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Georgia – December 12, 2017

By Prativa Khanal

Georgia adopted its first National Action Plan (NAP) on the UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women and Peace and Security in 2012, the first post-Soviet country to do so. The first NAP, approved by the Parliament of Georgia, covered the period 2012-2015. Georgia is now implementing its second NAP for the

years 2016-2017; and work is ongoing on the third NAP. One of the key features of the current NAP process is the inclusion of local authorities and other local leaders.

With support from the Austrian Development Cooperation and in partnership with the IDP Women's Association Consent, the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) facilitated Localization of UNSCR 1325 workshops in Georgia's Shida Kartli and Samegrelo regions from November 24-28, 2017.

The Localization workshops convened local council members, representatives of women's groups and other civil society organizations, internally displaced persons, police officers, Ministry of Refugees, Social Service Department, and Education Resource Centre. The workshops raised awareness of UNSCR 1325 and the third phase of Georgia's NAP among local authorities and leaders in Shida Kartli and Samegrelo regions. There is a total of 273,411 internally displaced people (IDP) in Georgia because of the violent conflicts the country experienced including the Russian-Georgian war in 2008. Zugdidi has the largest number of IDP and conflict-affected population due to its proximity to the breakaway region of Abkhazia. Gori, which was occupied and was the target of several aerial attacks by Russian troops during the 2008 war recorded a large number of civilian injuries and deaths during and after the war. It maintains a strategic importance due to its location on the principal highway connecting eastern and western parts of Georgia.

The workshop participants started the drafting of Local Action Plans (LAPs) for their municipalities highlighting issues such as women's participation in public decision-making, shelters for IDP, psycho-social counseling, legal assistance, employment support; access to education and basic social services such as health care, water, and electricity. The participants also called for funding for LAPs from the budgets of the municipalities as well as the national government. They stress the value of the Localization process:

"Localization helps in adapting Georgia's NAP 1325 to the existing situations and realities in local communities," states Lia Chlachidze, Member of Gori Local Council during the Workshop on Localization of UNSCR 1325 in Gori, Shida Kartli region. At the Localization workshop in Zugdidi, Samegrelo region, Ana Emukhvari, from the civil society organization "Community Development Centre" shares "Localization assists local organizations and authorities in making local communities aware about UNSCR 1325 as an instrument that should be used to address the impact of war."

Sopo Japaridze, the Prime Minister's Adviser for Human Rights and Gender Equality, who is also the Head of the Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence; and overall coordinator of the NAP, spoke at the workshop in Zugdidi municipality. She stressed, "We are here to listen to the concerns, challenges and issues of local authorities and population in order to mitigate risk and prevent further problems by including them in the upcoming NAP on UNSCR 1325 of Georgia."

Representatives from UN Women; Office of the Prime Minister; Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence; EU Monitoring Mission, and the International Committee of the Red Cross also attended the Localization workshop in Zugdidi.

Prior to the Localization workshops, the Office of the Prime Minister, UN Women office in Georgia, GNWP and IDP Women's Association Consent, co-organized a NAP Workshop in Tbilisi, Georgia on November 21-22, 2017. It was the first NAP workshop attended by newly elected local authorities from different municipalities. This was a critical step in promoting participation of local communities in the development of the NAP which could ensure strong local ownership and effective implementation.

Civil society groups and the representative of the State Committee of Women, Family and Child Issues from Azerbaijan also participated in the NAP and Localization workshops under GNWP's Peace Exchange program. The Peace Exchange is aimed at knowledge-sharing and exchange of strategies among NAP stakeholders. It also promotes meaningful government-civil society partnership in the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

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