

**COMMUNIQUÉ ON LINKING RELIEF, REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT: UN-HABITAT  
GENDER-RESPONSIVE ENGAGEMENT IN POST-CONFLICT CONTEXTS  
20-21 April 2016 Barcelona**

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**BACKGROUND**

On 20 and 21 April, 25 international experts participated in *The Expert Group Meeting (EGM), Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD): UN-Habitat Gender-Responsive Engagement in Post-Conflict Contexts*. The Meeting focused on the refinement of methodologies employed by UN-Habitat in three issue areas: housing & livelihoods, safety & security and spatial planning, in relation to gender equality in urban post-conflict contexts.

In addition, Meeting Experts acknowledge the international agreements and resolutions (see Annex) as being paramount, in the way of binding policy, in the journey forward toward promoting GEWE in post-conflict contexts in the New Urban Agenda.

**KEY MESSAGES**

The Experts recognize that issues of relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD) are transcending the boundaries of traditionally state level responses and coordination; while becoming more salient in the urban contexts. The consequences of rapid urbanization are fueling a set of new, specific challenges for LRRD. We recognize that the urban context holds gender-specific challenges, which UN-Habitat has long been working to address. Therefore, Experts note a new landscape of relief, rehabilitation and development in the urban context; as such many emerging and evolving challenges to the protection, empowerment and equality of women and girls. Therefore, our key messages to the World Humanitarian Summit, Geneva Review Conference on Safety in World Cities and the Habitat III process are:

1. UN-Habitat occupies a specific and important space in both humanitarian assistance and development work. In this regard, the Agency is well placed to be an essential bridge between relief and rehabilitation efforts and urban development. As the human settlements Agency, UN-Habitat interacts with the contexts of conflict, peacebuilding and resilience, all of which are becoming more salient in the urban context. To ensure success, there is a need to work together with other international and UN partners—in particular on gender issues with UN Women—to ensure that all interventions to Build Back Better (BBB), such as the People’s Process (PsP) address both the issue of rebuilding the physical urban infrastructure, as well as, rebuilding the urban social fabric and restoring human dignity. In fact, there are opportunities in the PsP to act as vehicle for gender equality and women’s empowerment (GEWE) in the urban context. In sum, transforming crisis into opportunity requires the formal recognition of women in peacebuilding through appropriate policy review, stronger participation in the planning and management of the post-conflict rehabilitation.

***Therefore, we put it to the Summit, the Geneva Review Conference and Habitat III, to remain attentive during the proceedings of the emerging landscape of humanitarian action in urban contexts, and the complexities of international, national and local safety and security dynamics which manifest new and specific challenges for women and girls.***

2. Civil society organizations and groups which facilitate an organized voice from women and girls in particular are a cornerstone of empowerment in conflict and post-conflict contexts. The facilitation of such groups and organizations through reliable and creative funding mechanisms has proven in practice to be an important part of transforming challenges into opportunities for women and girls in post-conflict contexts.

***Therefore, we ask the Summit, the Geneva Review Conference and Habitat III, in both dialogue and outcomes to appreciate the importance of this knowledge from practice, and maintain that humanitarian response needs to be embedded at all levels to rebuild dignity and facilitate civilians to own and participate in BBB and PsP.***

3. It has long been understood by both UN-Habitat and its partners that women and girls experience disproportionate risk in negotiating access to adequate housing and livelihoods. Such challenges are compounded in conflict and post-conflict contexts where the care-economy other informal economies are also destabilized.

***Therefore, we ask the Summit, the Geneva Review Conference and Habitat III, to keep the unique nature of women's work and women led economies and the intricate relationship of such to adequate housing at the forefront of humanitarian interventions.***

4. Addressing issues of urban safety and gender based violence (GBV) in conflict and post-conflict contexts requires an understanding that there are new and manifesting forms of violence to address. The prevention of violence against women (VAW) in urban settings draws upon a co-ownership of safety to include a broad spectrum of actors at all levels. Translating this to conflict and post-conflict contexts is a challenge which demands strong co-ordination and collaboration among grassroots, civil society, municipality, national and international actors, alongside accountable policing and protection.

***Therefore, we urge the Summit, the Geneva Review Conference and Habitat III, to provide space for the consideration of city and urban environments as social entities, beyond their built and infrastructural form. The restoration of dignity, formation of citizenship values, behaviours and norms which urban safety and crime prevention depends on, take place in the socialized spheres of the city.***

5. It was agreed that for continuity of these discussions, it is necessary to establish a platform of knowledge-sharing: focused on successful policies, tools and practices. The Platform could take the form of a Working Group comprised of the EGM Experts and others to share information electronically, and to convene bi-annually to reflect on and arrange site visits to projects and programmes with positive results to showcase.

***Therefore, we invite the actors, leaders and practitioners of the Summit, the Geneva Review Conference and Habitat III, to join us in coordinating effectively, sharing knowledge and progressing practices for a united response to the complexities of LRRD.***

## KEY MESSAGES FOR ISSUE AREAS

### HOUSING & LIVELIHOODS

#### Key messages

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1. *Recognize* that unstable access to adequate housing and livelihoods in post-conflict settings are vulnerable situations that women and girls disproportionately face;
2. *Acknowledge* that gender inequality in the contexts of ownership, access and control of assets, such as land and property is a major contributing factor in hindering human development and women's rights; and
3. *Recognize* that adequate housing represents an important site for women's livelihoods because women tend to predominate in the care-economy (low paid or unpaid) and informal economy and many activities of for these economies are carried out in the household.

#### Recommendations

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1. *Advise* comprehensive collaboration and coordination between UN agencies, other development and humanitarian actors and stakeholders to ensure transition from emergency relief to long-term development, and to recognize women's role in the recovery process;
2. *Recommend* the establishment of a program with the proposed title *Transforming Cities in Crisis: from shelter to adequate housing*; to demonstrate UN-Habitat's extensive engagement across the humanitarian assistance to development spectrum;
3. *Urges* that UN-Habitat post-conflict projects incorporate women's saving groups and cash-transfer schemes to ensure economic empowerment of women; along with women's community centers where women can plan, build organizations, start businesses and undertake care economy obligations;
4. *Advise* that the construction of housing bring women on board and be flexible and take into account the nature and importance of social capital, the care-economy and the informal economy;
5. *Call for* peer-to-peer learning through grassroots academies and exchange of good practices; with an emphasis on the importance of women organizing; and
6. *Recommend* scaling up the engendered People's Process from the neighborhood to the city-level in order to address the link between housing and livelihoods and Build Communities Back Better (BCBB).

### SAFETY & SECURITY

#### Key Messages

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1. *Recognize* that there are new challenges for women and girls in the conflict and post-conflict urban contexts. Therefore, it is important to recognize emerging types of violence and work to transform challenges into opportunities for women and girls in urban areas;
2. *Acknowledge* that humanitarian and development action needs to maintain a Human Rights based Approach (HRBA) and participatory approach to the prevention of violence and protection of women and girls, building resilience, empowerment and people-centered results; and
3. *Recognize* that achieving urban safety and security for women and girls requires an approach to violence prevention that involves all actors and stakeholders and adopts a co-ownership of safety and security to include grass roots, civil society, municipality, national actors and international actors – as well as policing.

#### Recommendations

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1. *Call for* partnership working between local authorities, local leaders and other development actors to improve safety and empower women in post-conflict recovery;
2. *Advocate* improved mechanisms for sharing new technologies, data and interventions to ensure evidence based data driven gender focused interventions;
3. *Call for* predictable and flexible funding and support for women's civil society organizations;
4. *Advise* training and developing capacities for those responsible for the security and safety of woman

- and girls, to include accountability mechanisms, protocols and monitoring; and
5. *Call for* developing programs and policies that promote behavioral and attitudinal changes around the safety of women and girls, engaging men and boys in the process, as potential change-makers.

## SPATIAL PLANNING

### Key messages

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1. *Recognize that* gender responsive spatial planning requires national policy frameworks, in addition to proactive and measurable steps to inform and monitor gender-responsive spatial planning at the national- and local-level, in order to meet the targets of SDG 5 and SDG 11;
2. *Recognize that* spatial planning should support sustainable urban mobility for efficient use of time and resources and well-being through connected and mixed social spaces, basic services and facilities, including green spaces; and
3. *Acknowledge that* gendered spatial planning should recognize the multiple risks faced by women to ensure their safety through integrated, functional, accessible public transport, to aid in the autonomy and empowerment of women.

### Recommendations

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1. *Advise* that spatial planning should be a participatory process which engages women in urban design so as to facilitate resilience and inclusion;
2. *Urges* spatial planning to support women's resilience through innovative and flexible measures; differentiating between temporary emergency measures and longer term reconstruction efforts by ensuring Building Back Better (BBB), mainstreaming women's resilience needs and choices;
3. *Advise* that spatial planning has a critical role in rebuilding cities, and restoring cadastral and property ownership, e.g. through experience of the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN);
4. *Advocate* people-centered, participatory spatial planning at all levels – building on partnerships with all relevant stakeholders. Spatial planning is understood and executed as a dynamic and cyclic process to continuously adapt and enhance existing planning practice and capacities; and
5. *Call for* planning to adequately utilize innovation, such as ICT or shared-economy to further contribute to urban prosperity.

## ANNEX

### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (2015)

Goal 11: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. In particular:

- 11.3: By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.
- 11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.
- 11.9: By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels.

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. In particular:

- 5.1: End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.
- 5.2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.
- 5.7: Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

### SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1325 (2000)

- **Article 1:** *Urges* Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict;
- **Article 12:** *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, and to take into account the particular needs of women and girls, including in their design, and recalls its resolutions 1208 (1998) of 19 November 1998 and 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000;
- **Article 8 (a):** *Calls on* all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, inter alia: The special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction.

### DECLARATION ON THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (1993)

- **Article 2:** Violence against women shall be understood to encompass, but not be limited to, the following:
  - a) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation;
  - b) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution;
  - c) Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs.
- **Article 3:** Women are entitled to the equal enjoyment and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field. These rights include, inter alia:
  - a) The right to life;
  - b) The right to equality;
  - c) The right to liberty and security of person;
  - d) The right to equal protection under the law;
  - e) The right to be free from all forms of discrimination;

- f) The right to the highest standard attainable of physical and mental health;
- g) The right to just and favourable conditions of work;
- h) The right not to be subjected to torture, or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

#### **CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (1979)**

- **Article 2:** States Parties condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and, to this end, undertake:
  - (a) To embody the principle of the equality of men and women in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation if not yet incorporated therein and to ensure, through law and other appropriate means, the practical realization of this principle;
  - (b) To adopt appropriate legislative and other measures, including sanctions where appropriate, prohibiting all discrimination against women;
  - (c) To establish legal protection of the rights of women on an equal basis with men and to ensure through competent national tribunals and other public institutions the effective protection of women against any act of discrimination;
  - (d) To refrain from engaging in any act or practice of discrimination against women and to ensure that public authorities and institutions shall act in conformity with this obligation;
  - (e) To take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women by any person, organization or enterprise;
  - (f) To take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women;
  - (g) To repeal all national penal provisions which constitute discrimination against women.