

How to #MoveTheMoney from War to Peace: Reflections on Women, Peace and Security Financing Workshop and Side Event

July 15, 2016

Is it possible to [#MoveTheMoney](#) from a political economy of war to a political economy of peace and gender justice? Are there technical mechanisms that exist that can be more effectively leveraged?

This was the focus of a two-day [workshop](#) with about 40 people that WILPF's Women, Peace and Security programme, PeaceWomen, held on 7-8 July 2016 that brought together civil society experts from development and security sectors to develop concrete strategies for gender equality and peace. It was also the focus of a 11 July [side event](#) with about 25 people, which reported back from the workshop to member states, UN entities, and international civil society attending the [High Level Political Forum](#).



At the side event on Monday, speakers reported back on the workshop to share an overview of mapping of financial flows, opportunities for good practice on Women, Peace and Security financing, and recommendations on the way forward.

Nahla Valji, Deputy Peace and Security Chief of UN Women, introduced the event by reminding participants that the problem is not a lack of money for gender equality and peace, but a lack of effective priorities for action. The international community spends “pennies on peace and pennies on conflict prevention” while spending more than \$1.7 trillion on war. She pointed out strengthening financing for conflict prevention and peace based on gender equality was one of the main messages that came out of the 2015 [Global Study](#) on the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

Isabelle Geuskens, *Executive* Director of the Women Peacemakers Programme, shared how militarism as a way of thought constrains financial flows for gender equality and peace, with particular implications for women human rights defenders and peace activists. She shared research on new financial regulations aimed at counter-terrorism, which result in shrinking space for women’s organisations to operate through increased obstacles to operations, and with increasing safety and sustainability risks for their important work.

Broadening horizons



Speakers then shared good practice opportunities for strengthening financing of Women, Peace and Security issues in a variety of different ways.

Mavic Cabrera-Balleza, the International *Coordinator* of the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders, shared innovative work on financing UNSCR 1325 National Action Plans. According to Cabrera-Balleza, National Action Plans remain “the most concrete expressions of government commitments to the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.” However, of the 60-odd NAPs, only 12 have dedicated budgets. Cabrera-Balleza called for states to finance their NAPs, including by integrating NAP commitments into Local Development Plans to build community engagement and buy-in for strengthened accountability in otherwise often gender-blind and peace-blind contexts.

Emilia Reyes, Coordinator at Equidad de Género, shared how gender budgeting can be used to strengthen prevention efforts through investing in policies for women’s human rights and peace. According to Reyes, the issue is “not about money or putting a percentage from one place to the other, but about well-spent money that is more effective.” She argued powerfully that member states do not need to find new money, but instead need to shift their planning methodologies to address the different experiences of the populations they target through a gender aware lens.

Good practices to fill the gap

While gender budgeting has historically been applied within socio-economic contexts, the defense and military sector has not been a priority for this tool. This is, in part, due to gendered assumptions about what count as “women’s issues.” However, it is also due to the secrecy and lack of transparency that can surround military budgets due to claims of “national security,” which increase opportunities for corruption and misuse of resources.

Uruguayan Parliamentarian Daisy Tourne shared innovative initiatives in the Uruguay context by parliamentarians that addresses (1995) [Beijing Declaration’s](#) call for innovative financing including by reducing military spending and redirecting to gender equitable social development. She shared how after the dictatorship in Uruguay, parliamentarians have been able to introduce laws that promote transparency, anti-corruption, and democratic participation around military budgets, and to empower civilians to become involved in political decisions and programmatic work. This can be seen as good practice that other member states may learn from.

Abigail Ruane, Director of WILPFs Women, Peace and Security programme, wrapped up the session by calling for strengthened collaboration to [#MoveTheMoney](#) from a political economy of war to apolitical economy of peace and gender justice.

Now more than ever, it is clear the international community must [#movethemoney](#) from economies of war to economies of peace. We call on member states to:

- 1) finance the gender equality and peace goal of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- 2) finance National Action Plans on UNSCR 1325;
- 3) strengthen Gender Budgeting;
- 4) strengthen accountability on defense and military budgeting; and

5) strengthen funding of the feminist movement, including by CSO inclusive funds like the Global Acceleration Instrument.

Join us! Demand that your government [#MoveTheMoney](#).



Participate in the debate! Share your thoughts!