You get what you pay for!

1 year of the world’s military expenditures (USD 1464 billion 2008)

or

700 years of the UN regular budget

or

2928 years of the new women’s agency

WOMEN’S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM
World military spending 2008:
1 464 000 000 000 USD
or 4 000 000 000 USD per day

Disarming for gender equality
Achieving universal gender equality is an ambitious goal, one that has been articulated in the UN Charter and many resolutions, conference outcome documents and decisions of governments. It will require a shift in the way we think about gender roles and in the relationship between men and women, boys and girls. Legislation needs to be changed, as well as social attitudes and norms.

Serious financial resources will need to be made available. Compared to military spending, however, the amount required seems ridiculously small. In 2008 the world’s military expenditure was estimated to be US$ 1,464 billion USD or 217 USD per capita. Funding gender equality, as set out in the Millennium Development Goals, costs less than 20 percent of military spending.

The cost of achieving gender equality
The World Bank has estimated that it would cost US$ 7-13 per capita to finance interventions directly aimed at achieving gender equality in low-income countries. The amount spent on French military equipment in one year would cover this need for a whole year. The amount that the USA spends on military research and development in one year would be enough to cover this need for five years.

Reducing the gender gap at all levels of education is one indicator of gender equality. Meeting the target of gender parity in secondary education would cost...
The annual cost for a basic package of sexual and reproductive health services is estimated to be US$ 36 billion, which is only slightly more than what the UK spends on military personnel and equipment in a year.

This equals to less than the cost of 9 days occupying Iraq (or four days depending on who you ask). Providing sexual and reproductive health services is also essential to expand the life choices available to women, as well as to reach the goal of reduced maternal mortality.

The annual cost for a basic package of sexual and reproductive health services is estimated to be US$ 36 billion, which is only slightly more than what the UK spends on military personnel and equipment in a year.

**The Millennium Development Goals and gender equality**

The goal of increased gender equality is tightly connected to the other Millennium Development Goals; in fact, gender equality is integral to the achievement of each of the development goals.

According to the World Bank, 35-52 percent of the total funding required to fulfill the Millennium Development Goals will directly or indirectly facilitate the achievement of gender equality objectives.

Investments aimed at increasing gender equality need to be directed towards all sectors of society. The World Bank estimates that over 90 percent of the costs associated with achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment are in fact implemented through sector programs, and it is absolutely necessary for governments to invest in gender equality interventions if they hope to achieve the other Millennium Development Goals.

It is possible to reach the Millennium Development Goals, but in order to do so, governments have to fulfill their promises to increase their official development assistance. The amount necessary for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals was estimated to be US$ 135 billion in 2006, rising to US$ 195 billion in 2015. These figures are respectively equivalent to 0.44 and 0.54 percent of donor GNP.
In 2007 the USA spent 4.0 percent of its GDP on the military. The UK, France and China are not far behind, spending 2.4, 2.3 and 2 percent of GDP respectively for military purposes. Governments have undertaken to increase their overseas development assistance to 0.7 percent of national GDP, but in fact we have not witnessed any significant increases of aid since 2004.

Instead the world’s total military spending continues to increase, and is now almost on the same level as it was by the end of the Cold War.

As demonstrated above, the enormous amounts of money spent on militarism would be more than enough to finance gender equality and the Millennium Development Goals. This does not mean that cuts in military expenditure would automatically lead to increased resources for gender equality and the advancement of women. To accomplish this, governments in all parts of the world need to introduce gender aware budgeting and reallocate resources spent on the military towards efforts that benefit women and humanity at large. Gender aware budgeting can also help offset some of the negative effects on gender relations caused by militarized societies, by fostering alternative norms, perspectives, and attitudes.

Gender aware budgeting

Budgeting is not just a financial exercise; it is a method of planning, prioritizing and decision making that has consequences for people and their environment. Gender budgeting is a tool that takes into account the needs of women and men in their different social and economic positions and therefore helps determine how the prioritization, allocation and spending of resources can contribute to achieving equality between women and men.

As demonstrated above, the enormous amounts of money spent on militarism would be more than enough to finance gender equality and the Millennium Development Goals.
### Top 10 Military Spenders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Spending USD</th>
<th>Spending per capita USD</th>
<th>Contribution to UN regular budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>607 000 000 000</td>
<td>1 967</td>
<td>598 292 101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>84 900 000 000</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>72 529 320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>65 700 000 000</td>
<td>1 061</td>
<td>171 356 297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>65 300 000 000</td>
<td>1 070</td>
<td>180 629 824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>58 600 000 000</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>32 634 115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>46 800 000 000</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>233 252 334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>46 300 000 000</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>452 091 268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>40 600 000 000</td>
<td>689</td>
<td>138 123 890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>38 200 000 000</td>
<td>1 511</td>
<td>20 341 931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>30 000 000 000</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12 237 793</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conventional Arms Transfers to Developing Nations, 2001-2008
(Congressional Research Service, 7-5700, www.crs.gov)

**References:**
- Sixty-second General Assembly Fifth Committee 26th Meeting (Night), GA/AB/3835
- http://www.globalissues.org/article/75/world-military-spending
What would you buy?

One year of the world’s military spending

Over 24 years of the additional foreign aid required to reach the Millennium Development Goals by 2015

43 years of the annual cost required to achieve universal access to sexual and reproductive health services

2928 years of the budget for the new UN women’s agency

WOMEN’S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM
www.wilpfinternational.org

WILPF projects:
www.ReachingCriticalWill.org
www.PeaceWomen.org