

EC

**ACTION FICHE J**  
**THEMATIC PROGRAMME INVESTING IN PEOPLE**  
**THEME 3: GENDER EQUALITY**

**1. IDENTIFICATION**

Title	Support for the International Colloquium on Women's empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security and its follow-up DCI-GENRE/2008/153-667		
Total cost	EC Contribution € 500 000		
Aid method / Management mode	Joint management – Contribution agreement with an international organisation (UNDP)		
DAC-code	15164	Sector	Gender Equality

**2. RATIONALE**

**2.1. Sector context**

In the past decade Liberian women have demonstrated their potential in leadership and decision making processes when they became instant heads of household and families' breadwinners during the years of conflict. The war environment necessitated role shifts that women seized in spite of bearing the brunt of violence and humans rights abuses including rape and participated, largely through informal networks, in brokering peace (including the Accra Comprehensive Peace Accord of August 2003) and lobbying the warring parties at the frontlines to stop the war. Women all over the African continent find themselves in similar positions as for instance in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Kenya and Sudan.

The realization that women could and can significantly influence decisions and unfolding events and the results from regional experiences led to women in Liberia mobilizing around an agenda for peace and security, and subsequently to the mobilization of voters and candidates in the 2005 elections around a women's minimum agenda and female presidential candidate. This culminated into the emergence of women's effective formal participation in political processes. Although these are major achievements in Liberia, they are only a first step to women's empowerment. Moreover, women in other parts of the continent have so far not been able to have their voices heard at all levels of decision making and even in Liberia women remain extremely vulnerable to all forms of discrimination and abuse due to deeply entrenched negative cultural practices to sustain disparity between women and men. So, although the MDG report for 2006 claims that progress has been made in achieving MDG 3 - promote gender equality and empower women- especially as women's political participation has increased in countries emerging from conflict as the Liberian example shows, much still needs to be done.

It was this acknowledgement that gave birth to the initiative to start mobilising women from all over the world, and particularly from Africa, with a special focus on women from West Africa, Rwanda, Burundi and DRC, countries that have had to deal with serious conflicts in the recent past. The exchange of knowledge and experience, between grassroots women organisations and community leaders in developing countries, particularly those with a history of conflict and the South to South network creation could be a first step in empowering women and building women leadership, a first step to achieving MDG 3. The fact that the UN adopted UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security is an additional incentive for this initiative.

Against this background, the President of Liberia, H.E. Ms Johnson Sirleaf, has taken the initiative to host an *International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security* in March 2009 in Liberia. The President of Finland, H.E. Tarja Halonen, has agreed to serve as co-convenor of the event. The inspiration behind this initiative is the extraordinary development worldwide of women gaining political leadership both in advanced industrialized countries and developing countries with other aspiring women Presidential candidates.

The first steps in organising the International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security were taken in 2007. The overall framework shall be UN SCR 1325 while the particular issues identified for the Colloquium will be (i) experience of women in leadership; (ii) capacity development for leadership; (iii) implementation of UN SCR 1325; (iv) assess progress on achievement of MDG 3; and, (v) establishing a Chair on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security. In the past year the further development of the Colloquium has progressed substantively with: (i) securing significant levels of buy-in from international as well as national leaders and constituents across a spectrum of governments, the UN to civil society leaders and women's rights activists; (ii) further developing and substantiating the ideas of the Colloquium; and, (iii) establishing a management structure which links the international, the national and community levels, and vertically brings together key decision makers and stakeholders relative to the Colloquium outcomes.

A High Level Meeting comprising of international and national coordinators of the coming Colloquium will be held in New York in March 2008 in order to review the results of the first technical preparatory meeting held in January 2008 in Liberia and to finalize the programme.

## **2.2. Lessons learnt**

In the context of *UNSCR 1325* there is nowadays international acknowledgement that greater attention needs to be given to women's experiences and leadership in (post)conflict situations. The Resolution specifically calls for the UN 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 (art. 1). Women need to be empowered so to ensure that this requirement is fulfilled.

The *Council of Women World Leaders Global Security Summit* (15-17 November 2007) enhanced the effectiveness of women's leadership on global security through 3 main objectives (1) launch a process to amplify the efforts of women leaders and facilitate more collective action on global security (2) generate public awareness and support for women's leadership on global security; and (3) generate ideas and increased resources for women's leadership on global security. The Outcome of the meeting was a Call to Action on human and state security (see <http://womenandglobalsecurity.org/>)

### 2.3. Complementary actions

In March 2008 Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner will be hosting a High Level Conference on Women's Leadership in Brussels to which the Liberian minister for Foreign Affairs Hon. Ms. Olubanke King-Akerele has been invited. The meeting will be focusing on UNSCR 1325 as a reference point and will discuss issues of human security including climate change, lack of energy security, poverty, poor health and education, narcotics, terrorism and arms proliferation of all kinds. The outcome of the High Level meeting will feed into the Colloquium (<http://www.womenworldleaders.org>).

The Ethical Globalization Initiative "Realizing Rights" addresses five urgent issues required for greater human development and security, one of which is encouraging women's leadership. Their mission is to put human rights standards at the heart of global governance and policy-making and to ensure that the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable are addressed on the global stage (see <http://www.realizingrights.org>)

### 2.4. Donor coordination

The government of Finland is playing an important role as co-convenor of the International Colloquium. The President of Finland Ms Tarja Halonen will be co-chairing the Colloquium together with President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. Apart from providing in-kind support, the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs is currently in the process of identifying the possibilities to support the Colloquium related activities financially. The Norwegian and Danish governments are doing the same.

Considerable interest has already been generated in the initiative in various quarters including the UN system in Liberia, FAS, World Council of Women Leaders, the Pan African Parliamentarians, UNIDO, UNESCO-Dakar, ECOWAS, MAWOPNET, Gender and Development Centre (Senegal), ITC. Moreover, UN Agencies provided financial and technical support to the Focused Programme under the Phased implementation of the meetings in January 2008. They have initiated a process through the UN Gender Theme Group to identify resources to support the colloquium both technically and financially. UNDP's support to the colloquium has consisted so far in providing 300 women leaders from all the 15 counties of Liberia with training on *women's leadership*. A *gender budgeting* workshop for government planners, budget officers and civil society organisations is already planned for April 2008.

### **3. DESCRIPTION**

#### **3.1. Objectives**

##### **Overall objective:**

- to empower women at various levels to become effective leaders and thereby positively impact development by making a difference qualitatively on issues at national and international levels through their active participation in governance.

##### **Specific objectives:**

- to examine the qualitative difference that women make when they assume political leadership.
- to validate, facilitate and enhance women's continued involvement in all processes of conflict reduction, prevention, transformation and consolidation of peace.

#### **3.2. Stakeholders:**

About 550 participants are expected from across the world: the Liberian government, women leaders at all levels and women from the community, local and national representatives of civil society in Africa, particularly from West Africa, Ruanda, Burundi the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Ethiopia. Participants will come from Europe, Asia and the Americas among others.

#### **3.3. Expected results and main activities**

The expected **results** are:

- (1) enhanced women's leadership on global security, including the implementation of UNSCR 1325
- (2) innovative models, approaches and programmes aimed at enhancing women's leadership and positively impact policy directions and decision making at all levels, including in addressing economic insecurities, are identified, formulated, and eventually launched and implemented.
- (3) the progress in the achievement of MDG 3 are documented and analysed
- (4) the Chair on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security is established in Liberia
- (5) technical expertise is primarily the support for the Colloquium Management which constitutes the Management structure of the Colloquium.

The main **activities** will be:

- (1) logistical organization of the colloquium, including the support the attendance of participants coming from developing countries, especially of non-governmental representatives at the Colloquium (e.g. travel costs, daily

subsistence allowances, accommodation) (2) Provision of expertise and technical assistance to prepare the Colloquium, notably data collection, research, documentation, exchanges and study tours for women to further develop their leadership skills

(3) Consultancy work and travel for the formulation and design for the Angie Brooks International University Chair on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security in Liberia over a three month period.

### **3.4. Implementation set-up**

The organisation of the Colloquium will be guided by the International Steering Committee which is composed of representatives of the Liberian authorities, Finnish authorities, United Nations Agencies, the EC and NGOs. UNDP will be responsible for the direct management/supervision/coordination of the EC contribution, in close cooperation with the Liberian authorities.

### **3.5. Risks and assumptions**

*Assumptions:* In the wake of the adoption of UNSCR 1325, the issues of Women leadership and Women's empowerment, particularly in conflict ridden countries, have become more prominent on the global agenda. The developments in Liberia, with the election of H.E. Ms Johnson-Sirleaf and the political will manifested in the current Liberian administration to deliver on its commitments towards the fulfilment of gender equality and the advancement of human rights, offer a unique opportunity to promote women's empowerment and women leadership at all levels, but particularly at grassroots and local level, not only in Liberia but also in other countries with a history conflict such as for instance Rwanda, Burundi and DRC.

*Risks:* The success of the colloquium is contingent on a good management structure in place as well as political will and regional ownership. In order not to be a one-off activity, the organisers already have follow-up activities in mind such as the Angie Brooks Chair on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security.

### **3.6. Crosscutting Issues**

The following crosscutting issues will be addressed in the proposed project: Governance, Gender, Sustainable Environment, including Climate Change, Human Rights and Human Security specifically in the context of the linkages between security and development.

## **4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES**

Support for workshops and organisation of preparatory meetings as part of the roadmap to March 2008.

### **4.1. Implementation method**

Joint management / direct agreement with UNDP (FAFA)

#### **4.2. Procurement and grant award procedures**

All contracts foreseen should be awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standard documents laid down and published by the UN.

#### **4.3. Budget and calendar**

Budget: EUR 500 000 Calendar: the International Colloquium should take place on 8 March 2009

#### **4.4. Performance monitoring**

The following progress monitoring indicators for the organisation of the Colloquium will be used among other: state of play of technical organisation of Colloquium set to a fixed time; schedule; n° of meetings and concrete outcomes of the individual regional vice-chairs and individual committees; n° of participants registered at set dates; n° of high level participants registered as participant and/or speakers at set dates; level of international and national awareness and buy-in reflected in political, technical and financial support for the Colloquium and its outcomes; level of awareness of duty bearers and rights holders on rights, roles, and, responsibilities in the implementation of UN SCR 1325 in Liberia and other participating countries, etc.

#### **4.5. Evaluation and audit**

The project will be monitored during the process by the Steering Committee and the project staff.

An evaluation will be conducted at the end of the project in order to assess the achievement of the objectives as well as to draw the lessons learnt. An external audit of the project will be carried out at the end of the project in accordance with established international standards.

#### **4.6. Communication and visibility**

The visibility of the EC will be ensured at all times according to the visibility manual by UNDP.

The International Colloquium will be communicating through its own website ([www.womenscolloquium.com](http://www.womenscolloquium.com))

The regional Vice-chairs will be responsible for the communications, invitations and information dissemination within their own constituency.

The Liberian embassies will publish information on the International Colloquium on their respective websites.

A Communications Committee has been set up as 1 of the 5 committees and will be looking more in detail at communication tools.