



PROJECT OUTLINE

Gender and peace in Somalia – Implementation of Resolution 1325

Agencies of project implementation: **UN-INSTRAW** (United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women) and **ADEP** (Associazione Diaspora e Pace)

Funding institutions: Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Region of Puglia, Province of Milan, Municipality of Bari.

General objective of the project

- Promote the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)ⁱ through peace and reconstruction processes in Somalia and in countries of the Somali Diaspora with the aim of advocating for the participation of women and of women's rights associations.

Specific objectives of the project

- Recognise the contribution of women of the Somali Diaspora in their work to actively promote the peace and reconstruction process in Somalia.
- Support the continued cooperation between Somali women's rights organisations in Somalia and in countries of the Somali Diaspora to ensure a full implementation of Resolution 1325 in Somalia.
- Empower women's work within the Somali civil society to promote women's participation in the ongoing peace process and for the planned political elections in 2009.
- Contribute to gain more attention from the international community in favour of the political work of Somali women.

Background of the project

The Project "Gender and peace in Somalia – Implementation of Resolution 1325" is promoted by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and implemented by UN-INSTRAW and its Italo-Somali project partner *Associazione Diaspora e Pace* (ADEP). The Project aims to promote the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) by supporting the role of women in the Somali peace process and emphasising their role and their engagement for the survival of their communities during the conflict in Somalia. The Project is based on the participation of women of the Somali Diaspora in Italy, of women's rights associations and of Somali civil society organisations, leading the way to a peace and state-building process that already start in exile by encouraging women's full participation during the political elections in Somalia planned for 2009.

From the point of view of the current emergency and of the re-establishment of the international cooperation in the area, Somalia is currently a country with an exceedingly variegated and active social fabric, above all on the local level, and with great economic differences. In Somaliland and Puntland, the local economy has benefited from the processes for autonomy and the local communities have responded positively to the creation of an initial administrative structure and of more secure environmental conditions. However, the central and southern regions of Somalia continue to be unstable due to the conflict and to the continuous militarisation process. In these areas, the political authority is highly fragmented and disputed, and the populations are exposed to repeated humanitarian crises. The "war economy", which consists above all of the exchange of goods and private services, survives despite the instability of the area. There are in fact telephone companies that maintain the communication network in the inner regions of the country and money exchange services have taken over the function of the regular banks, ensuring the arrival of remittances from abroad. However, the lack of stable institutions penalise fundamental sectors such as the health services, the educational system and the access to primary goods such as water and food. The female workforce is highly concentrated in these sectors. In many cases, women support entire families by themselves. These distinguished efforts contribute to the reconstruction of civil society and to end the endemic crisis of Somalia. During the last seventeen years, as a result of the collapse of the state structures and of the war machinery, men in Somalia find it increasingly difficult to find long-term employment. Women have therefore had to take over the responsibility of satisfying the daily needs of their families to a much greater degree.

Women are hence active promoters of the peace and reconciliation process. After many years of advocacy, they have now reached the point where many international observers have started to take note the efforts made by the Somali women, realising that they are a fundamental part of civil society and of the work of local communities to try to overcome the difficulties and severe violence that continues to prevail in the area. Somali women represent an important interlocutor that needs to be invested in, especially to ensure greater participation of women in the peace process and in the upcoming political elections. In fact, the initiatives that are put into practice on the grass-root level can create the basis for a sustainable peace by aiming not only to rebuild institutions and infrastructures, but also to meet the needs and capacities of the local populations.

The initiative for this Project was taken at an international Conference which was held in Rome on 13 June 2007 and supported by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Conference aimed to discuss how UN Security Council Resolution 1325 can be adapted to the situation in Somalia and to put greater international focus on the role of Somali women in Italy. The purpose was to highlight the role of Somali women in the conflict and peace negotiations in Somalia and their importance for their families and exile communities in Italy. Representatives from various organisations participated in the discussions of the Conference, among them a number of UN agencies (such as UNIFEM, UNICEF, UN-INSTRAW and UNHCR), government agencies, NGOs and Somali civil society organisations based in Italy. The aim of this Project is to follow up the discussion that was initiated by the international seminar in Rome and support the continued cooperation between Somali women's rights organisations in Italy, in Somalia and in other countries of the Diaspora to ensure the full implementation of Resolution 1325 in Somalia.

The creation and work of *Associazione Diaspora e Pace*

ADEP is an Italo-Somali association working for Somali women's empowerment in Somalia and for the rights of immigrants in Italy, with the support of Somali women living in Italy. ADEP is made up of seven women of Somali descent that live in various parts of Italy since many years. The members of ADEP have been active for Somali women's empowerment in Somalia and in Italy since many years. They were for example among the main organisers of the Conference in Rome in June 2007. Since September 2007, the members of ADEP collaborate with UN-INSTRAW for the implementation of this Project, leading among other things to the formal constitution of the association ADEP in early April 2008. ADEP was the main organiser of the two seminars held in Italy within the framework of the project, held in Milan on 23-24 February with financial support of the Province of Milan, and in Bari on 3-4 May 2008 with financial support from the Municipality of Bari and the Region of Puglia.

UN-INSTRAW's expertise

The expertise of UN-INSTRAW in the fields of Gender, Peace and Security, in combination with that of Gender, Remittances and Development, gives the Institute a unique profile. The project benefits especially from UN-INSTRAW's specialisation in these fields, together with the extensive experience in networking and participatory research methodologies.

UN-INSTRAW conducts pioneering research in the field of gender and security, and the Institute's Gender, Peace and Security programme is active in work and advocacy for the implementation of Resolution 1325, currently also in Liberia and Burundi. The programme has established extensive networks of experts in the field of gender and security, including academics, NGO activists, policy-makers and UN officials. This networking capacity constitutes an important part of the work methodology of the Gender, Peace and Security programme and it allows the staff members to conduct highly participatory research. In 2006, UN-INSTRAW published the guide "Securing Equality, Engendering Peace" on how to create action plans for the implementation of Resolution 1325, targeting governments, UN agencies, regional organisations and national as well as local NGOs. This guide includes good practices, specific recommendations and a template for how to outline action plans in six operative phases.

UN-INSTRAW's Gender, Remittances and Development programme contributes to the current debate on the impact of international migration on development, focusing on the gender perspective by conducting research and projects on gender and migration. UN-INSTRAW collaborates with various institutions, including the Inter-American Development Bank, the Institute for Development Studies of the University of Sussex, the International Organization for Migration and the South African Institute of International Affairs, UNDP and UNFPA. One example is a study that UN-INSTRAW is conducting with the support of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, on the role of women in the Filipino community in Rome, Italy. The participatory methodology of this research, based on interviews and focus groups with Filipino women, constitutes an interactive process which highlights the opportunities and challenges of these women in their new life in Italy.



Working methodology

The activities of the Project are based on the grass-root participation of women of the Somali Diaspora in Italy and of women from Somalia. The seminars in Italy aim to determine the themes that will be addressed during the International Conference in Dar-es-Salaam by the Somali women's associations that work for the peace and state-building processes of the country. The interests of other donors will also be taken into consideration, such as those of regional and local authorities in Italy.

Activities and operative organisation of the project

- *February & May 2008* – Two regional meetings with Somali women in Northern Italy (Milan 23-24 February 2008) and Southern Italy (Bari 3-4 May 2008) to discuss how they could support the process of women's empowerment in Somalia, and how to promote further bridge-building between women in Somalia and women of the Diaspora to encourage women to take an active part in the peace and state-building processes in Somalia.
- *September 2008* – International Conference in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania with the representatives of the Somali women's organisations of the Diaspora countries and with women's organisations in Somalia. The agenda of the International Conference was outlined by the priorities indicated during the Seminars in Milan and Bari. The aims of the International Conference are to:
 - Promote an international networking process among Somali women's organisations from countries of the Diaspora and from Somalia, supporting their advocacy activities;
 - Involve various Somali stakeholders that are active in the peace process of the Country;
 - Outline a roadmap for the creation of an Action Plan for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in Somalia, and define strategies and methodologies for supporting women's organisations in their roles in the processes of peace-building and institution-building;
 - Outline recommendations and suggestions for future activities, including methods for monitoring the results of future projects.

Products of the project

- Awareness-raising of the aim and utility of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 among women of the Somali Diaspora and in Somalia.
- Networking between Somali women's organisations in Somalia and in the countries of the Somali Diaspora;
- Roadmap for the creation of Action Plans for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in Somalia and for CSOs at the local, national and regional levels;
- Reports of the results of the Seminars in Italy and Conference in Somalia;
- Background paper for the International Conference in Tanzania;
- Mapping of organisations working for Somali women's rights in Somalia;
- Contacts with international organisations, as well as with the media, for the support of the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Somalia;
- Working paper on gender, peace and security in Somalia and on participatory methodologies to promote networking among Somali women in exile and in Somalia to engage in the peace and state-building processes of the country;
- Final project report.

ⁱ UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) is outlined according to the following 18 points:

- Increase the representation of women in decision-making for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict and peace processes (para.1);
- Increase the participation of women at decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes (para.2);
- Increase the appointment of women as special representatives and envoys (para.3);
- Expand the role of women in field-based operations as military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel (para.4);
- Incorporate gender perspectives into peacekeeping operations and ensure that field operations include a gender component (para.5);
- Provide training guidelines and materials on the rights and needs of women to Member States and incorporate gender perspectives into national training programmes (para.6);
- Increase voluntary financial, technical and logistical support from Member States for gender-sensitive training efforts (para.7);
- Adopt a gender perspective in negotiation and implementation of peace agreements, including attention to the special needs of women and girls, support local women's peace initiatives, and ensure protection and respect for the human rights of women and girls (para.8);
- Ensure respect for international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls (para.9);
- Adopt special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence (para.10);
- End impunity and prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, including those related to sexual and other violence against women and girls (para.11);
- Ensure respect for the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements and take into account the particular needs of women and girls (para.12);
- Consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants and the needs of their dependants in disarmament, demobilisation and rehabilitation (DDR) initiatives (para.13);
- Give consideration to the potential impact on civilians, and the special needs of women and girls, and appropriate humanitarian exemptions, in measures adopted under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations (para.14);
- Ensure that Security Council missions take gender considerations and rights of women into account, including through consultation with local and international women's groups (para.15);
- Invite the Secretary-General to carry out a study on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in peace-building and the gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution and submit a report to the Security Council (para.16);
- Request the Secretary-General to include in his reporting to the Security Council progress on gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping missions (para.17);
- The Security Council remains actively seized of the matter (para.18).