



Project funded by the
European Union



United Nations Entity for Gender Equality
and the Empowerment of Women



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SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE NATIONAL CONSULTATIONS ON THE INTEGRATION OF GENDER PERSPECTIVES IN THE SECURITY SECTOR

TBILISI, 18 - 20 APRIL 2012

Representatives of Georgian Civil Society Organisations and government entities involved in the implementation of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security discussed challenges to NAP implementation, what resources civil society has to aid in the implementation and drafted recommendations to improve implementation and monitoring of the NAP. Discussions were organized in six groups with distinct thematic areas:

- Group 1: Implementation and monitoring processes
- Group 2: Equitable provision of security services
- Group 3: Equitable provision of justice services
- Group 4: Equal participation in conflict prevention and resolution
- Group 5: Securing social and economic needs
- Group 6: Gathering information and raising awareness

The present report summarises the thematic areas, recommendations, and discussions of each group.

GROUP 1: IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING PROCESSES

KEY ACTOR: GENDER EQUALITY COUNCIL

DESCRIPTION

The Advisory Council of Gender Equality was established under the chair of the Parliament of Georgia.

The Council acts as a lobbying unit for gender issues. Its main activities include to:

1. Discuss and issue recommendations on gender issues;
2. Elaborate proposals and recommendations on National Gender Policy setting out the actions to integrate gender equality in all spheres and sectors of the political, economic and social life of Georgia;
3. Ensure gender mainstreamed legislation and approximation of Georgian Legislation to the European Union Law pertaining gender equality;

4. Within its competence observe the implementation of the international agreements and conventions involving the rights of women and gender equality issues; and
5. Co-operate closely with international and local organizations working on gender issues.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OUTLINED IN NAP

The Gender Equality Council shares responsibility for working towards all the objectives across all directions and goals outlined in the NAP. As the body with the widest scope of responsibility, it is ideally placed to coordinate and monitor the overall implementation of and reporting on the NAP as well as to consider any eventual revisions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Given the need to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the NAP, it is crucial to clearly identify governments resources—both in use and available—for NAP implementation. An ad-hoc expert group should be established, under the authority of the Gender Equality Council (GEC), to evaluate existing resources. Civil society organisations (CSOs) could leverage their experience in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to support the evaluation process.
2. The Gender Equality Council, as coordinator of NAP implementation, will need to have timely and accurate information. The establishment of a streamlined communication mechanism between government entities responsible for NAP implementation and the GEC could be strengthened with the support of civil society through its contacts, networks, and human resources.
3. NAP monitoring will require coordinating resources from the state, international organizations, and civil society. In that vein, information from civil society reports on Georgia’s northern territory and information from the public defender’s office could enhance monitoring capacity. CSOs can also support the process by providing training on M&E methodologies to designated monitors.

SUMMARY OF GROUP 1 DISCUSSIONS

The topic of discussion of Group 1 was implementation and monitoring of the National Action Plan for implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960 on “Women, Peace and Security” (NAP).

The group identified the evaluation of existing state resources as key for the implementation and monitoring of the NAP. The group suggested that civil society could use its resources, such as information about projects that have already been implemented, to aid with the evaluation process. Information about Georgia’s existing referral mechanism for victims of domestic violence could be indicative of what kinds of resources are currently available. Personnel of the Gender Equality Council

(GEC) and other staff leading the implementation of the NAP will need training in monitoring and evaluation skills to carry out the evaluation of existing resources. CSOs, with their experience in monitoring and evaluation, could also support the implementation of this stocktaking. The final suggestion for recommendation 1 was to create a group of experts that will evaluate all of the existing and needed state resources, financial and human, to support the implementation of Georgia's NAP. The evaluation group will need to consult with the Ministry of Finance in order to ensure national resources for the plan.

A challenge the group identified was that entities responsible for the plan's implementation may not be able to provide comprehensive and evidence-based information to the GEC in a timely manner. The group suggested that civil society could use its human resources, trained personnel, and contacts to aid with timely provision of information. Furthermore, a mainstreamed communication channel should be established in order for responsible state entities to report to the Council. Finally, the group recommended strengthening the coordination between GEC and the entities responsible for the implementation of the NAP.

The group identified another challenge in that the monitoring mechanism to be established for the implementation of the NAP may not be completely effective in carrying out its duties. The group suggested that resources from the state, international organizations, and CSOs could be utilized to better monitor the plan's implementation. Furthermore, information included in civil society reports from Georgia's northern territory and information from the public defender's office could aid with said monitoring. The group's final suggestion to realise this recommendation was to train designated monitors in monitoring and evaluation skills.¹

¹ The Office of UN Women in Georgia offered support in evaluation methodology based on its previous experience on evaluating the Georgia NAP on Domestic Violence

GROUP 2: EQUITABLE PROVISION OF SECURITY SERVICES

KEY ACTORS: MINISTRY OF DEFENSE, MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

DESCRIPTION

This group centred on the ministries in charge of armed actors, namely the armed forces and police, and their role in the provision of security services under the auspices of the NAP.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OUTLINED IN THE NAP

Under the NAP, the responsibilities of the MoD and Mol relate to women's participation in the armed forces (Objective 1.3); on increasing knowledge and awareness of risks and threats to women (Objective 2.2); training of military and police personnel on gender issues and the UNSCRs on WPS (Objective 3.1); and ensuring the physical safety of forcibly displaced/conflict affected women (Objective 4.3). As with all actors involved, the MoD and Mol are also charged with reporting and ensuring accountability and monitoring (Objective 5.5).

OTHER INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS

The responsibilities described above are shared with the Gender Equality Council (all save Objective 3.1), the Ministry of Education and Culture (Objective 2.2) and local self-government bodies (Objective 4.3).

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A critical mass of female security sector personnel is considered an important factor contributing to equitable provision of security. Public perception in Georgia, however, is generally sceptical about women's employment in security institutions. Resources from government and civil society—the media, academia and NGOs in particular—should be combined to create campaigns raising awareness about the positive contributions of women to the security sector and the appeal of security institutions as a career opportunity for women.
2. An additional challenge to the equitable provision of security services is the general lack of awareness about UNSCR 1325 and related issues among the general population and security sector representatives. Educational institutions should incorporate UNSCR 1325 and related topics in their programmes, leveraging the knowledge, expertise, and relevant materials from CSOs. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) and conflict-affected populations are a key target for awareness-raising. Displaced and conflict-affected women and policewomen would also be valuable resources in such educational efforts. Security institutions should develop training and ToT materials for their staff.
3. To improve coordination and reporting of the implementation of the NAP, NGOs, independent experts, and IDP communities' representatives, could form thematic subgroups to support the

NAP coordination bodies group by developing specific recommendations on how to implement the plan within each institution of the security sector.

SUMMARY OF GROUP 2 DISCUSSIONS

Group 2 focused on the topic of equitable provision of security services.

The group identified as a first challenge the fact that there is no “demand” on the part of the general public for women to serve in security sector (armed forces, law enforcement, etc.). That is, there is a general perception that women do not belong in this sector and such gender bias and stereotyping must be addressed. In this regard, the state has resources that can be mobilized for changing public perceptions and raising awareness regarding the need for gender balance in the security sector. The media can play a key role to raise the public’s awareness in this respect. The NGO sector, academic circles and education institutions can also be key contributors because they have direct communication with society, relevant experience, knowledge and resources. Lastly, IDPs should be consulted as their experience is a valuable resource. Thus, the group recommended that the state should develop an information campaign for raising awareness about the need for a gender balance in the security sector and popularizing UNSCR 1325. More specifically, the MoI, MoD, and other security institutions should provide the population with information, via all existing communication channels, that serving in the security sector provides for good opportunities for women.

Group 2 identified a second challenge in the lack of education and training about gender mainstreaming in the security sector for the population and for security sector personnel. The group suggested that in addition to state entities, the resources of NGOs, academic circles and populations from the border regions and conflict-affected areas should be made use of, as they have appropriate knowledge, expertise, experience, and relevant materials. Educational institutions (primary, secondary and higher education) should be encouraged to disseminate information about gender equality in the security sector. For example, female police officers could present during “career day” at primary schools. The group recommended integrating UNSCR 1325 into education programs based on existing resources, especially in the border regions. Furthermore, both operational and civilian defence staff should be trained on UNSCR 1325 and training-of-trainer modules should be developed so that defence personnel can train on gender issues in the future. Lastly, IDPs should be trained on gender equality principles and women’s rights.

The third challenge identified by the group was the creation of an effective coordination and reporting system for the implementation of the 1325 NAP. The group suggested that NGOs, independent experts, representatives of the social/civil spheres, and IDP communities can support the plan’s implementation. The envisioned coordinator group (for the plan) could be supported by thematic subgroups that could develop specific recommendations on how to implement the plan within each institution of the security sector. These subgroups would report to the coordination group on a regular basis.

GROUP 3: EQUITABLE PROVISION OF JUSTICE SERVICES

KEY ACTORS: MINISTRY OF JUSTICE, MINISTRY OF CORRECTIONS AND LEGAL ASSISTANCE

DESCRIPTION

The Ministry of Justice of Georgia (MoJ), as a principal body responsible for policy development, execution of legal proceedings and protection of the public, plays a key role in democratic development and improvement of the legal system in the state. Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA) along with the Ministry of Justice of Georgia (namely the Prosecution Service of Georgia) is authorized to protect the public order, safety and security within the state.

The Ministry of Corrections and Legal Assistance of Georgia (MoCLA) is an institution within the Government of Georgia, which ensures execution of sentences and management of penitentiary establishments, as well as provision of free legal aid service.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OUTLINED IN THE NAP

Under the NAP, the MoJ is jointly responsible for including gender considerations in the process of peaceful negotiations (Objective 1.2), for examining the existing legislation in light of Georgia's international commitments and for undertaking awareness raising on sexual violence committed in conflict and post-conflict contexts (Objectives 3.1 & 4-1).

The MoJ and MoCLA, as well as MoIA are jointly responsible for conducting training for law enforcement bodies and legal aid units on UNSCRs. The High School of Justice is responsible entity on trainings for judiciary representatives in Georgia (Objective 4.2).

The MoCLA is further responsible for developing a legal aid service and other mechanisms to ensure access to justice for women and girls in the territories adjacent to occupied regions (Objective 4.2).

As with all actors involved, the MoD and MoI are also charged with reporting and ensuring accountability and monitoring (Objective 5.5).

OTHER INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS

The responsibilities outlined above are shared with the Gender Equality Council (all save Objective 3.1), and the Office of the National Security Council, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the State Minister for Reintegration Issues (Objective 1.2).

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The lack of awareness about UNSCR 1325 and related issues among justice officials and other ministries' staff hinders women's access to justice. Civil society organisations (CSOs) have developed awareness-raising and training materials and have direct knowledge of women's justice needs, in particular of displaced and conflict-affected women. A joint government-civil

society training manual, elaborated with extensive input from justice professionals and women's NGOs, would help bridge the awareness gap and thus facilitate women's access to justice.

2. Conflict-affected and displaced rural populations—especially women—lack detailed information on available, free legal assistance programmes. CSOs have mobile outreach teams already working with these vulnerable populations. Respective Government representatives could join these mobile teams and directly provide information on legal aid services to the target population.
3. To face the challenge of coordinating and monitoring NAP implementation, a series of thematic working groups within the existing national coordination mechanism under the Gender Equality Council could leverage the experience of CSOs in conducting monitoring and evaluation.

SUMMARY OF GROUP 3 DISCUSSIONS

Group 3 discussions focused on the equitable provision of justice services, identifying potential challenges to and civil society resources to support NAP implementation.

The group identified as a first challenge the lack of adequate knowledge and capacity on gender issues and issues on women, peace and security among the staff of relevant ministries, law enforcement agencies, judiciary and local governments. The group proposed to use relevant resources available to CSOs such as: training modules on the UNSCRs on women, peace and security; training on peace building; and availability of qualified trainers, experts and advisers on issues of UNSCR 1325. As a recommendation the group proposed to support the creation of joint training manual with the participation of CSOs and relevant ministerial staff based on the needs of the different ministries, such as the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Corrections and Legal Assistance of Georgia, and creating a thematic working group on access to justice. This group would include NGOs and representatives from governmental institutions to identify the needs, challenges and measures needed to support the implementation of NAP in this area, such as specific training needs for prosecutors. All trainings and manuals should take into consideration needs, competence and specificities of the particular governmental institutions. Training should be carried out by persons having relevant experience (for example, prosecutors shall be trained by former or acting prosecutors in issues directly relevant for prosecutors from respective resolutions, etc.).

A second challenge identified was the lack of information about government-funded, free legal aid services among the population living in the areas adjacent to the occupied regions due to these areas' remoteness and the lack of financial resources to travel to the cities where assistance services are based. The group noted that CSOs have mobile outreach teams of lawyers and psychologists attending the conflict-affected population in the rural areas of Shida Kartli and Samegrelo regions. Government outreach representatives could join these mobile teams and directly provide information on available free legal aid services to the rural population living close to conflict zones. Media and printed materials could supplement these direct outreach initiatives.

The group identified a third challenge in coordination and monitoring on the NAP implementation. As an applicable resource, the group suggested the experience of CSOs in conducting monitoring and evaluation and available mechanisms for cooperation with representatives of governmental institutions. The recommendation is to support the establishment of different thematic working groups within the existing national coordination mechanism under the Gender Equality Council to provide relevant coordination and information-sharing between CSOs and the government on the process of NAP implementation.

GROUP 4: EQUAL PARTICIPATION IN CONFLICT PREVENTION AND RESOLUTION

KEY ACTORS: MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL, OFFICE OF THE STATE MINISTER FOR REINTEGRATION ISSUES

DESCRIPTION

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for Georgia's relationships with other states.

The National Security Council of Georgia (NSC) advises the President of Georgia on National Security, Foreign Policy, and Domestic Policy. It is the highest political decision-making body for security matters. The NSC is chaired by the President of Georgia, and regular attendees include the: Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, Defence Minister, Minister of Internal Affairs, Finance Minister, National Security Advisor to the President (Secretary of the National Security Council) and the Speaker of Parliament.

The Office of the State Minister for Reintegration is a governmental agency within the Cabinet of Georgia in charge of coordination and monitoring of activities undertaken towards Georgian–Ossetian and Georgian–Abkhazian conflict resolution, generating new peace initiatives and reintegrating the conflict regions and their population with the rest of Georgia.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OUTLINED IN THE NAP

These three actors are charged with including principles of “women, peace, and security” during meetings in the framework of the Geneva talks and the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) and cooperating with international and civil society organisations to train women mediators (Objective 1.2).

The Office of the State Minister for Integration Issues is further responsible for supporting people's diplomacy processes and women's participation in them (Objective 1.4), and with the stipulation of women-related issues in conflict prevention mechanisms and early warning systems (Objective 2.1).

As with all actors involved, they are also charged with reporting and ensuring accountability and monitoring (Objective 5.5).

OTHER INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS

The Gender Equality Council shares responsibilities for all objectives these agencies work on, and the Ministry of Justice shares responsibility for Objective 1.2 with these agencies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To bridge the coordination gap between the NAP's National Coordination Group and CSOs; civil society contacts and regional networks could be a valuable resource and an incentive to increase cooperation through a regular mechanism for the exchange of information.

2. The lack of information among CSOs about the two ongoing peace processes, the Geneva Talks and the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism, makes it difficult for civil society to identify entry points for women’s participation. A media campaign promoting women’s role in conflict prevention and resolution—as urged for by UNSCR 1325—would facilitate the increased participation of women, especially among displaced and conflict affected populations, in the peace processes.
3. The lack of women’s involvement in the formal peace processes can also be addressed with a reinforcement of “track 2” and “track 4” diplomacy. Civil society contacts with Ossetian and Abkhaz women’s groups should be supported as confidence-building measures.

SUMMARY OF GROUP 4 DISCUSSIONS

The group’s topic was equal participation in conflict prevention and resolution.

According to the group, the main challenge was the lack of coordination between the National Coordination Group that oversees implementation of the NAP and civil society organisations. Participants suggested using civil society’s capacity in terms of networking, contacts and outreach to all regions to support the implementation and monitoring of the NAP. The group recommended developing a mechanism of dialogue and cooperation between the National Coordination Group and civil society for systematic exchange of information and deepening cooperation in relation to the NAP.

As a second challenge the group identified the lack of clear information about the ongoing formal peace processes—Geneva Talks and Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism—which makes identification of entry points for mainstreaming gender and women’s issues in those processes more difficult. Participants mentioned knowledge of information-sharing mechanisms and public needs as applicable civil society resources. Thus, the group recommended increasing public awareness about the role of women in confidence-building, peace-building and conflict-prevention efforts through media campaigns with particular emphasis on the promotion of the role and resources of displaced and conflict-affected women.

As a third challenge, the group underlined the lack of security mechanisms and guarantees for the development of multi-track diplomacy. The group suggested that civil society, especially women’s NGOs, has valuable resources, such as contacts with Ossetian and Abkhaz women’s NGOs, and significant experience in people-to-people diplomacy work. The group recommended utilizing the potential of women’s NGOs in relevant confidence-building projects, including those supported by the office of the State Minister for Reintegration in the frameworks of the Reintegration Strategy and Action Plan.

GROUP 5: SECURING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC NEEDS

KEY ACTORS: MINISTRY OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS FROM THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, ACCOMMODATION AND REFUGEES; MINISTRY OF ECONOMY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT; MINISTRY OF LABOR, HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY

DESCRIPTION

The Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia (MRA) implements the state policy on refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons, repatriates, victims of the natural disasters and other migrants in terms of their social and legal protection, accommodation and overall migration control.

The Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia aims at establishing modern and innovative educational and scientific environment in close cooperation with civil society.

The mission of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development is to provide stable and high rates of economic growth with working up and implementation an effective economic policy.

The mission of the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs is to promote the population's good health and functional capacity, promote healthy working and living environments, ensure that there are sufficient social and health services.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OUTLINED IN THE NAP

These three ministries are charged with securing needs of forcibly displaced and conflict/war affected women and girls in the following areas: ensuring political, economic, social and physical safety (Objective 4.3); conducting consultative studies on priorities and special needs (Objective 5.1); considering the needs of forcibly displaced and conflict/war affected women with disabilities (Objective 5.2), ensuring accessibility of psycho-social services (Objective 5.3). As with all actors involved, they are also charged with reporting and ensuring accountability and monitoring (Objective 5.5).

OTHER INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS

The Gender Equality Council shares responsibility for these activities (all), along with the National Statistical Service (Objective 4.3).

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To address the lack of information among displaced and conflict-affected women and girls about available social and health programmes, civil society's resources—experience in dissemination campaigns, networks and outreach mobile teams—could receive support from and collaborate with government agencies and local institutions.
2. Displaced and conflict-affected women face numerous challenges to their economic empowerment, among which is the lack of appropriate business and professional skills. With

governmental and international funding, women's organisations could expand their existing activities to provide adequate training and enhance economic opportunities for targeted women.

3. Beyond those directly affected, there is a low level of awareness of the prevalence of domestic violence in the regions. Support activities should be expanded geographically beyond the two existing crisis centres and thematically to cover not only domestic violence survivors but also perpetrators, to avoid recidivism. Coordination between government and civil society would be crucial in this respect.

SUMMARY OF GROUP 5 DISCUSSIONS

The group discussed securing the social and economic needs of women as outlined in the NAP. The challenge identified by the group was lack of information about the existing programs in the field of social issues and healthcare for displaced and conflict-affected women and girls. The group proposed using CSO resources, such as experience of planning information campaigns; mobile groups with social workers, lawyers and psychologists; promoting the role of local self-governments and active involvement of the local self governments in order to help bring information to the beneficiaries. The group recommended conducting information campaigns about the existing programs in the field of social issues and healthcare for raising awareness of the target population and improvement of these programs based on the specific needs.

As a second challenge, the group identified the lack of access to business and professional skills and rights for the economic empowerment of displaced and conflict-affected women and girls. Business training (languages, office programs) is fundamental, as well as training on professional skills and certificate courses. Current initiatives include a number of assistance programs to support the development of professional skills, professional colleges, NGO-driven training, and small grants for women and girls from international organisations. In addition, communities already hold important entrepreneurial potential. The group recommended funding for the provision of business skills training and courses on professional skills—including agriculture—with the collaboration of the governmental, nongovernmental and internal organizations for the economic empowerment of displaced and conflict-affected women and girls.

Finally, the group identified a third challenge in the low awareness in the regions about domestic violence and in the lack of rehabilitation programmes for perpetrators. Among other resources, they outlined the existence of two crisis centres (shelters) which provide rehabilitation services for survivors of domestic violence, but noted the need to expand services and cover other regions; rehabilitation services should be offered not only to survivors, but perpetrators as well, to avoid recidivism. Public information campaigns can also raise awareness and reduce domestic violence. In accordance, the group recommended expanding rehabilitation activities to perpetrators and strengthening already

existing services with the active cooperation of governmental, nongovernmental and internal organizations.

GROUP 6: GATHERING INFORMATION AND RAISING AWARENESS

KEY ACTORS: LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE, NATIONAL STATISTICS OFFICE, GEORGIAN PUBLIC BROADCASTER

DESCRIPTION

Local governments include the governance structures of districts and self-governing towns.

The National Statistics Office of Georgia carries out its activities independently. It is an institution established to produce the statistics and disseminate the statistical information according to the Georgian legislation.

The Georgian Public Broadcasting operates as a governmental legal entity that is publicly owned and financed. The intelligential product is intended for Television-Radio Broadcasting on non-commercial airwaves. This legal entity operates independently from governmental direction and control. It is publicly accountable under collective ownership and operates freely from any state structure or institution.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OUTLINED IN THE NAP

Under the NAP, these agencies are responsible for raising awareness of the population on risks and threats including those with a particular focus on women and children (Objective 2.2); for ensuring the political, economic, social and physical safety of forcibly displaced and conflict/war affected women (Objective 4.3) and for public awareness-raising on the UNSCRs on WPS (Objective 5.4). As with all actors involved, they are also charged with reporting and ensuring accountability and monitoring (Objective 5.5).

OTHER INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS

The Gender Equality Council (all), the Ministry of Defense (Objectives 2.2, 4.3).

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The displaced and conflict-affected population, especially women, lack accurate and timely information on the security situation and potential threats. Through civil society access to media, informal networks, education, and research, CSOs could establish a two-way communication link with society at large and with the government entities responsible for NAP implementation. Communication and coordination of NAP implementation could also be advanced through coordination groups at the local level.
2. NAP implementation is hindered also by the lack of development of local sources and means of disseminating information about issues of women, peace and security. A broad communication campaign through women's NGOs, local television and radio and other local media could help

bridge the information gap, with research organisations assisting in developing appropriate content. NGOs could help with raising journalists' awareness on the topic.

3. Similarly, women's NGOs could broaden the base of support for women, peace and security issues by raising the awareness of influential adults, such as teachers, doctors, and journalists.

SUMMARY OF GROUP 6 DISCUSSIONS

The topic of discussion of Group 6 was information gathering and awareness raising. The group identified the inaccessibility of clear information about threats and the state of the conflict as a challenge. The lack of information increases fear in the population and hinders efforts to raise awareness of the NAP and collect necessary information. The group suggested that civil society could use its resources, such as local women's organisations, media, formal and informal education experts, social workers, research organizations, etc., to support NAP implementation by facilitating the coordination between the governmental and non-governmental sectors. These resources would be coordinated through ad-hoc consultative centres at the regional level that will involve local governments, NGOs, media, and of experts on relevant topics. The centres would gather, process, analyse and disseminate information.

As a second challenge, the group identified the low development of local sources and means of information distribution about the issues of women, peace and security. The group suggested that civil society could use community radio, local television, print media, and electronic media and partner with businesses and research organizations to improve information flows on women, peace and security through "information week", brochures, videos, and TV shows that will become periodic. Training for journalists would strengthen local and central media.

The group also identified the lack of information among adults above the age of 25 about women, peace and security as a third challenge. The group suggested that NGOs working on educational issues, like associations, community centres, media, and eco-brigades, support the implementation of the NAP by providing training modules for influential professionals such as journalists, teachers, and doctors. Additional public awareness may be raised with activities such as "information week", brochures, video clips, TV shows that could become periodic and would address the issues of women, peace and security. Finally, the international non-profit organisation IREX should be encouraged to integrate women, peace and security issues into its media programs in Georgia.