Country Teams. The Department's network of UN Information Centres, based in over 60 countries, participated in promoting the launch. DPI also developed a visual identity and slogan. It created a website in the official languages for the launch (www.endviolence.un.org), with inter-agency information and links to United Nations documents, webcasts and resources. The Department issued press releases for the launch and produced several radio stories for the campaign, and highlighted inter-agency efforts to address violence against women. The *News Centre*, a website for journalists worldwide, issued multiple stories which were picked up by the press. DPI provided live coverage of the launch of the campaign, along with the noon press briefing and the lunchtime panel discussion. The i-Seek Intranet site highlighted the Secretary-General's Campaign and violence against women issues.

Substantial media coverage was generated by the launch of the campaign in the international and regional press, including the on-line editions of *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Fox News* and *San Francisco Chronicle* among US media, and the *International Herald Tribune*, *The Guardian* (UK), *De Standaard* and *El Mundo* internationally. The launch was covered extensively by influential wire services and national media as well.

Other activities

Along with the broadcast network HBO, DPI co-sponsored film screenings at New York's New School on 12 April 2008, and included a panel discussion on sexual violence. UNTV produced several television stories that were offered to broadcasters through its series "UN in Action" and "21st Century", including features on violence against women in Nepal, women's rights in Rwanda and female infanticide in India. DPI's quarterly journal *UN Chronicle* published a story on UNIFEM's partnership with Avon in order to raise money to fight violence against women. *Africa Renewal* carried in-depth stories on violence against women focusing on Africa. More than 30 stories were also featured on the high-traffic UN News Centre website, including "[Ban leads call for greater efforts to end 'silent war' of sexual violence in conflict](#)" and "[Time to turn commitment to ending gender-based violence into action – Migiro](#)"

Links to information products

Selected press releases on violence against women

<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2008/dsgsm399.doc.htm>

<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2008/sgsm11437.doc.htm>

<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2008/wom1664.doc.htm>

UN Radio (selected)

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/radio/english/detail/9459.html>

UN Chronicle

http://www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/2008/webarticles/080325_unifem.html

Africa Renewal

<http://www0.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/newrels/221-campaign-to-end-violence-against-women.html>

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

Policy development

OHCHR is contributing to the elaboration of a pilot project in the Democratic Republic of Congo to enhance access to justice for survivors of sexual violence. Côte d'Ivoire, Guatemala, Haiti and the Occupied Palestinian Territory which are also experiencing acute violence against women are being considered.

In March 2008, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, submitted to the Human Rights Council her reports on indicators on violence against women and State response, and on her country missions to Algeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Ghana. She also addressed the Council within the framework of the review, rationalization and improvement of the mandate on violence against women, renewed by resolution 7/24. The Special Rapporteur conducted two official visits, in May 2008 to the Republic of Tajikistan, and in July 2008 to Moldova, the latter jointly with the Special Rapporteur on Torture.

Research

OHCHR is finalizing an analytical study on the current jurisprudence relating to the prosecution of rape, both under international humanitarian law and human rights law. This legal analysis will facilitate the development of tools and guidelines with an aim to enhance OHCHR and United Nations-wide internal operational capacity in addressing women's human rights issues.

Operational activities, including capacity building and training activities

OHCHR entered into a partnership with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) in order to contribute to shaping policy in the areas of addressing violence against women, the promotion of gender equality and ensure respect of individual gender identity.

Awareness raising and advocacy

In March 2008, OHCHR facilitated interactive expert panel discussions on the question of violence against women, and on maternal mortality as a human rights issue, respectively.

Future activities

In September 2008, a conference entitled, "*We asked for Justice and they gave us Law*", organized by the non-governmental organization Medica Mondiale, with financial and substantive support from OHCHR, will explore whether law actually reflects the lived experience of women during and after conflict. The conference will bring together women from most of the countries which are in a post conflict phase and have experience of transitional justice initiatives.

Also in September 2008, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women will participate in a consultation on violence against women with civil society organizations from Eastern Europe and the CIS region in St-Petersburg. In October, she will participate in a consultation with organizations from the Asia-Pacific region, in New Delhi, which will focus on violence against indigenous women, in cooperation with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people. On 31 October 2008, the Special Rapporteur will conduct a two-day follow up visit to Turkey, to assess in particular the provision of shelters for victims of violence, including trafficking, in the country. The visit will be conducted jointly with a member of the European Parliament and of the delegation to the European Union - Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

Policy development and research

In the framework of its thematic debate on ‘Aspects of violence against women that pertain directly to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice’, the Commission, at its seventeenth session from 14-18 April 2008, considered the report of the Secretary-General on crime prevention and criminal justice responses to violence against women and girls. The Commission, in decision 17/1, requested UNODC to convene an intergovernmental group of experts, in cooperation with the institutes of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme network, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, to review and update the Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Women in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

UNODC continued to support, and conducted research related to trafficking in persons, including on the nature of trafficking and national and regional responses to trafficking.

UNODC is an observer to the work of the Friends of the Chair Group on violence against women indicators, established by the thirty-ninth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission. The Group is expected to present its recommendations on indicators on violence against women to the Commission at its fortieth session.

Operational activities including capacity-building and training activities

The Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT) has been focusing on ways of improving the coordination of efforts – at the national, regional and global levels – against trafficking in persons, especially women and children, as well as strengthening gender-sensitive approaches in all anti-trafficking efforts.

A project, funded by the UN Development Account, to establish Women Police Stations to deal with gender-based violence cases is being implemented in Brazil and Southern Cone countries, using the Brazilian model.

In the Southern African region, under the framework of the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security and in close collaboration with other UN agencies, UNODC supports activities aimed at strengthening capacity to address gender-based violence as a human rights violation, and empowering survivors, *inter alia*, through training. The project also includes counselling and establishment of support groups for male perpetrators and potential perpetrators in order to break the cycle of violence.

UNODC is carrying out training of law enforcement officials in Colombia and India, concentrating on investigation and punishment of trafficking in persons with a gender perspective. Regular training for military officials, including NATO, focusing particularly on trafficking for sexual exploitation is also being provided.

Future activities

Plans are under way to launch the following activities; a regional juvenile justice project for the Middle East and North Africa region focusing, *inter alia*, on the special needs of girls; a global project on the implementation of the Guidelines on justice in matters involving child victims and witnesses of crime; the development of handbooks on (i) Effective Police Responses to Violence against Women and related training curriculum; (ii) Handbook for Prison Managers and Policymakers on Women and Imprisonment; (iii) a Guide to the standard minimum rules for

the treatment of prisoners from a gender perspective; the expansion of One-Stop Centres to further locations in South Africa and to other southern African countries; and a project in Liberia entitled; “Building capacity of Liberian judges and magistrates in addressing gender-based violence”, due to start in January 2009.

Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)

Policy development and research

ECA, in partnership with the African Union (AU) and development partners, has set up the Network on Gender-Based Violence/Violence against Women (GBV/VAW), in Addis Ababa. This initiative recognizes the need for a coordinated effort to respond to, and act on violence against women. The Network is co-chaired by ECA and AU, and its members include: Regional Economic Communities, the Swedish, Finnish, Danish and South African Embassies, United Nations agencies and civil society organizations.

The Network is undertaking the following activities:

- Review global and regional legal commitments on GBV/VAW and analyse obligations by States
- Review and recommend for strengthening, AU reporting frameworks to facilitate monitoring progress and improve performance in implementation of commitments
- Compile good practices in addressing GBV/VAW in Africa.

ECA's African Center for Gender and Social Development (ACGSD/UNECA), in collaboration with UNDP regional gender programme for Africa, developed an African Women's Rights Observatory (AWRO) website. Violence against women is one of the three thematic areas covered. The AWRO was officially launched on 28 August 2008, at the Conference of Ministers of Gender and Women's Affairs in Addis Abba.

Awareness -raising and advocacy

In February 2008, the Economic Commission for Africa organized a high-level policy dialogue in Addis Ababa on national implementation of the Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) in Africa, in collaboration with the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. Ministers and high-level representatives from 18 countries of Africa, representatives from the Regional Economic Communities, and observers from national and regional non-governmental organizations and United Nations entities attended the meeting.

ECA collaborated in the organization of a seminar by the African Union Commission, held from 4 to 5 April 2008 in Addis Ababa, to commemorate the fourteenth anniversary of the Rwandan Genocide, on the theme "Ending violence against women in conflict situations: lessons drawn from the Rwandan Genocide".

Future activities

In the context of its fiftieth anniversary, UNECA will convene the African Development Forum on "Gender equality, women's empowerment and elimination of violence against women in Africa: Translating commitments into reality", to take place in Addis Ababa, from 19 to 21 November 2008. Partners include the African Union Commission, African Development Bank, as well regional United Nations system organizations and agencies.

ECA, along with the other four regional commissions, will be implementing the project "Enhancing capacities to eradicate violence against women", funded through the Development Account.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

Policy development/research

Based on the mandate received in the Quito Consensus, adopted by the tenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (August 2007), ECLAC has initiated the development of a *Gender Observatory*, as a tool to support governments in analysing regional realities, monitoring gender equality policies and international agreements, and providing technical support and training to national mechanisms for the advancement of women and to national statistical agencies in countries that request such support. Violence against women is one of four main issues of concern.

Awareness-raising and advocacy

ECLAC is acting as the link between the regional and global levels for the Secretary General's campaign to eliminate all forms of violence against women. Activities are being carried out in the inter-agency and intergovernmental frameworks. A regional interagency working group has been established to define the strategy and ways to implement the Secretary-General's campaign. Member States of the Regional Conference on Women have agreed to develop a proposal for the regional campaign, in coordination with the interagency working group.

Future activities

ECLAC will convene two specialist meetings, for Latin America (Aguas Calientes, Mexico, 2-3 October 2008), and the Caribbean (Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 6-7 October 2008), to discuss and identify the indicators to be used in the Gender Observatory. INSTRAW, PAHO, UNIFEM and UNFPA are collaborating with ECLAC in this initiative.

ECLAC, along with the other four regional commissions, will be implementing the project "Enhancing capacities to eradicate violence against women", funded through the Development Account.

New publications and online resources

Arauco Lemaitre, E.; Mamani Apaza, R.; Rojas Silva, J. (2007), *Violencia contra la mujer en la pareja: Respuestas de la salud pública en El Alto, Bolivia*, Santiago, Chile, ECLAC, Mujer y Desarrollo series No 84 (LC/L.2721-P/E).

[online] <http://www.eclac.cl/publicaciones/xml/7/28987/lcl2721e.pdf>

ECLAC (Coord.) (2007), *The right of women to live a life free of violence in Latin America and the Caribbean*, Santiago, Chile, ECLAC/ UNICEF/ UNIFEM/ UNAIDS/ UNHCHR/ UNFPA/ UNESCO/ ILO/ PAHO/ IOM/ UNDP/ IICA (LC/L.2808).

[online] <http://www.eclac.cl/mujer/publicaciones/xml/4/32194/Nomore.pdf>.

Provoste, Patricia (2007), *Violencia contra la mujer en la pareja: respuestas de la salud pública en Santiago de Chile*, Santiago, Chile, ECLAC, Mujer y Desarrollo series No 85 (LC/2722-P).

- Online access (<http://www.eclac.cl/mujer/>) to surveys on violence against women carried out in the region has been updated.

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

Policy development/research

In follow-up to an April 2007 expert group meeting on regional strategies for implementing the recommendations from the Secretary-General's in-depth study on all forms of violence against women, a sub-regional study has been prepared which documents harmful traditional and cultural practices as forms of violence against women in South Asia. The study covers Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

Future activities

ESCAP is organizing an expert group meeting on the use of violence against women indicators in support of implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Platform for Action. The meeting, to take place from 1 to 3 October 2008 in Bangkok, is jointly organized by ESCAP's Social Development Division/Gender and Development Section and the Statistics Division. Representatives of national statistics offices and of national machineries for women will attend. The meeting will focus on the role of statistics and data collection for monitoring implementation of the Convention and the Beijing Platform for Action.

ESCAP, along with the other four regional commissions, will be implementing the project "Enhancing capacities to eradicate violence against women", funded through the Development Account.

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

Policy development

UNIFEM continued to support the development, reform and implementation of violence against women legislation and policy at global, regional and national levels. Examples include: legislative reform support to the Alliance on the elimination of violence against women in Pakistan; support to the Regional Rights Training Team and UNDP in advocating for the passage of sexual and gender-based violence bills in Fiji and Vanuatu; and advocacy for the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1820 (2008) on sexual violence in conflict.

UNIFEM contributed to the development of national strategies and plans on gender-based violence in Afghanistan, Liberia and Ecuador. In June 2008, UNIFEM, in cooperation with UNICEF, OHCHR, UNFPA and the UN Peacekeeping Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, held a regional consultation towards the creation of the regional action plan to eradicate sexual violence and end impunity in the Great Lakes Region.

UNIFEM, through its gender-responsive budgeting programme in South East Europe, supported civil society, which led to increased regional and municipal budget allocations in 2008 for domestic violence shelters in Bosnia and Herzegovina and amendments to the domestic violence law to ensure co-financing for shelter operations.

Research

As part of its inter-agency cooperation in Burundi, UNIFEM worked with UNDP, UNESCO and UNICEF to provide training and reporting assistance for civil society organizations and police to improve statistics and data collection on cases of gender-based violence. UNIFEM and DFID supported a conference organized by the Rwandan Defense Forces in Kigali in March 2008 on women's participation in peacekeeping missions, as part of prevention of gender-based violence. In collaboration with UNFPA and UNDP, UNIFEM organized a satellite session "From acknowledgement to action: Intersections between violence against women and HIV/AIDS", at the International Conference on AIDS in Mexico City, in August 2008.

Operational activities including capacity building and training activities

UNIFEM provided capacity development to the Burundian police and judiciary to improve protection mechanisms for survivors of violence against women. It supported the development of a training course, "Empowerment, HIV and violence against women in the Caribbean." As part of the *Safe Cities* Programme, UNIFEM and Red Mujer y Habitat supported an online learning course, "Urban violence, insecurity and discrimination". UNIFEM strengthened the capacity of civil society partners working on violence against women in Indonesia, Thailand, Timor-Leste and the Philippines. In June 2008, UNIFEM organized a workshop with representatives from Afghanistan, Haiti, Liberia, Rwanda, Timor-Leste and Uganda as part of a programme on *Supporting Women's Engagement in Peace-Building and Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict: Community-Led Approaches*.

UNIFEM leads or partners on several joint United Nations initiatives on violence against women, including programmes in Bangladesh, Colombia and Morocco; the Asia Pacific Regional Joint Programme Partners for Prevention: Working with Boys and Men to Prevent Gender-based Violence; and the One UN pilots in Albania, Rwanda and Uruguay, which include violence against women in their programming.

Awareness-raising and advocacy

UNIFEM facilitated the Wilton Park conference of May 2008 on the role of military peacekeepers in addressing sexual violence during armed conflict, and contributed to the dissemination of the results.

UNIFEM supported issuance of two publications to raise awareness about the linkages between violence against women and HIV, namely “The Multiple Faces of the Intersections Between HIV and Violence Against Women” and “Women, Violence and HIV&AIDS: Exploring Interfaces”. UNIFEM collaborated with several agencies to support “Women on the Frontline”, a seven-part series of the BBC aired in April 2008 that profiled forms of violence against women around the globe.

The *Say NO to violence* campaign (www.sayNOtoviolence.org) continued with a significant expansion in signatures from individuals, public figures, state officials, private sector entities and governments.

The UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women

The 2008 Call for Proposals for the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women rolled out in April. Grant applications were invited from governments and civil society organizations, and for the first time from UN Country Teams (UNCTs) working in close coordination with national stakeholders. The call received a record number of concept notes and funding requests. Technical review teams and fifteen global and sub-regional inter-agency Programme Appraisal Committees comprising UN agencies, leading NGOs and experts on ending violence against women reviewed the concept notes and invited shortlisted applicants to submit full-fledged proposals. Selected grantees will be announced on 25 November 2008 at the UN Headquarters.

Contributions to the UN Trust Fund by Member States, the private sector, foundations and non-governmental organizations have increased. UNIFEM in collaboration with Avon Products, Inc. convened a global summit in March 2008, and Avon Products, Inc. committed US \$1 million to the UN Trust Fund – the Fund’s largest single, annual, private sector contribution ever.

The UN Trust Fund convened a second workshop on programme design and evaluation for a seven grantees working on the ‘twin epidemics’ of violence against women and HIV/AIDS, in collaboration with Johnson and Johnson and with technical assistance from PATH. The workshop was part of an ongoing effort to enhance grantees’ capacities in programming, and monitoring and evaluation, and to contribute to the evidence base, scale-up and knowledge generation and sharing.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Policy development

UNHCR's Handbook for the Protection of Women and Girls (March 2008) describes the protection challenges faced by displaced woman and girls and explains how UNHCR and partners work together to promote gender equality, in particular, to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence through a rights and community-based approach.

UNHCR is leading the development of guidelines on establishing community-based complaints mechanisms for sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian personnel and peacekeepers (through the Executive Committees on Humanitarian Action and Peace and Security (ECHA/ECPS) UN NGO Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)).

Operational activities including capacity-building and training activities

In 2008, UNHCR allocated an additional USD 1.5 million for prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence. Projects include: creating a manager post on sexual and gender-based violence and community outreach teams in the Central African Republic; hiring an expert in Chad; signing agreements with implementing partners in the Democratic Republic of Congo; raising awareness through home visits in Bangladesh; sports and cultural activities in Uganda, Panama and Venezuela. People of concern also benefited from capacity building workshops for women in Panama, psychological counseling in Venezuela and Turkey, distribution of sanitary materials in India and Thailand, improved access to health facilities and income-generation activities in India, allocation of subsistence allowances to unaccompanied children in Egypt, language classes in Malta, vocational training in Bosnia, and the establishment of safe houses in Yemen and Turkey. The impact of the projects will be evaluated in 2009.

UNHCR promotes the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in all field operations. In June 2008, the IASC Sub Working Group on Gender released a SOP template for prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence in IDP settings, based on the UNHCR template.

UNHCR expanded the provision of Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) following rape to prevent transmission of HIV. It organized training courses using the WHO/UNHCR Clinical Management of Rape Guidelines in East Africa and Asia. In collaboration with WHO and UNFPA, UNHCR is working on the development of an e-learning programme for clinical staff to improve skills to provide appropriate care and support to rape survivors.

UNHCR is working with UNFPA and the International Rescue Committee (IRC) to develop a gender-based violence information management system (GBVIMS) to improve and systematize data collection and information sharing. In 2008, technical consultations were conducted to support the roll-out of GBVIMS in Kenya and Northern Uganda.

In relation to the safe school initiative, UNHCR has conducted assessment missions with Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS) to Malawi, Namibia and Rwanda, to ensure safe learning environments and addressing sexual and gender-based violence in schools. A training module was prepared for testing.

Awareness-raising and advocacy

In May 2008, UNHCR and Sonke Gender Justice launched the project, *“Embracing Men and Boys as Partners in Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence”*. The key

objectives are to integrate men and boys, and to train staff, partners and people of concern in addressing sexual and gender-based violence. Training workshops have been held in refugee camps in Burundi, Uganda and Kenya, with the goal of further roll-out in the region.

Future activities

UNHCR's future activities include: developing a three-year strategic plan for addressing sexual and gender-based violence; finalizing the *Gender Equality Policy* and disseminating *UNHCR Handbook for the Protection of Women and Girls*; producing a film series on topics in the Handbook; on- and off-site technical support to the roll-out of GBVIMS in Uganda and Kenya; pilot-testing of the training module for the safe schools initiative; roll-out of the "Embracing Men and Boys" project; and continued participation in the UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict, Protection Cluster Working Group on SGBV, the [IASC Sub Working Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action](#), and ECHA/ECPS discussion on SEA.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)

Policy development

UNRWA has developed guidelines, a referral system and a training course for health staff on handling cases of violence against women and children when discovered in UNRWA clinics.

Operational activities including capacity building and training activities

UNRWA held weekly discussion groups for women (127 participants), men (53 participants), girls (109 participants) and families (125 participants), on how to deal with domestic violence.

Awareness-raising and advocacy

Approximately 5000 refugee women attended awareness-raising sessions on domestic violence.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Policy development and research

UNICEF is currently a member of the Central Organizing Committee of the 'World Congress III against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents', to be hosted by the Government of Brazil, from 25-28 November 2008. This Congress follows previous Congresses on commercial sexual exploitation of children in Stockholm and Yokohama.

UNICEF country offices continued to support the development of legislation pertinent to violence against women and girls, including on trafficking, domestic violence and sexual exploitation and violence. Many country offices in 2008 have focused on exposing violence against women and girls, utilizing television and radio campaigns and capitalizing on international awareness days to publicize this issue.

UNICEF's MICS 3 (Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey) collected in 2007 for the first time information on attitudes towards domestic violence and child disciplining. MICS also includes modules on female genital mutilation/cutting and child marriage (information is available at www.childinfo.org). UNICEF Swaziland, in partnership with the Centres for Disease Control, published a study on sexual abuse of girls, which will be replicated in other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The West and Central Africa Regional Office produced an analysis on gender-based violence and its effects on HIV. The report provides strong evidence that chronic violence can lead to HIV risk behaviours which are not necessarily chosen in a conscious way.

Operational activities

UNICEF continues to engage in capacity-building and the development of holistic strategies on gender-based violence, including training, education and provision of advice. UNICEF facilitates the establishment of partnerships with governments and non-governmental organizations, and places emphasis on the development of national action plans on gender-based violence. For example, in June 2008 in Uganda, 35 schools received support to form child rights clubs. A series of trainings for Parents/Teachers Associations (PTAs) and School Management Committees (SMCs) on child rights and sexual abuse were conducted to improve safety and security in the learning environment.

Future activities

UNICEF's future activities regarding violence against women include: implementation of recommendations in the Secretary-General's study on violence against children, ensuring attention to violence against girls; support the upcoming World Congress III against Sexual Exploitation and follow-up to its recommendations and time-bound goals, enhanced programming to prevent sexual violence and meet the needs of survivors of sexual violence; continued work at the community level on abandonment of female genital mutilation/cutting and early marriage; and continued participation in UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict.

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Operational activities, including capacity-building and training activities

The UNFPA and UNICEF Trust Fund and Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) aims at reducing FGM/C by 40 per cent in 17 countries by 2012. Over the last six months, achievements included:

- Work plans finalized in eight countries and funds disbursed for programme implementation
- Quarterly monitoring tool developed: A monitoring tool aimed to capture achievements of each output under the Joint Programme, the lessons learned and challenges, as well as the contribution of each output towards achievement of the outcomes in the Joint Programme was developed
- Baseline matrix drafted: A baseline matrix to guide the collection of baseline information was developed and circulated to all countries for adaptation
- Djibouti and Guinea Bissau Launch: Launched in Djibouti and Guinea Bissau, the events created a forum for advocacy and policy dialogue towards accelerated abandonment of FGM/C within a generation, with the Government, Parliament, the Judiciary and with religious leaders, international and national NGOs, development partners and their embassies and the private sector
- Policy discussions in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Guinea Bissau, Sudan, and Egypt: Policy discussions were held in four Country Offices of UNFPA and UNICEF and with partners. The aim was to clarify issues related to the operation of the Joint Programme and Trust Fund. In Sudan, the Trust Fund supported media advocacy capacity for partners implementing the Joint Programme.

The Gender-based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS) in humanitarian and recovery settings, a joint effort of UNFPA, UNHCR and the IRC, is a first attempt to systematize management of reported data related to gender-based violence, with a focus on humanitarian and recovery contexts. A technical consultation was undertaken by the inter-agency team (UNFPA, the IRC and UNHCR) to pilot test the GBVIMS system in Uganda in May 2008.

As part of UNFPA's collaboration with the International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW) on costing violence against women, workshops were conducted during this reporting period in Bangladesh, Uganda, and Morocco, to test the domestic violence costing model developed under the partnership.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

Operational activities including training and capacity building

UN-HABITAT and UNIFEM held a joint workshop during the International Seminar “Cities without Violence, Safe Cities for Women’s and Girls”, from 23 to 25 July 2008 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and presented a joint training initiative on women’s safety audits for cities in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Awareness raising and advocacy

UN Habitat held two panel discussions during Kenya’s National Youth Forum in February 2008 on preventing gender-based violence. An award ceremony was held in March 2008 in Costa Rica, as part of the “IV Safer Cities Competitions for Women and Girls - Safety and Security for Women and Girls in Cities”, with the following municipalities receiving awards: San Miguel de Tucumán, Argentina; Maipú, Chile; and Solidaridad, Mexico.

Future activities

UN-Habitat, in partnership with Women in Cities International, will undertake a comparative evaluation study of women’s safety audits.

UN-HABITAT, UNIFEM and Women in Cities International will hold a thematic session on women’s safety and safety audits November 2008, in Mexico, as part of the 8th Annual Colloquium of the International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC).

United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW)

Research

In May 2008, UN-INSTRAW undertook an assessment of gender-based violence in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Noel in the Dominican Republic. The study revealed that there was very little attention to, or provision in post-disaster reconstruction efforts to address gender-based violence, particularly among residents of temporary shelters.

Operational activities including capacity-building and training activities

In February 2008, UN-INSTRAW, in collaboration with the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), published the *Gender and Security Reform Toolkit* that aim to support gender mainstreaming and the participation of women in different institutions of the security sector (the justice sector, defence, the police, border guards, private military and security firms, parliamentarians and civil society, among other actors) in order to build the capacity of the security sector to respond to gendered insecurities and human rights abuses as violence against women. The toolkit includes 12 tools and corresponding practice notes on gender and police reform, gender and border management, gender and justice reform, and gender training for security personnel, among other topics.

Awareness-raising and advocacy

The Gender and SSR Toolkit was launched during the fifty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women. Advocacy is being carried out among Member States and other stakeholders to encourage the use of the toolkit in ongoing security sector reform processes.

United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)

Operational activities including capacity-building and training activities

In 2008/2009, UNICRI is implementing a second programme to counter trafficking in human beings from Nigeria to Italy. Towards this end, an agreement was signed in February 2008 between Nigerian Government and UNICRI. The programme includes empowerment activities, action-oriented research aimed at assessing and disseminating good practices in assistance to victims of trafficking, awareness raising campaigns and education activities. These will be implemented in Nigeria, in close cooperation with local NGOs.

So far, a specialized training for representatives of the Edo State NGO Coalition against Human Trafficking and NAPTIP (the Nigerian National Agency against Trafficking) has been carried out, and women's empowerment activities will be launched in September 2008. Work is under way for the creation of an information system/database for the investigation of trafficking cases, to be set up within the National Monitoring Center in NAPTIP. An information exchange mechanism between Italian regions most affected by the trafficking of Nigerian girls and women for the purpose of sexual exploitation will also be established, and a coordination platform will be created as a forum for discussion of strategies; exchange of information, experiences, best practices and contacts; and coordination of possible joint actions in the field of assistance and reintegration programmes.

Awareness raising and advocacy

As part of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme Network (PNI), UNICRI published the proceedings of a PNI workshop on "Eliminating violence against women: forms, strategies and tools" on the occasion of the seventeenth session of the United Nations Commission On Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (Vienna, 14 April 2008). The publication is available at the following link:

http://www.unicri.it/wvk/publications/books/docs/eliminating_violence.pdf.

UNICRI compiled a bibliography and a repository of legal instruments which are accessible on databases at: <http://www.unicri.it/wwd/trafficking/bibliography/index.php>; and http://www.unicri.it/wwd/trafficking/legal_framework/index.php. The International Legal Repository (ILR) contains relevant international, regional and sub-regional legal instruments. The International Repository of Institutions against Sexual Exploitation of Minors (IRISEM) <http://www.unicri.it/wwd/trafficking/irisem/index.php> contains information on institutions and organizations working to reduce and prevent trafficking and sexual exploitation of minors around the world.

Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

Policy development

In April 2008, UNAIDS presented “Gender Guidance for National AIDS Responses” to its Programme Coordinating Board (PCB). This guidance document contains strategies to strengthen attention to gender issues within national AIDS programmes, including increased attention to combating violence against women in the context of AIDS.

UNAIDS, together with WHO, completed technical and policy guidance to support the integration of gender issues into national proposals to the Global Fund on AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) for Round 8, with emphasis on better integrating programmes aimed at combating violence against women with AIDS services.

UNAIDS undertook two reviews with an emphasis on violence against women and AIDS: (1) a review of the gender policies of the three major AIDS financing institutions – the World Bank, PEPFAR and the GFATM – with a view towards strengthening harmonization and coordination of approaches; and (2) a review of over 50 national strategic plans on AIDS to ascertain the degree to which gender issues were integrated.

Operational activities including capacity building and training activities

In June 2008, UNAIDS, together with the University of Witwatersrand Reproductive Health Research Unit, convened a meeting "Stopping the HIV epidemic – young women, girls and HIV in southern Africa. What must be done!" to assess why young women and girls in HIV hyper-endemic countries of southern Africa continue to be so vulnerable to HIV infection. Three research papers relevant to violence against women were presented: intergenerational sex; sexual violence; and risk perception, knowledge and behaviour. These papers will be published in September 2008.

Awareness-raising and advocacy

The Global Coalition on Women and AIDS has provided technical and financial support to the Regional Coalitions of First Ladies and Women Leaders in Latin America and the Caribbean Coalition of Women Leaders, who are working with networks of women living with HIV and policy makers in their regions to put forward action plans and advocacy campaigns to address gender-based violence.

UNAIDS participated in several workshops and fora at the International AIDS Society Meeting in Mexico which presented new information on violence against women.

Future activities

UNAIDS, together with cosponsors and partners, will convene a technical working group in 2009 to bring together the latest research and programme guidance for national partners on programmes which address violence against women in the context of AIDS.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Policy development/research

Under the United Nations System-wide Work Programme on Scaling-up HIV/AIDS Services for Populations of Humanitarian Concern (PHC), in 2008 FAO analyzed the results of the research undertaken in 2007 in Kenya on the linkages between HIV/AIDS, gender inequality, and sexual and gender-based violence among populations of humanitarian concern (PHC); and refined the research tools to undertake a similar assessment in two provinces in the North of Uganda scheduled for September 2008. This assessment will concentrate specifically on understanding the impact of sexual and gender-based violence on people's livelihood options, particularly among PHC. The expected outcome of the assessment and further technical work with the Ministry of Gender in Uganda, UNFPA, WFP, WOUGNET (a network of Ugandan non-governmental organizations) and other relevant partners will be the development of livelihoods guidelines and strategies to address sexual and gender-based violence and transactional sex in Uganda.

Operational activities including capacity-building and training activities

FAO is participating in the implementation of joint programmes in Guatemala and Morocco, under the One-UN initiative. The multisectorial joint Programme in Morocco focuses on the elimination of violence against women and the empowerment of women and girls. The programme aims at protecting women and girls against all forms of violence (economic, physical, verbal, psychological, sexual and trafficking) and addresses the linkages with poverty and vulnerability. The joint Programme will also include a series of capacity building and awareness raising activities.

Awareness raising and advocacy

FAO's Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division continued to raise awareness and build the capacity of FAO emergency officers and local partners in gender equality and HIV/AIDS mainstreaming in emergency and rehabilitation programmes. It also encouraged the disaggregation of data by sex and age in the agricultural and rural sectors.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Research

UNESCO's Culture Sector compiles and maintains a trafficking statistics database focusing on Asia and other regions, available on-line at:

<http://203.146.233.12/culture/WebTraffickingV2/>. It has linked databases with information related to trafficking, rates of HIV/AIDS incidence, interventions and their coverage, and the distribution of at-risk populations (migration, population in sex work) to discover, record and map related trends. Many of the maps from this project are available on-line.

UNESCO's Social and Human Sciences Sector has undertaken a programme of research on women's rights for peace and security in post conflict democracies in Africa. Researchers from 11 countries of the Great Lake Region, Sierra Leone and South Africa submitted papers on violence against women and the relationship between women's human rights, peace and security in post conflict context, as well as recommendations for the way forward to be addressed to policy- and decision-makers.

Operational activities including capacity building and training activities

UNESCO's Communication and Information Sector implemented a project in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, entitled "Training of female radio reporters to prevent violence" in association with the local NGO "Casa de la Mujer." Two workshops were conducted with women and men on existing legislation against domestic violence, and forty 30-minute radio programmes (in various broadcasting formats) are being produced and will be broadcast by participating radio stations.

Awareness raising and advocacy

On 20 May 2008, UNESCO's Division for Gender Equality chaired a side event on female genital mutilation, organized by the Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children (IAC), in the context of the WHO World Health Assembly.

As part of its celebration of International Women's Day 2008, UNESCO's Division for Gender Equality, in collaboration with WHO, hosted the première of the documentary "Mutilation, Women's Cries", by the French-Gabonese association Kerciné. A UNESCO video spot to raise awareness and combat violence against women entitled "Being Fed Up" was posted online in April 2008 and is available at:

<http://www.unesco-ci.org/cgi-bin/media/page.cgi?g=Detailed/128.html;d=1>

Future activities

In February 2009, UNESCO will convene a policy dialogue on strategies for combating violence against women, in Nairobi, as part of a Forum of Ministers of Women's Affairs from the Great Lakes Region.

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Policy development

At the request of the Government of Pakistan, IOM participated in a national consultation on 30 July 2008, on the draft Domestic Violence Bill. IOM is working with UNIFEM and civil society organizations to review and propose amendments to the Prevention and Control of Human Trafficking Ordinance of 2002 which, at present, does not cover internal trafficking.

Operational activities, including capacity-building and training activities

Since February 2008, IOM has conducted specialized training and capacity building workshops in a number of cities in Pakistan to sensitize a variety of actors on human trafficking. The workshops especially emphasized the different dimensions of violence against women. IOM signed an agreement with the Colombian Ministry of Justice in order to develop counter-trafficking activities in the areas of assistance to victims; prevention through a hot-line; and technical assistance and support in the de-centralization of the national strategic plan. IOM Colombia also started the implementation of a project to prevent and address gender-based violence in IDPs at and across the Colombian borders with Panama, Venezuela and Ecuador.

A regional programme is providing assistance for the return and reintegration of trafficked women and girls throughout the region, mainly exploited as domestic workers. Medical assessments are carried out in the shelters with special attention to HIV cases. Reintegration activities involve school support or income generating activities. Local stakeholders from government agencies, civil society and service provider organizations are trained to offer an enhanced assistance for trafficked victims and improve their capacities to prosecute traffickers.

Future activities

IOM is part of UNGIFT and is organizing a Drafting Workshop on Guidance on Human Trafficking for Healthcare Providers at IOM Headquarters (Geneva) from 3 to 4 September 2008.

IOM is preparing a submission for a global campaign against female genital mutilation, to be implemented in the main European destination countries and the main African countries of origin where FGM is practiced. The central focus of the campaign will be capacity building for civil society and community-based information campaigns.

IOM will be one of the implementing agencies of the “Integrated strategy for the prevention of and attention to all forms of gender-based violence in Colombia”.

In Bangladesh, IOM will be part of the three-year Joint Programme to address violence against women. IOM will be in charge of training judges and prosecutors, provide pre-departure orientation to female migrants, organize workshop for the Counsellors/Labour Attachés and build the capacity of staff on psychological counselling and treatment of victims suffering from STD and HIV/AIDS.

Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE)

Operational activities, including capacity building and training activities

The Task Force on violence against women, co-convened by UNFPA and UN-DAW, progressed with the implementation of the joint programming initiative on violence against women in 10 pilot countries. In accordance with the overall framework for the initiative, in each of the pilot countries a baseline assessment is conducted to help develop the country-specific work plans. Since February 2008, an assessment has been completed in Rwanda, and first drafts have been completed in Fiji, Paraguay and Kyrgyzstan.

National multi-stakeholder workshops to develop joint programming frameworks have been held in Jordan, Philippines, Rwanda, Fiji, and Kyrgyzstan. These workshops are instrumental in developing a multi-sectoral joint programming framework that brings together United Nations system actions in support of national efforts to address violence against women, including in support of the implementation of national action plans on violence against women where such plans exist; or to help develop such plans where these plans do not yet exist.

Joint national committees consisting of stakeholders from Government, the United Nations and civil society have been formed in Rwanda, Philippines, Jordan Kyrgyzstan, Fiji. These committees are responsible for coordinating and providing technical support towards finalization of the joint programming proposals as well as for fundraising, implementation of the various activities, and monitoring and evaluation

Following the national multi-stakeholder workshop, joint programming proposals have been developed by the joint national committee in Rwanda and Philippines. These two pilot countries submitted their proposals to the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women 2009 call for proposal.

Awareness-raising and advocacy

As part of the work plan of the Task Force, the Division for the Advancement of Women has updated the Inventory of United Nations system activities on violence against women twice annually (in February and September) and posted it online.

UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict (UN Action)

Policy development/research

UN Action has published two documents to support the UN system's response to sexual violence in conflict settings. These are posted on UN Action's website:

- Do's and Don'ts: Reporting and interpreting data on sexual violence from conflict-affected countries
- Summary of Ethical and Safety Recommendations for researching, documenting and monitoring sexual violence in emergencies.

Awareness raising and advocacy

In June 2008, UN Action hired an Advocacy and Women's Rights Specialist to lead its advocacy efforts under the banner "Stop Rape Now" (see www.stoprapenow.org).

In May 2008, UN Action co-sponsored a high-level conference at Wilton Park entitled, "Women targeted or affected by armed conflict: What role for military peacekeepers?" Government officials, military commanders, NGO representatives and other experts reviewed front-line military tactics to protect women from sexual violence in armed conflict. In July 2008, UN Action organized a briefing for Heads of military components of peacekeeping operations to discuss outcomes of the Wilton Park conference.

UN Action has developed a PowerPoint presentation on Security Council resolution 1820 (2008) on sexual violence in conflict, to heighten awareness of the implication of the resolution for the work of the UN system. The presentation is available at www.stoprapenow.org. In August 2008, UN Action organized a briefing in New York for NGOs around resolution 1820.

Operational activities, including capacity-building and training activities

In April 2008, UN Action posted a Senior Advisor on Sexual Violence to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) for one year. The Senior Advisor is tasked, *inter alia*, with providing guidance on the development of mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the Government's national strategy on gender-based violence, facilitating and drafting a UN system-wide action plan on sexual violence and monitoring its implementation, leading the process of developing a central standardized information collection and analysis system for sexual and gender-based violence and managing information flows between the national government and the UN system at large.

Future activities

UN Action is committed to developing a capacity-building strategy for senior and mid-level staff in the field. The following two activities are in conjunction with this effort:

- UN Action has committed funding to UNFPA to support a training course entitled "Coordination of Multi-Sectoral Response to Gender-Based Violence in Humanitarian Settings". This will take place in Ghent, Belgium, in November 2008. The two-week intensive course is designed to train managers to coordinate gender-based violence prevention and response strategies.
- UN Action is exploring the option of contracting a professional recruitment firm to create a roster of senior level gender-based violence Programme Coordinators.

UN Action has committed funds for the recruitment of a Programme Manager to help manage and coordinate the Government of Liberia and UN *Joint Programme to Prevent and Respond to*

Sexual/Gender-Based Violence. The Programme Manager will be recruited by UNDP and report jointly to the Resident Coordinator and Minister of Gender and Development.

As a result of its assessment mission to Darfur, Sudan, in April 2007, UN Action has committed funds for two UN system-wide gender-based violence Coordinators, who will be recruited by UNFPA.

UN Action will organize missions to UNMIL, Liberia (September 2008) and to MONUC, DRC (November 2008) with the purpose of finalizing the *Analytical Inventory of Responses by Peacekeeping Personnel to War-Related Violence Against Women* as well as contribute to the larger study on the protection of civilians initiated by DPKO and OCHA.

In December 2008, UN Action will – through WHO – organize a conference to agree on a research agenda on sexual violence in conflict. The meeting will build on the outcomes of two UN Action supported conferences, namely “Women targeted or affected by armed conflict: What role for military peacekeepers?” and OHCHR’s conference “Seeking Justice – Getting Law: How do post-conflict societies deal with sexualized war violence against women and girls?” (both co-financed by UN Action).

ECHA/ECPS UN and NGO Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Background

The Executive Committees on Humanitarian Affairs and Peace and Security (ECHA/ECPS) United Nations (UN) and Nongovernmental Organization (NGO) Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse was established in February 2005 with the aim of preventing acts of sexual exploitation and abuse and improving response to it when it occurs. OCHA and DFS co-chair this task force that includes more than 35 UN and non-UN entities. This Task Force took up the work of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises.

Policy framework

In October 2003, the Secretary-General issued a Bulletin entitled *Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse* (SGB). The SGB stipulates that any acts of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse committed by UN staff members or persons under contract with the UN “constitute acts of serious misconduct and are therefore grounds for disciplinary measures, including summary dismissal.” It also notes that Heads of Departments, Offices and Missions are responsible for “creating and maintaining an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.” Through the Task Force, members seek to implement this obligation with the benefit of inter-agency collaboration.

Areas of focus

The work of the Task Force is divided into four focus areas: 1) engagement with and support of local populations, 2) prevention, 3) response systems, and 4) management and coordination.

Main activities

The Task Force supports the establishment of UN and NGO policies and develops tools so as to assist the humanitarian community in protecting from sexual exploitation and abuse. It has produced, for example, a *Statement of Commitment on Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and non-UN Personnel*, an awareness-raising video *To Serve with Pride: Zero Tolerance for Sexual Exploitation and Abuse*, and a UN strategy on assistance to victims, adopted by the General Assembly in December 2007. Future outputs will include guidance on developing complaints mechanisms, training modules for managers and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) focal points and guidance for implementing the Secretary-General’s Bulletin.

The Task Force also provides strategic and technical support to selected UN Country Teams and peacekeeping operations. In this context, it builds capacity through training, strengthens inter-agency collaboration on PSEA activities, provides guidance on developing victim assistance programmes, and undertakes other related work.

Contacts/website

The Task Force’s website is soon to be launched at www.un.org/sea. In the meantime, it can be found at <http://ochaonline.un.org/sea>. The Task Force can be contacted at seatf@un.org.