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Ministry of Women and Social Affairs



OUTCOME DOCUMENT

**Policy Dialogue Forum
Integrated Approach to Amplifying
the Voices of Women in
Peacebuilding & Reconciliation in
Ethiopia**

5 GENDER
EQUALITY



16 PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



OUTCOME DOCUMENT

A POLICY DIALOGUE FORUM ON AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO AMPLIFYING
THE VOICES OF WOMEN IN

PEACEBUILDING & RECONCILIATION **IN ETHIOPIA**



July 5, 2022

1. INTRODUCTION

As evidence from global research on the role of women in peace and security confirms¹, women have a decisive role in preventing, managing conflicts as well as ensuring sustainable peace among conflicting parties/ communities. Concurrent to global findings, an assessment² conducted in Oromia and Somali Regions by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Ethiopia in collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (MoWSA) and Ministry of Peace (MoP) has also underlined the case on the positive role of women in peace and reconciliation. The assessment calls for concrete policy and programme level interventions that address the deep-rooted social and structural barriers facing women in contributing to peace and reconciliation efforts at the national, regional, and local levels. Based on this evidence, a policy dialogue forum was held on 5th July 2022 under the auspices of the MoWSA to examine the gains made and the ‘unfinished business’ in positioning women at the front and centre of policy and programming with regard to peace building and reconciliation efforts, and in particular, how this would feed into and inform the National Gender Policy currently under review. The dialogue forum was organised under the auspices of the MoWSA and brought together key national and international stakeholders. Among the documents that informed the deliberations during the forum included a Policy Brief³, emerging from a past similar engagement that focused on Somali and Oromia regions as well as recent Review of the National Policy on Ethiopian Women (1993)⁴. This document is an Outcome Statement from the forum and captures some of the salient issues emerging from the deliberations.

The Policy dialogue was timely and relevant in making the issues of Women in Peace and Security one of the strategic pillars of the new Gender Policy. It was an opportunity to address the policy implications of the changing context including the impact of the on-going conflicts in parts of the country, and how this is affecting women’s role in peace-building and reconciliation processes. The presentations and discussions of the forum were also useful in providing an integrated and holistic view to inform the Policy development and the parallel United Nations Security Council (UNSC) 1325⁵ National Action Plan (NAP) development process led by MoWSA. Ethiopia is one of the countries that have adopted the resolution, but the NAP development has just started this year which provides a unique opportunity for a strategic start to address the issues of women in peace and security against the backdrop of a changed context including conflict.

The Policy dialogue brought 37 experts (23 Female and 14 Male) from relevant federal and regional peacebuilding authorities, members of the Technical Committee working on the revision of the National Gender Policy and NAP development technical committees with the lead consultant for the former, CSOs, think tanks, and women structures at regional and Woreda level, among other participants.

Expert opinions and inputs were collected from the active engagements of participants during the dialogue that helped to frame the outcomes of the dialogue against the four pillars of UNSC 1325, namely, Prevention, Participation, Protection, Recovery and Relief and Recovery. This outcome document will be presented to the higher leadership of MoWSA, and National Technical Committee who are entrusted to guide the development of the Gender Policy as it was agreed during the planning phase.

1 Women, Peace and Security: Women’s Organizations in Peace-Making, RESEARCH BRIEF by DESIRÉE NILSSON AND ISAK SVENSSON, November 2020. This brief is part of the series of research briefs which were initiated in connection to the 20th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 and promotes the realization of the WPS agenda through evidence-based policy and practice; As cited by IPA at <https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/IPI-E-pub-Reimagining-Peacemaking-rev.pdf>; Jana Krause, Werner Krause & Pii Bränfors (2018) Women’s Participation in Peace Negotiations and the Durability of Peace, *International Interactions*, 44:6, 985-1016, DOI: 10.1080/03050629.2018.1492386

2 Comprehensive assessment on the Role of Women in Peace and Reconciliation in Oromia and Somali Regional States, UNDP, 2020.

3 An integrated approach to amplifying the voices of women in peacebuilding in Ethiopia: the case of Oromia and Somali Regional States, UNDP, 2022.

4 Review of the National Policy on Ethiopian Women, CARE Ethiopia, June 2021. The review report was produced by CARE Ethiopia with the request of Ministry of Women, Children and Youth in its efforts to understand the impact of the 1993 women’s policy and inform future policy formulation in Ethiopia

5 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, on women, peace, and security, was adopted by the UN Security Council on 31 October 2000. The resolution acknowledged the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women and girls.

2. POLICY ISSUES FORWARDED

The following questions guided the contribution of participants during the dialogue forum.

1. How and what should be done to make Ethiopian women more active contributors to the statutory and traditional peacebuilding and reconciliation institutions/mechanisms. Please articulate specific Policy Agenda in respect to their roles.
2. What are the methodologies and approaches that would make the national gender policy be more responsive of the challenges and opportunities of Ethiopian Women in Peace and Security? Please consider the following four Pillars of the UNSC 1325 as a framework to forward your recommendation-Participation, Prevention, Protection and Relief and Recovery.

Concurrent to the above questions the following major outcomes are extracted to inform the Gender Policy Development process.

A. Women to become active contributors in the statutory and traditional peacebuilding and reconciliation institutions/mechanism: Contributions from participants are framed in a way for the policy to address those issues at three levels:

i. At Individual Level the gender policy to:

- Strong provision for all concerned to provide support and capacitate women at individual level to set agenda, participate and lead peacebuilding processes and contribute to national and regional processes/ platforms for peace as the ongoing national dialogue⁶ process
- Recognition for influential individuals and group/s of women who are active contributors to peacebuilding and reconciliation
- Set a mechanism for recognition of the different roles and level of engagement of women in peace as an individual in both the formal and informal/ cultural systems

ii. At institutional, legal and policy level the gender policy to:

- Enforce the application of an integrated and holistic thinking and approach for relevant institutions from government and CSOs to institutionalize the work on women in peace and examine their barriers and devise a transformative policy and programmes that could maximize the role of women in building sustained peace in Ethiopia
- Make the human rights approach as the central drive on the issues of women peace and security
- Recognize the importance of the ratification and implementation of International legal Frameworks to promote the role of women in peace and security
- Be comprehensive in a way to recognize the four pillars of UNSCR 1325 as well-set direction for effective implementation and preparation of periodical review of a National Action Plan (NAP) to ensure sustainable peace and security on women
- Advocate for concrete action on the establishment of benchmarks, database, monitoring, evaluation, and accountability systems that are networked to track progress and further inform decisions at all levels related to women in peace and security
- Enforce the need for coordination of existing structures, networks and institutions working on promoting the issues of women in peace and security
- Recognize the need for legalization of the cultural conflict prevention, management, reconciliation, and mediation systems in a way to enforcing the role of women in peace and security in the system
- Enforce allocation of budget for implementation of policy provisions
- Recognition for influential groups of women and networks who are active contributors to peacebuilding and reconciliation
- Devise specific actions in the new national gender policy in view of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 16 in particular) to promote peace & rule of law and reduce all forms of violence
- Interconnect the role of women in peace building with the current/ongoing initiatives such as the national dialogue process

⁶ A National Dialogue Commission is established with Proclamation No. 1265-2021 to lead broad-based national dialogue process that could help Ethiopians to settle on their differences and pave the way for reconciliation and peaceful settlement of differences.

- Strengthen CSOs working on promoting the role of women in peace building and reconciliation
- Address structural barriers affecting women's participation in formal peace processes and promote the meaningful engagement of women in the formal peace building institutions

iii. At community level the gender policy to:

- Recognize the need for studies, assessment of and deliberations on all national values (cultural or religious) which contribute to and hinder the role of women in peacebuilding and reconciliation
- Support additional evidence and data generation on the role of women in early warning, peace building and reconciliation across the varying contexts and capitalise on the positive aspects of the roles
- Recognize the cultural and attitudinal barriers at community level and provide direction for all concerned to address it in a transformative way

B. Methodologies and approaches on how the national gender policy be responsive against the four pillars of UNSC 1325- Participation, Prevention, Protection and Relief and Recovery

i. Participation -The Gender Policy to:

- Establish quota system to increase participation of women and assume decision-making positions in peace committees, commissions, formal task forces, political systems, democratic and security institutions, peace missions, negotiations and mediations processes, and cultural systems at national, regional, and local levels
- Recognize the need for mainstreaming of the quota system in all relevant sectors to ensure women's equal participation in conflict resolution, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction, recovery, and building conflict resilient communities
- Encourage establishment of strong women networks for sufficient women participation in promoting peace and social cohesion in a coordinated and coherent manner
- Advocate for and demand consistency and alignment in the application of quota systems and rules for a meaningful participation of women
- Direct establishment of monitoring and accountability system to ensure the meaningful participation of women in conflict prevention, management, peace processes, and national, regional, and local structures

ii. Prevention -The Gender Policy to:

- Clarify the role of government and other non-government institutions as well as lay the ground for a strategy to mainstream gender in peace and security agenda in all sectors and levels
- Set an agenda on gender sensitive programming, risk assessment and conflict mapping as one of the major prerequisite procedures to inform any programme and project level interventions by all sector
- Identify and recognize the role of other institutions/CSOs, bilateral and multilateral organization/for their active engagement in the prevention of conflict induced attacks, Sexual and Gender Based Violence/ rape and other forms of sexual abuse/, and all other forms of violence in situations of violent, and armed conflicts

iii. Protection- The Gender Policy to:

- Provide a strong provision for the security and justice sector bureaus/institutions to fully discharge their responsibilities by recognizing the special needs of women and impacts of conflict on their lives and livelihood
- Promote and advocate for security, protection and women's access to justice and other basic social services
- Recognize and promote strong monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and coordination systems/ mechanisms and institutional arrangements for justice and security sector institutions to implement and coordinate protection services for women in pre and post conflict scenarios
- Emphasize the need to put an end to impunity and enforce prosecution of crimes including those related to sexual and other violence against women and girls during conflict
- Allow women in conflict situations to create platforms and be empowered to protect themselves
- Set establishment of safe houses/other systems and structures for women as the major steps of all relevant actors to protect women during conflict and during post recovery and rehabilitation
- Recognize the need for support and follow up for local CSO to contribute for peace and protection of women in pre and post conflict situations

- Affirm and enforce the full implementation of international humanitarian and human rights law⁷ that protects the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts

iv. Relief, Recovery and Resilience: The Gender Policy to:

- Recognize the special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration, post-conflict reconstruction and resilience building
- Enforce the participation of women in the design of post conflict assessment and response plans with a clear gender perspective approach for their engagement
- Enforce the establishment of and scale up of one stop centres, safe houses, need based and responsive legal, psycho-social/trauma healing and other mental and physical health services with the required capacities and resource support from government and other development partners
- Enforce the establishment of direct cash support system with a clear standard procedure that would give priority for the recovery and rehabilitation of female headed households and internally displaced women and children
- Put a clear direction for inclusive coordination mechanism with government and among international and local humanitarian organisations
- Recognize the need for the establishment of gender disaggregated database on Internally displaced people to inform the resettlement and rehabilitation, reintegration, and post-conflict reconstruction interventions

3. CONCLUSION

The policy dialogue process is one of the efforts by the MoWSA and actors with mandates and responsibilities to ensure policy responses are put in place for the role of women in peace and security. The specific recommendations which are forwarded in this outcome document are helpful for the process of policy articulation by the National Technical Committee. While these recommendations are not final, they do, however, shed light for further debates, discussions, and advocacy efforts to ensure the recognition of the gender mainstreaming agenda as one of the critical pillars of the Gender Policy as well as to make it responsive of the current realities of women in Ethiopia. More work beyond the policy response will also be needed to examine and document the barriers of women in peace and security in the context of Inter-Governmental Relations in the current federal arrangements of the country.

Moving forward, ownership and implementation of the policy should also be effective by creating the required institutional and legal arrangements and coordination along with the required resource allocation from government and development partners. This will guarantee sufficient space for women empowerment in the process of conflict resolutions, peacebuilding and post conflict recovery and reconstruction efforts that are ahead demanding commitments of all concerned stakeholders in Ethiopia.

⁷ Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and the Protocol thereto of 1967, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979 and the Optional Protocol, UNSC 1325

4. Annex:

A. AGENDA: HIGH LEVEL POLICY DIALOGUE-AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO AMPLIFYING THE VOICES OF WOMEN IN PEACEBUILDING AND RECONCILIATION IN ETHIOPIA, July 5,2022, Bishoftu

Time	Activity	Responsible Party
08:30	Registration/Tea & Coffee	UNDP/MoWSA
09:00 – 09:15	Welcome and Introductory Address Opening Remarks	Representatives of UNDP and MoWSA
10:00 – 10:15	Presentation- The Gender Policy-Its Significance, Timeliness and Preparation Status	MoWSA
10:15 - 10:30	Presentation: The Integral Approach to Amplifying the Voice of Women in Peacebuilding	UNDP
10:30-11:00	Tea/Coffee	Organizers
11: 00- 12:30	Plenary: Question and Answer	Moderator
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch	Organizers
13:30 - 13:40	Formation of Sub- Groups and presentation of Group work objectives	Moderator
13:40 – 15:00	<p>Sub -Group Deliberations on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How and what should be done to make Ethiopian women active contributors to the statutory and traditional peacebuilding and reconciliation institutions/mechanisms. Please articulate specific Policy Agenda in respect to this question. Methodologies and approaches on how the national gender policy be responsive of the challenges and opportunities of Ethiopian Women in Peace and Security. Please consider the following four Pillars of the UNSC 1325 as a framework to forward your recommendations <p>A. Participation A. Prevention A. Protection A. Relief and Recovery</p>	Participants
15:00 – 15:30	Tea /Coffee	Organizers
15:30 – 16:40	Subgroup Presentations	Participants
16:40–17:00	Closing Remarks	UNDP + MoWSA
17:00	End of the Policy Dialogue	

B. Presentation

Women in Peacebuilding: What we know from global experiences

- **Most affected** during conflict, yet **mostly neglected** in efforts and decisions to resolve them
- Their **roles** in conflict are **both as combatants/instigators and as victims**
- When involved, a peace agreement was almost always reached, and is likely to be implemented
- Processes that exclude **women ignore the visions, needs, and priorities** of a large part of population .



Women in Peacebuilding: ...what we know

- Women’s equal participation, therefore, is as much about the, **effectiveness of peacebuilding processes** as it is about **inclusion and human rights**
- Excluding women from peacebuilding neglects a rich **potentials, skills , insights and energy**
- When **participate** in peace negotiations increases the **durability and the quality of peace**
- Participation of women national peace process strengthens **legitimacy** of the process and its **outcomes**
- It also helps to ensure national **ownership of peace process**



Ethiopia: What we know

- **Scant evidence** on the overall role and capacity of women
- **Growing attention** to identify and promote women’s role in the statutory and traditional mechanisms
- Women **structures/figures for peace are being created** (Mother of Peace, Women Peace Forums, Ambassadors...)
- Process initiated for **NAP** to adapt and implement **UNSC 1325**
- The national policy review **was silent on issues of women in peace and security** thus the policy vacuum may persist if not addressed now



What was done by UNDP?

- Women in Peacebuilding (WiP) and Conflict Resolution initiative was implemented in Oromia and Somali Regions of Ethiopia
- Contributed to the **empowerment of targeted women leaders**
- Supported **establishment of CSO Peace forums**
- Contributed to **filling evidence gap** through producing **assessment report and policy briefs** States.



An Integrated Approach to Amplifying the Voices of Women in Peacebuilding

Integral Change Model/Approach

- Helps to **view a situation from different angles and points of view**
- Means **whole, lacking nothing**
- Provides **four quadrants** to diagnose, understand any complex social issue and find a solution
- All **four quadrants are also equally important** thus helps to transform complex social problems



Barriers/opportunities of Women in Peacebuilding Through Four Lenses of The Integral Model

<p>Quadrant 1: Individual Interior</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More sensitive towards conflict than men • More interested in peace and reconciliation than men, • Truth seekers, • BUT accept their subordinate positions in the customary conflict management practices/avenues 	<p>Quadrant 2: Individual Exterior</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace agents/keepers • Conflict instigators/catalysts • Truth tellers • Social support mobilizers • Networkers (Trade and marriage) • Information bearer -BUT have no observable skills in scientific peacebuilding and reconciliation processes
<p>Quadrant 3: Collective Interior</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not know about traditional procedures, customary law on how reconciliation is conducted, • cannot make good judgments and leadership • men have more wisdom than women, • are already represented through their husbands • their participation in public meetings undermine their contribution to their reproductive roles 	<p>Quadrant 4: Collective Exterior</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoP, MoWSA, Peace and Security and Women, Children and Social Bureaus, women's peace committees, associations, federations, leagues, peace ambassadors 'group, peace and development committees, women social groups, and Trade and Marriage networks, • Gurriti, Geda System, Forum for Haada Sinqee, The Xeer- BUT no Legal and Policy Frameworks/, coordination systems among national, regional and local, structures

Conclusion

- **No policy framework** backs the engagement of women in peacebuilding, conflict management and resolution
- Women happened to **have a voice directly or indirectly** but with **limited visibility and participation**
- Women also **have the drive and motive to be active peace actors**, a key enabling factor to initiate and manage peace and reconciliation processes
- Women seemed to have **a subtle role in peace and reconciliation processes**. But **not officially empowered**



Conclusion

- *It is not without a reason that women tend to accept their subordinate positions in peace. This, however, doesn't mean that women are not taking the initiative in peace and any other development initiatives. They do. But those shared interior realities of their community are always in their way.*
- The **interior motives and capacities of state and non-state actors** have a direct influence on the formulation and enforcement of policies, legal and institutional frameworks



What should be done?

- **Inducing attitudinal change within the customary system** - the customary system has unfavorable attitude as influenced by religious and cultural beliefs
- Enhancing **women's knowledge and attitude** on their role on peace
- Awareness raising among **local peace agents** on the role of women in peace building
- Strengthening and working with existing **women's organizations, networks and groups**



What should be done?

- Empowering local women in the customary systems
- Creation/strengthen of **women-centered peace forums and regular dialogue**
- Increasing the number of **women in law enforcement and judiciary**
- Improve **women's representation in the governance system**



What should be done for A Transformative Policy Initiative?

- Investment on **comprehensive and rigorous research undertaking should be increased**
- Any policy and legal formulation **should not leave the subtle interior motives and believes of the formulators to its fate. There is no trade-off in this.**
- Any programme or policy design should employ **systems thinking approach** rather than linear cause and effect analysis



What should be done for A Transformative Policy Initiative?

- The design and implementation of programmes and policy interventions should **employ a multidisciplinary approach** that could bring a range of experts
- Partnerships should be based on **complete understanding of the whole perspectives of the problem**
- The national and regional states actors must give recognition to the issues of women in peace and security as a **standalone national agenda to be aligned with the international normative frameworks/UNSC 1325 / and in the ongoing Women/Gender Policy Development.**



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