

PEACE OPERATIONS BUDGETS AND GENDER EQUALITY

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In remarks to the General Assembly in September 2011 and January 2012, the **Secretary-General** highlighted his **seven-point action plan on gender-responsive peacebuilding** as one of his five priorities for his second five-year term. This plan had been presented to the Security Council on September 14th 2010 as part of the Secretary-General's Report on Women's Participation in Peacebuilding (A/65/354-S/2010/466), after being previously endorsed by all UN entities by a Policy Committee Decision. One of the most salient details of this seven-point action plan is a financing commitment to work toward dedicating **at least 15 percent of all UN-managed funds in support of peacebuilding to projects that address women's specific needs, advance gender equality, or empower women**. For that goal, each UN entity had committed to initiate a process, in line with its specific institutional mandate and governance arrangements, to invest in systems to track their investment on gender equality in their programming budgets.

The fifteen-percent goal has been repeated in subsequent reports of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding and on women, peace and security. One of the indicators to track implementation of resolution 1325, reported yearly by the Secretary-General to the Security Council, is the proportion of UN system funding used to address gender equality issues, including multi-donor trust funds. And several UN entities, such as the Peacebuilding Fund, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee have already established **gender markers** and are reporting on their results. Others, like UNHCR, are establishing tracking systems and will begin to report this data. The UN's strategic results framework on women, peace and security, agreed on in 2011, sets the target that by 2020, all UN entities operating in conflict and post-conflict situations must have tracking mechanisms for funding for gender equality.

In May 2011 the UN Senior Peacebuilding Group had agreed that the commitment pertained to all funds in countries eligible for peacebuilding funds **except for DPKO, DPA and DFS staff, logistics, and military personnel allocations**, as these could not be considered programming funds. In practice, this means that the most visible and expensive tools of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace and security, its peace operations, do not track how much of their budgets are dedicated to the goal of advancing gender equality or addressing women's needs, both inside and outside the mission.

The current approved **budget for peacekeeping** missions, for example, is **above 7 billion dollars**, which is spent on fifteen missions, the logistics base in Brindisi, and the UN's support account. The funds are allocated to military personnel, police personnel, civilian personnel (international staff, national staff, and UN volunteers), consultants, official travel, facilities and infrastructure, ground transportation, air transportation, naval transportation, communications, information technology, medical, special equipment, other supplies, and quick impact projects. At 21.6 million dollars, the allocation for quick impact projects, which Civil Affairs could easily report on projects whose main goal is advancing gender equality or addressing women's needs, is the second smallest allocation in the peacekeeping budget, representing only 0.3 percent of the total.

Each mission's budget is proposed by the Secretariat, based on the mandate and force ceilings authorized by the Security Council. DPKO develops a concept of operations and a statement of force requirements that disaggregates the total number of authorized personnel into smaller components assigned specific tasks within the operation, and DFS assesses the mission's logistical support requirements. A cost estimate emerges from these planning documents, and is reviewed by the Department of Management before the Secretary-General proposes a mission structure and a budget estimate for the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the General Assembly's Fifth Committee.

More than half of the budget of peacekeeping operations is spent on military, police, and civilian staff. The rest is spent on procuring a range of services and operational requirements, e.g. food rations, trucks, engineering equipment, bedding and laundry service, fuel, security guards, garbage collection, construction, maintenance, armoured vehicles, trailers, and leases on planes and helicopters, to name a few examples.

It may not be immediately obvious how these categories could be analyzed from the perspective of their gendered impact or gender sensitivity, however as we have learned from developing gender-responsive budgeting for national budgets, it is entirely possible to code the mission activities for which these services, assets, or personnel are put to use. Beyond certain categories of staff like **gender advisors** and their staff, or **women protection advisors** in some missions, this should encompass at least part of the work of all **remaining staff** in the mission, whether working on **human rights, political affairs, electoral support, rule of law, security sector reform, civil affairs, disarmament and demobilization, public information, conduct and discipline**, and other areas. For example, engaging women in mediation, negotiation, and national dialogues or other political processes, supporting judicial actors in the investigation and prosecution of sexual and gender-based violence, addressing the special needs of female combatants or women associated with armed groups in demobilization processes, or enhancing the participation of women in elections, both as candidates and voters, to name a few.¹ In recent years, missions have increasingly reported on **protection tasks** undertaken by military and police units that are specifically aimed at protecting women and girls. Further investments on gender equality by peacekeeping missions could include: the funds spent on efforts to increase women's participation in the military, police, and civilian components of missions, special family or leave arrangements for women, adequate and appropriate mission facilities for women –from accommodation quarters and sanitary facilities to welfare and recreational spaces and activities, special medical and gynecological care, or investments in the internal safety of the compound, gender-specific uniforms or body armour, and, quick impact projects targeting women's needs. Mission-wide functions like public information and training could also be analyzed (for example, public information units in missions pay significant attention to issues related to gender equality).

Even if only some categories of spending are eligible for gender-responsive budgeting and financial tracking, experts on peacekeeping and gender-responsive budgeting should be able to make that determination, and to advise on what methodology to use or whether to focus on either budget design, tracking spending, or (preferably) both. For example, more gender-responsive outputs, enabling actions and indicators could be added to each component of the results-based budgeting framework of the mission. Some missions already have a number of such outputs, enabling actions and indicators, as DPKO has been putting considerable efforts to mainstream gender in mission planning for years. However, the process by which this is done could may need support, so there is the capacity to do a standard gender gap analysis for each mission's budget proposal before they are submitted by the Secretary-General. Lessons can be learned from other entities' gender markers (IASC, OECD, PBF, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA), national gender-responsive budgeting systems for government budgets, or UNHCR, another large entity that depends on a large quantity of physical inputs and operational heft. Changes to the financial back-end system may be considered that would allow to code each spending unit on a scale of gender-responsiveness, or instead

¹ Lahoud, Nina, Note to DPKO's ASG of Operations on Increased Integration of Gender Dimensions in DPKO-led Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations, April 10th (in file, available upon request).

conduct more spaced-out periodic reviews, such as having experts review all budget documents and meet with each section to come up with an approximate estimate (or requested mission leadership with some guidance). Budget officers in missions could be asked to report on it as part of their reporting on the results-based-budgeting framework. Some of these options may not be feasible or advisable, and there may be alternative ways to do it.

A similar exercise on gender-responsive budgeting could be made in **special political and peacebuilding missions**, which take up approximately 20 percent of the UN's regular budget, or slightly above 1 billion dollars. If 15 percent or a similar percentage is adopted as a target, this goal should be time bound. Since 2010, when the 15 percent target was established for peacebuilding funds, entities have been working towards that goal at a very slow pace, even though fifteen percent was a conservative estimate that was meant to be a floor and not a ceiling.

Regardless of whether the 15 percent applicable to programming funds in peacebuilding contexts is deemed an adequate and/or feasible goal for the budgets of peace operations, **we currently do not have an approximate estimate or methodology to review mission budgets from a gender perspective.**

Suggested Recommendation:

The panel should recommend that peacekeeping budget experts and planning officers, along with gender-responsive budget experts, review mission budgets and make a recommendation on methodology and capacity needed for gender-responsive budgeting and financial tracking of investments on gender equality in mission budgets.