

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ELEVATING THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN MEDIATION**

More than 50% of peace agreements fail within five years of signature. In part, this is because negotiations and accords often do not address the root causes of conflict or seek to prevent a resurgence of conflict. It is also because talks suffer from the absence of women. In 2010, the UN Development Fund for Women found that women comprise less than 10% of negotiators and less than 3% of the signatories to peace agreements.

In January 2011, The Institute for Inclusive Security convened twenty one experts from twenty<sup>1</sup> countries to develop recommendations for advancing women's inclusion in mediation. They considered ways to increase the prevalence of female mediators, enhance communication and cooperation with women and civil society during negotiations, and to augment attention to women's priorities and needs. Generally, they felt that mediators must ensure negotiations bring a broader, longer-term perspective to talks so that peace agreements endure; involving women will help ensure a focus on critical broader priorities and needs.

Implementation of these recommendations would reinforce realization of the Beijing Platform for Action, UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1889, and 1960<sup>2</sup>, and The Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which stress the need for women's representation in all peace processes. It would also advance implementation of a US National Action Plan on women, peace, and security.

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<sup>1</sup> Argentina, Burundi, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guatemala, Iraq, Israel, Kenya, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, Serbia, Sri Lanka, Uganda, and Yemen.

<sup>2</sup> UN Security Council Resolutions on women, peace, and security include: UNSCR 1325 (2000), UNSCR 1820 (2008), UNSCR 1888 (2009), UNSCR 1889 (2009), and UNSCR 1960 (2010).

**CONVENERS AND OBSERVERS OF MEDIATION (SUCH AS MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS,  
FOREIGN COUNTRIES, AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS) SHOULD:**

1. Include at least 40% men and 40% women in mediation teams, including in decision-making positions.
2. Ensure that every formal mediator and mediation team has appropriate technical support to engage women and address their needs by:
  - a. Clearly defining the mediators' mandate and performance objectives to require attention to gender and consultation with women and civil society;
  - b. Providing orientation and sensitization of the need for women's inclusion and cooperation with civil society at the national, sub-national, and community levels;
  - c. Formulating and disseminating guidelines regarding cooperation with women and civil society;
  - d. Including a gender adviser at a senior level who has knowledge of peace processes;
  - e. Convening high-level gender expert support teams of women from conflict-affected areas to advise all actors in the process, including observers; and
  - f. Consistently commissioning analyses of community level conflicts that look at the differential needs, roles, and interests of women and men to feed into local, national, and international mediation efforts.
3. Strengthen international contact groups/groups of friends'<sup>3</sup> efforts to ensure women's role in mediation by including at least 40% men and 40% women within them and by explicitly:
  - a. Calling for formal consultations with women and men in civil society;
  - b. Mandating gender analysis; and
  - c. Advocating to mediators and negotiating parties to include women in peace processes and to produce more gender sensitive agreements.
4. Credit and identify women as members of mediation teams and publicly acknowledge their contributions to mediation, including with the media.

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<sup>3</sup> "Group of friends" refers to the different formal and informal international coalitions that come together in support of mediation processes. Examples include Friends of the Guatemalan Peace Process, the International Contact Group on Somalia, or the International Contact Group supporting the Mindanao peace process. These may be established directly by the mediator, by observers and supporters of the mediation, or at the request of the parties.

**FUNDERS AND PROVIDERS OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SHOULD:**

1. Fund global mapping exercises of women with national and sub-national mediation experience; use those maps to enrich rosters of mediators that exist.
2. Enhance research into the role and success of female mediators and women's priorities in mediation, especially by:
  - a. Conducting evidence-based analyses of the different roles women play in mediation, including everything from direct mediation support to creating the conditions for mediation to occur; obstacles to women's participation; women's differential impact on mediation; strategies and structures to promote women's inclusion; and case examples of successful and unsuccessful mediation efforts that explore the quantitative and qualitative difference more inclusive processes make on the community, national, and international levels.
  - b. Conducting gender-sensitive analyses of conflicts at the local level; and
  - c. Consistently using a gender lens when tracking and evaluating implementation of peace processes, including agreements.
3. Use financial incentives to:
  - a. Facilitate women's participation in peace talks by underwriting women mediators' and negotiators' participation in peace processes (that is, additional to the funding provided for the standard number of mediators and negotiators); and
  - b. Encourage the creation of gender sensitive agendas for negotiation by facilitating consultations with women and civil society.
4. Support efforts to increase the number of female mediators and gender awareness in mediation through:
  - a. Gender-sensitization sessions to increase awareness of all mediators;
  - b. Efforts to recruit, increase capacity, and provide opportunities for women in mediation;
  - c. Ensuring peer exchanges of peace mediators and exchanges among conflict areas to give local women experience mediating outside of their own context;
  - d. Funding formal networks of female mediators and supporting women's entry into broader networks of mediators; and
  - e. Supporting medium- to long-term programming to develop cadres of female mediators to ensure professionalism and sustained peace.
5. Underwrite national government and civil society efforts to increase the visibility of women mediators and to highlight their achievements in public broadcasting, commercial mass media, and social media as well as through the creative arts.

**DOMESTIC ACTORS FACING CONFLICT**  
**(SUCH AS NATIONAL AND SUB-NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS AND NEGOTIATING PARTIES) SHOULD:**

1. Ensure women's input is solicited and formally considered:
  - a. At the peace table, by including women equally at all levels within mediation teams, negotiating parties, and technical assistance teams; and
  - b. In constructing the agenda for talks and determining the content of agreements through consultations with women and civil society organizations.
2. Diversify recruitment of female mediators for international and national mediation teams by including women with conflict mediation experience in different contexts at the national and local levels.
3. Institutionalize mediation by:
  - a. Creating a legal framework for the use of gender-sensitive, non-adversarial dispute resolution processes (thereby ensuring enhanced participation of women as mediators, recognition of women mediators' in these areas, and women's access to justice);
  - b. Where applicable, creating a national structure for peacebuilding and conflict resolution in which there are at least 40% men and 40% women in positions at all levels; and
  - c. Developing school curricula at all levels to create a culture of peace.
4. Ensure peace negotiation agendas include women's priorities and needs.
5. Support women's political participation at the local and national level to ensure that a sufficient number of women feed into the pool of mediators drawn upon to resolve future conflict.