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**OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE  
SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR THE  
GREAT LAKES REGION**

## **Concept note for the Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework**

### **Pillar 5**

### **Gender and Sexual and Gender-Based Violence**

Under the lead of UNFPA and UN Women

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**A. Intervention 1 : Enhance role of International Conference on the Great Lakes Region for monitoring accountability for impunity for gender based crimes with focus on Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda**

1) Type of Regional Intervention

Sexual and other forms of gender based violence are highly prevalent in the Great Lakes region; and there is very little accountability for those who commit these crimes, which has led to impunity. This is irrespective of the fact that there are regional and country commitments to address impunity. In 2006, countries of the Great Lakes region under the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) signed the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes region (ICGLR Pact) to address the security and development issues in the region. The ICGLR Pact has 10 protocols including the Protocol on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children, which commits member states to prevent, criminalise and punish acts of sexual violence in peace times and in times of war in accordance with national laws and international criminal law. All the countries of the Great Lakes region have legal frameworks in place that criminalise sexual violence.

In 2011, Heads of States of the ICGLR convened in Kampala, Uganda to discuss challenges and gaps in prevention, ending impunity and support to survivors. The Kampala Declaration committed member states to eradicate armed groups, fully domesticate and implement the Protocols on Non-Aggression and Mutual Defence, Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children and Judicial Cooperation. To address impunity, member states further committed to declare “zero tolerance” for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) crimes and impunity: to establish structures for prevention and protection; to establish special courts, sessions and procedures to fast track SGBV cases in the Police and Judiciary; and to establish effective mechanisms for the investigation and prosecution of SGBV crime. Most of the countries launched the zero tolerance for SGBV campaigns but this has not corresponded to a decrease in SGBV cases. The special courts, sessions and procedures have for the most part not been instituted; and although mechanisms to improve investigation and prosecution for SGBV crimes have been instituted, they are not fully operational due to low political commitment evident by lack of allocation of resources for their operation. The National Action Plans for implementation of 1325 in Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda have expired. Uganda is currently reviewing the progress on the expired National Action Plan (NAP) and the situation analysis for a new one.

A review of 15 Year progress on implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UN SCR 1325) in the targeted countries commissioned by UN Women ESARO revealed that SGBV is high in the region with low prosecution rates despite the existence of structures and policies to support protection and prevention. There is limited and accessible up to date statistics (comprehensive statistics) on SGBV prevalence and prosecution in these countries, and current information is from demographic and health surveys conducted between 2013 – 2015, statistics from some sectors, national institutions, NGOs, OHCHR reports (in the case of Burundi) etc. all pointing to high prevalence of SGBV and little accountability.

The ICGLR with support from the World Bank has set up the Kampala Training Facility to train judicial, police and social workers to effectively manage SGBV cases. ICGLR however requires additional support to follow up with member states on the implementation of the Kampala Declaration including the fast track mechanisms for SGBV cases, effective measures for investigation and prosecution (operationalisation of laws, policies and institutional mechanisms, and support to survivors and to set bench marks and monitor progress through convening of annual technical review meetings. Relevant civil society organisations also require added capacity to mobilise, monitor and hold their governments accountable through independent reports to ICGLR. The systematic collection of data on SGBV is critical for monitoring, measuring and reporting

progress. This project will fill the aforementioned gaps to address impunity by putting in place regional modalities for accountability of existing commitments and support to country level structures for fulfilling these commitments.

## 2) Introduction and Background

SGBV is endemic in the Great Lakes region despite regional and global frameworks to address SGBV and end impunity. The unabated levels of violence in both conflict and non-conflict affected countries prevent women from reaching their optimum; exposes them to psychological and physical trauma that prevents them from participating in governance and engaging in other productive activities. The impact on girls reinforces the continuum of disempowerment by preventing girls' completion of education through early pregnancy resulting from rape, forced marriages and disruption of their lives through other forms of GBV. Women are thus prevented from realizing the Pillar Vision to "participate in peace building, economic growth and enjoy equitable access to benefits of sustainable development".

Most countries in the Great Lakes region do not purposefully collect and collate data on SGBV prevalence. Current country statistics are from Demographic Health Surveys and UN human rights reports. Sexual violence has characterised the conflict in the Great Lakes region. The Demographic and Health Survey for DRC (2013-2014) revealed that 52% of women aged 15 - 49 years had experienced physical violence since aged 15; 27% had experienced sexual violence at least once in their life time; and 57% spousal violence. In 2010, the UN Special Representative for Sexual Violence described DRC as the "Rape Capital" of the world. Between 40,000 to 60,000 women were allegedly raped in eastern DRC between 1996 and 2002 and 764 cases were documented by the UN between December 2011 and November 2012. In July, 2013, UNHCR registered 705 cases of sexual violence over a six month period, compared to 108 cases over a similar period in 2012. Most of the cases in DRC are committed by armed men. Approximately 40 rape cases occur daily in eastern Congo and due to the impunity of these violations, there has been an increase in sexual violence committed by civilians<sup>1</sup>. In Rwanda, the 2010 Demographic and Health Survey revealed 41% of women aged 15-49 years reported having experienced physical violence since aged 15 years, and 22% sexual violence. An SGBV baseline survey in 2013 revealed similar figures for sexual violence, i.e. 20.7%. About 250,000 women were raped during the genocide. In Uganda, the 20-year insurgency of the Lord's Resistance Army against the government witnessed the abduction of over 60,000 children and the internal displacement of over 2 million people, 75% of whom were women and children. Many of the abducted children faced irreparable psychological damage due to forced marriages, sexual slavery and forced conscription as child soldiers. The absence of government authority for over two decades led to the breakdown of law and justice institutions, an increase in gender based crimes committed by all parties to the conflict and impunity for such crimes. In 2013, out of 10,640 reported rape and defilement cases, only 13% were successfully prosecuted and 3.5% with successful convictions. The proliferation of small arms in the Great Lakes region impacts on security in the Karamajong region in Eastern Uganda where cattle rustlers have replaced their spears and arrows with guns, creating greater insecurity and its consequences. A 2011 Demographic and Health Survey states that 55% of women aged 15-49 years have experienced physical violence at least once since aged 15 years and that 28% have experienced sexual violence at least once in their lifetime.<sup>2</sup> A Demographic and health survey is not available for Burundi. In 2010 however, the Ministry of National Solidarity, Human Rights, and Gender registered 3 951 cases of SGBV, of which 2 447 were cases of rape. Nearly 20% of registered victims of rape are girls under 10 years of age, and 69.8% of all victims are women and girls under 30 years of age. In

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<sup>1</sup> Sexual Violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Molokele Nanivazo, United Nations University; <http://unu.edu/publications/articles/sexual-violence-in-the-democratic-republic-of-the-congo.html#info>

<sup>2</sup> EngenderHealth, Burundi Sexual Violence Assessment, <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/Engender%20USAID%20Sexual%20Violence%20Assessment%20Final%20Report.pdf> (accessed October 2015), September 2011.

Tanzania, the 2010 Demographic Health Survey revealed that over 30% of women, aged 15-49 years had experienced physical violence over a 12 month period and 10% of women of the same age had experienced forced sexual intercourse.

The Global Report on progress of UN SCR 1325 highlights protection of women's rights and prevention of violence against women in conflict affected regions as areas of limited progress globally over the last 15 years. It has an overarching impact on women's capacity to recover from conflict and participate in peacebuilding and recovery.

The conflict and insecurity have greatly affected the economy and livelihoods in the Great Lakes region, with most of the countries scoring very low in the human development index (see social situation analysis). Women's economic livelihood has been greatly impacted by this situation. They form 70% of the workforce and are the main producers of food. Displacement and the threat of violence have disrupted their economic activities.

There have been several attempts at establishing peace in the Great Lakes region; most have however not focused on the regional dimensions of the conflicts and a holistic approach to address its ramifications. It is imperative to address gaps in human security for women, viz. impunity for SGBV. Current prevention programmes aim at building the capacity of judicial and security institutions and service provision for SGBV survivors. The continuum of violence will continue unabated if there are no effective measures for accountability of perpetrators for SGBV crimes and justice for survivors. UNDP and UNFPA currently provide services for training of judicial and security institutions and service provision for survivors respectively. UN Women interventions will complement the aforementioned with interventions to address impunity for SGBV and enhance access to gender justice for survivors.

The ICGLR Pact on Security, Stability and Development, provides the regional legal framework for addressing peace and stability in the Great Lakes region. The Protocol and Plan of Action on Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children are in line with the following the Priorities of the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region (O/SESG-GL) , viz. G and H.

G): Mobilise active forces of the region: women, youth and civil society, to build the constituencies under the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework (PSC Framework) and promote a shared vision for peace and prosperity in the region

- ICGLR regional training facility on SGBV in Kampala Uganda;
- Legislative and judicial means to address the culture of impunity to SGBV

H): facilitate regional initiatives to fight impunity, improve accountability and advance regional judicial cooperation to strengthen the rule of law

- Comprehensive regional strategies with ICGLR for judicial cooperation, particularly on SGBV, corruption and illegal exploitation of natural resources.

In furtherance of implementation, a Heads of States Summit was held in 2010 to address impunity for SGBV in Kampala; an important outcome was the commitment of heads of states to zero tolerance for SGBV (Kampala Declaration). This was followed by a technical meeting of Ministers of Gender and Justice in 2012 in Kinshasa, DRC, and the 2017 Gender Ministerial meeting; the important outcome was the launching of zero tolerance campaigns for SGBV in all member states and the operationalisation of some of the special mechanisms for the fast tracking of SGBV cases (Kinshasa Declaration). To this end the ICGLR Regional Training Facility has been set up for the training of judicial, security, health and social workers for the effective prosecution of SGBV cases. UN Women has supported the Training Institute with a Senior Gender Expert to

support gender mainstreaming in the training curriculum and facilitation and coordination of the various trainings for judicial personnel, security forces and civil society organisations. This intervention will ensure continuation of the gender input in the trainings, country level support for implementation of the trainings, technical and advisory support for the establishment of fast track mechanisms for SGBV cases and systematic data collection on reported SGBV cases.

### 3) Intervention rationale

This programme addresses the current gap in comprehensive justice for SGBV survivors by seeking to break the cycle of impunity, release women's and girls' agency for productive engagements and reduce the high amount of resources that go into service provision for SGBV survivors. This supports implementation of SDG 5 and SDG 16; Gender Equality and promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies. The specific targets being "eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation" (SDG 5) and "promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere" (SDG 16). Women have a right to equality which includes for their rights to be upheld by the courts. Similarly gender discrimination in the legal system includes a failure to punish perpetrators of gender-based violence. As long as SGBV crimes cannot be successfully prosecuted, impunity will continue. Most UNDAFS in the sub region address SGBV and strengthening of the rule of law. Current initiatives aim at enhancing capacity of relevant institutions to address SGBV, including justice, security and social welfare institutions. The mechanisms for prosecution however need to be operational and effective. These include information on the current state of prosecution (% of reported cases that are prosecuted), bottlenecks in the justice system and areas for further intervention, establishment of mechanisms to fast track cases, strengthening capacity of relevant stakeholders to address the gender issues in effective prosecution at country level, and strengthening the ICGLR and CSOs to monitor progress on addressing impunity. Very few, if any of the countries in the Great Lakes region have reliable data on the prevalence of SGBV cases, and the outcome of the reported cases. The statistics for successfully prosecuted cases is also low in all the countries leading to impunity for SGBV offences.

### 4) Proposed response

Technical assistance and advisory support to ICGLR to strengthen their assistance to member states to set up mechanisms for fast tracking of SGBV cases; Annual technical review meetings of ICGLR with justice and security institutions and relevant civil society organisations of member states to monitor progress and good practices on prosecution of SGBV cases will be supported; support to member states for systematic data collection and analysis on SGBV cases; Review and report on best practices of fast track mechanisms for prosecution of SGBV cases; and capacity enhancement and facilitation of civil society organisations on monitoring and reporting on outcome of reported SGBV cases to support evidenced based advocacy with national and regional institutions for action to end impunity.

#### *a) Vision Statement*

A peaceful and stable region free from SGBV in which women and girls are empowered to participate in peace building, economic growth and enjoy equitable access to benefits of sustainable development.

*b) Main outcome*

**Implementation of commitments of the Kampala Declaration to address impunity for gender based crimes at the country level.** This includes the institution of special mechanisms to fast track SGBV cases; the setting up of special courts and/or mechanisms for fast tracking of cases, strengthening the institutions responsible for justice and security to respond to women's needs, supporting data collection and support for monitoring and reporting on progress and ensuring synergy between the training activities of the Kampala Training Centre and implementation of the commitments by institutions at the country level.

*c) Main activities*

1. Provide technical and advisory support to ICGLR to implement the agreement for the setting up of special courts and/or mechanisms for the fast tracking of SGBV cases in member states.
2. Document and disseminate best practices on special mechanisms for fast tracking SGBV cases.
3. Support member states to collect relevant data on SGBV prevalence and management for reporting and planning effective responses
4. Provide technical and advisory support to civil society to do evidenced based advocacy for fast tracking of SGBV cases.
5. Support civil society to track and publish progress on accountability of SGBV cases in the region.
6. Provide technical & financial support to AUC and ICGLR for the convening of special technical and high level political sessions to discuss progress on addressing impunity for SGBV in the region.

5) Fulfilment of the guiding principles for priority regional interventions

The interventions are linked to 2 of the 6 guiding principles of the UN Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework, viz. gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women and addressing conflict drivers identified in the conflict analysis. SGBV has been identified as a key manifestation of the conflict in the Great Lakes region with an impact on the socio economic development of the region through reduced productivity of women and increased costs to the social services sector. Gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment is a cardinal principle of the United Nations that is proven to have a transformational effect when integrated into all aspects of planning and programming, including for the Great Lakes region. The interventions for addressing impunity include mainstreaming activities for enhancing access to justice (technical assistance and policy guidance for gender mainstreaming, monitoring and reporting) and specific women empowerment components such as the establishment of special mechanisms for fast tracking SGBV cases.

6) Capacity to address the issues identified

UN Women works consistently with government and civil society to support their implementation and monitoring respectively of women's rights commitments. Its mandate within the UN includes leadership on gender and support to and accountability of UN Agencies for gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment. UN Women participated in and supported the ICGLR in the Kampala and Kinshasa Summits and is supporting the Kampala Regional Training Facility with high level technical expertise on gender. At the global level it has been at the centre for the development of the normative frameworks on women, peace and security, including UN SCRs 1325 and 1820 and the development of monitoring indicators for prevention and protection of women and girls from violence. It provides gender experts to peace mediating teams and regional institutions to ensure gender and women's rights issues are well integrated. At the country level it works with justice and security institutions to enhance their capacity to integrate gender in their work and has supported policy frameworks on gender for many such institutions. The capacity for UN Women to

respond to these issues has been enhanced at the regional and country levels. In addition to a variety of high level technical experts and consultants on roster, there are dedicated Units on peace and security, EAW and governance at the HQ, Regional Offices and country offices that include dedicated Regional Peace and Security Advisors and country level Peace and Security Specialists in all conflict affected countries.

ICGLR has a strong convening power of governments and an adequately strong legal framework to complement its programme on peace and security for women. It will benefit from funds from the World Bank (US\$3M) to support activities of the Regional Training Facility to train judicial, security and social workers to better address SGBV. The Governments of DRC, Burundi and Rwanda will also benefit from World Bank funds to address peace and security related issues. Both however require technical support in the areas of gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment, which will continue to be provided by UN Women in addition filling the gaps in addressing impunity for SGBV crimes. CSOs working on gender and women's rights have an established constituency but need continuing support in terms of capacity and financial programme support to fulfil their role of advocacy, monitoring and reporting.

## 7) Partners

There are existing stakeholders and frameworks to address gender and SGBV issues in the Great Lakes region and these stakeholders will be the primary partners. They include the ICGLR, O/SESG-GL, national institutions in the targeted countries responsible for security and justice and data collection, relevant civil society organisations and UN Agencies.

**The ICGLR** Intergovernmental bodies have played an important role in strengthening regional commitments on women, peace and security. The Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR Pact) entered into force in June 2008 and incorporates ten protocols including the Protocol on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children. The objectives include providing protection for women and children against impunity for sexual violence and establish a legal framework under which Member States undertake to prosecute and punish perpetrators of sexual violence in the Great Lakes region.<sup>3</sup>

Building on the ICGLR Pact, in June 2008 a regional consultation meeting led by Member States of the ICGLR adopted the Goma Declaration on Eradicating Sexual Violence and Ending Impunity in the Great Lakes region. Recommendations include that Member States should not grant amnesty to perpetrators of SGBV<sup>4</sup> and where necessary should amend laws to conform to the ICGLR Protocol on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children.<sup>5</sup> In December 2011, Heads of Member States of the ICGLR issued a Declaration with respect to SGBV, which includes a commitment to ending impunity through establishing appropriate mechanisms for investigating and prosecuting sexual violence crimes that amount to genocide, war crimes or crimes against humanity in the region.<sup>6</sup> The ICGLR launched an SGBV Training Centre in Kampala in March 2014 for training security organs, justice sector and other key officials on preventing and responding to SGBV and ending impunity which is being supported by the World Bank (US\$3M). In- country initiatives for setting up special courts to fast track cases are still in the initial stages and will be supported through this initiative and will complement support to judicial institutions by UNDP.

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<sup>3</sup> Protocol on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children, art. 2 (1, 2), 30 November 2006.

<sup>4</sup> The Goma Declaration on Eradicating Sexual Violence and Ending Impunity in the Great Lakes Region, Goma, 18 June 2008, Recommendation 23.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Recommendation 19.

<sup>6</sup> Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region at the Fourth Ordinary Summit and Special Session on Sexual and Gender Based Violence, 15-16 December 2011, Munyonyo Commonwealth Resort, Kampala Uganda, para 9.

The ICGLR also set up the Regional Women's Forum, which comprises women Members of Parliament to network with their respective governments to ensure that the gender and women issues in the respective frameworks are implemented.

### **The Women's Platform for Peace and Security**

On 24 February 2013, recognizing the recurring cycles of conflict and violence that permeate the eastern DRC, eleven countries in Africa signed a PSC Framework; at a later stage two more countries signed as well. The agreement aims to build stability by addressing the root causes of the conflict and fostering trust between the DRC and its neighbours. The PSC Framework further seeks to build on commitments at the national, regional and international levels to bring peace and stability to the eastern DRC and to the Great Lakes region. In January 2014, the former Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region, Mary Robinson, launched the Women's Platform for the PSC Framework aimed at strengthening the capacities of women's organisations in the region to implement the PSC Framework of the Great Lakes region. The Women's Platform focuses on building women's agency in four areas: i) monitoring and advocacy on the PSC Framework and the regional and national plans of action under UN SCR 1325; ii) combating violence against women and supporting women affected by violence; iii) advancing women's livelihoods and development and iv) access to clean energy at the local level. This initiative will support activities in areas i and ii.

### **National institutions for security and justice**

The above institutions are key to addressing impunity for gender based crimes, and providing relevant social services for the needs of women and girls in post conflict and conflict communities. They are key in implementing the commitments made at regional and sub- regional and global levels on peace and security. There are good policy commitments or frameworks, domestication of some of these commitments and initiatives for capacity building of the human resources in these institutions (Kampala Training Centre), but the capacity of these institutions to deliver tangibly at the country level on gender and women's empowerment issues need strengthening. There has been a long delay between the commitments for establishment of special mechanisms for fast tracking cases for SGBV and the initiation of these mechanisms. Apart from periodic Demographic and Health Surveys, there are no systematic collection of data on SGBV to measure prevalence and trends. The national statistics bureau of the various member states will be supported to generate data from the relevant national institutions.

### **UN Agencies**

UNDP works on support to the justice sector and this project will collaborate with UNDP to ensure synergy. UNFPA works mainly in the area of service provision and collaboration will be sought in linking services with accountability mechanisms and support for data collection. The project will also collaborate with and draw from UNFPA's extensive expertise and experience in data collection, especially on SGBV from their partners and coordination of SGBV activities in conflict zones. UN Women will collaborate with UNV for the recruitment of IUNVs and the possibility of fully funded IUNVs. Implementation of country level activities will be through UN Women offices in the various countries.

### **The World Bank**

DRC, Burundi, Rwanda and the ICGLR will receive funding from the World Bank (about USD 107 million) to address SGBV. This will cover holistic support to survivors, basic health services and regional and national knowledge sharing, research and capacity building. Though not a direct partner of the UN, the UN programme will collaborate with the World Bank to create synergy between the two programmes, avoid duplication, share information, and share best practices and focus on interventions that will add value to the World Bank interventions.

## **Civil Society Organisations**

The UN programme will also capacitate civil society to closely monitor and engage in decision making of the mainly government implemented World Bank programme. It will also support relevant civil society organisations to enhance their capacity to monitor and report on progress on prosecution of SGBV cases. This will include capacity building on monitoring and reporting and use and/or adoption of current frameworks for monitoring and networking to collect the necessary data and their participation/advocacy in relevant community, national and regional meetings.

### **B. Intervention 2: Enhanced women's visibility and participation in decision making and peace- building.**

#### 1) Type of regional intervention

The following is a national intervention with regional implications. October 2015 was the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UN SCR 1325; the landmark resolution on women's peace and security rights. 1325 highlights women's rights in participation in peacebuilding and post conflict governance structures, prevention from sexual and gender based violence, protection of their rights and from violence, and addressing of their needs in post conflict recovery and reconstruction. National Action Plans are the main operational/strategic frameworks for implementation of UN SCR 1325. They highlight the country's key priorities for women's peace and security based on a needs assessment and multi stakeholder consultations and have concrete outputs and indicators to measure progress in the critical areas of participation, prevention, protection and relief and recovery. Regional bodies like the African Union (AU) and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) have peace and security frameworks aligned to UN SCR 1325 and subsequent supporting Resolutions; IGAD has developed a Regional Action Plan and the AU is in the process of developing a regional monitoring framework for progress on implementation of UN SCR 1325.

The UN SCR 1325 Global Report showed that in the last 15 years, there has been significant progress, mainly through affirmative action provisions in national constitutions in women's representation in legislative bodies; and in some countries in executive and judicial positions as well<sup>1</sup>. There has been inadequate progress in women's participation and visibility in peace processes, including in negotiations although there has been some progress in women's representation in UN peace missions. Women's peace networks have been on the periphery of peace talks mainly lobbying from outside for their issues to be addressed. Funds for women's post conflict and recovery needs have consistently reduced, even for Multi Donor Trust Funds. The recommendations of the Global Report include increase representation of women in formal peace processes as mediators and members of delegations of negotiating parties, greater gender responsiveness of peace agreements, greater capacity of women in peace building and increased resources to address women's peacebuilding and recovery needs. These global findings and recommendations hold true for the Great Lakes region. A Mapping of Progress of UN SCR 1325 in the ESAR region, commissioned by UN Women and reviewed in September 2016, established similar findings and recommendations. The emerging security issues in Burundi have made it challenging for national stakeholders to have meaningful dialogue, necessitating international and regional interventions to broker peace. The deteriorating security in Burundi has resulted in a refugee crisis with over 250,000 Burundian refugees in refugee camps in DRC, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. The support for the country initiatives will have direct impact on women's rights in conflict and peacebuilding; support development/revision of the necessary country frameworks for women's peace and security rights, provide information and platforms for follow up by the regional bodies who have access for accountability to technical and political leadership of member states at the level of ministers and heads of states for policy commitments made, and enhanced capacity of women to engage in peace building at the community, national and regional levels.

## 2) Introduction and background

Only 4 countries of the target countries (Burundi, DRC, Rwanda and Uganda) have developed National Action Plans on UN SCR 1325 all of which have expired. This implies that women peace and security (WPS) are not part of the national agenda or national development plans of the target countries in the region. There has been insufficient progress in three of the four main areas of UN SCR 1325 in all the countries. Significant progress has been in the area of women's participation in governance; this is mainly a result of affirmative action provisions of national constitutions that have provided for women specific quotas in representative office. Unfortunately affirmative action has not extended to areas of women's representation in non-elective positions like in peace delegations and security organs. Affirmative action has also not yielded the expected dividends of equity and parity as women still have to grapple with patriarchy and also do not always possess the required experience, skills, knowledge and networking to effectively participate in public decision making and also articulate and advocate for women's rights. Gender discriminatory laws still persist, laws related to prevention of sexual and gender based violence are fraught with bottlenecks for implementation, negative cultural and traditional norms take precedence over women's human rights and justice and peacebuilding processes are not gender responsive; either in terms of inclusivity or in implementing gender commitments. Inadequate funding is provided to achieve gender parity whether in peace situations or in peacebuilding. The region is home to some of the longest persisting conflicts that have a regional impact on the security, economy and social well-being of its citizens. Several frameworks have been developed to address peace and security and its ramifications in the region. In addition to the PSC-F, there are the ICGLR Pacts on Peace and Security and the African Protocol, all of which call for women's participation and visibility of their needs.

There is empirical evidence that women's participation in peace building increases the prospects of sustainable peace; and sustainable peace cannot be built without women's participation. Addressing conflict in DRC, Burundi and other Great Lakes region's countries would require the participation of women, the building of their capacity to engage meaningfully and funding for their engagement in the various peace building consultations and in concrete peace dividends like economic and social recovery.

The initiatives are in line with the O/SESG- GL's Priority to mobilise active forces of the region including women, youth and civil society to build constituencies under the PSC Framework and promote a shared vision for peace and security in the region and SDGs 5 and 16, Gender Equality and Peaceful, Just and inclusive Societies.

The link between women's participation in peace and security decision-making and better outcomes, both for peace and gender equality is grounded in political interest theory. Here, organised representation of interests is assumed to produce policy outcomes of value to the interest group in question. Gender equality, gender justice, and sustained peace building can flow from women's participation and leadership in conflict resolution and recovery processes. If an enabling environment for implementation of women, peace and security commitments is created; if women participate in decision-making processes related to the prevention, management and resolution of conflict in a quality manner; and if the safety, physical and mental health and economic security of women and girls are assured, their human rights respected, and their specific needs met in the peacebuilding and recovery process, then societies will be more peaceful and gender equal; because evidence shows that women are drivers of peace and security. Inclusive societies are more likely to be stable and post conflict settings are opportunities to address underlying gender inequality barriers. The regional interventions will seek to influence power dynamics – the power of domestic constituencies for gender equality in peace and security policy to influence national, community and cross border decision makers and to hold them accountable to commitments on women's rights in peace and security. Unless

women's voices and representation are placed at the centre of reform efforts the PSC-F will not consolidate its transformational potential for a safe, stable, and economically viable region.

The project will support advocacy for women's greater inclusion in peace processes and support capacity development of women engaged in peacebuilding and decision making for the expected outcomes of more inclusive peace. Technical assistance will be provided for the development or revision of the national peace and security frameworks to ensure that the process is inclusive of all stakeholders, the analysis is solid and includes the current situation and emerging threats to women's peace and security, including baselines, targets, measurable indicators and adequate budgets and a monitoring framework with responsibilities of accountable institutions for reporting, both at the national level and to regional bodies. Advocacy, training and women's peace networks that connect grassroots concerns with national and regional level dialogues will be supported to ensure effective participation of women in peace processes especially in DRC and Burundi. The leadership enhancement of women refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), especially those in decision making/management positions will be supported to ensure that women acquire the skills and knowledge to develop their resilience to adverse situations. To ensure gender sensitivity of peace negotiations women with the requisite background and capacity in the region will be identified and trained in collaboration with regional institutions for inclusion in a roster of female mediators to be developed by the AU.

### 3) Intervention rationale

The four countries that developed NAPs in the Great Lakes region face varying levels of insecurity that impact disproportionately on women and girls; all have high levels of sexual and gender based violence, even though concrete statistics on SGBV prevalence are not available. Burundi and DRC face the additional problem of internal conflicts that have caused their citizens to take refuge in neighbouring countries. Over 250,000 persons have fled Burundi and 25,014 are internally displaced since the crisis broke out in April, 2015. A UN inter Agency Gender Needs assessment conducted in July 2015, revealed significant levels of sexual abuse in the camp, low empowerment of women and low visibility of women in camp management. Rwanda is home to over 75,000 Congolese refugees for several years now. There has been no gender assessment of the aforementioned group, but given the vulnerability of the Burundi refugees, there is need for an assessment of this group. In Burundi, OHCHR has recorded incidences of sexual abuse, mainly by security forces or by other persons with their compliance. The current crisis brought about by the President's bid for a third term in office has polarized the society and there are threats of more violence. Regional initiatives for a peaceful settlement have so far failed due to the failure of government to engage with all stakeholders in the process. There have been internal dialogues on peace and also externally facilitated dialogues by the UN and now EAC. Women have tried to be a part of the process but lack the capacity to form a cohesive body with a common women's agenda for peace. DRC has had the longest standing conflict in the region; and its forests are home to the LRA and other rebel groups. Women have been caught in the cross fire and many are raped as they live their lives in displaced camps with little accountability for the perpetrators. The NAPs for Burundi and DRC expired in 2016. There is need to review the progress in the current NAPs and develop a new NAP based on the current realities. NAPs for Uganda and Rwanda have also expired and there is also need for review of progress and development of new NAPs.

As part of its agenda of the African Women's Decade, the AU is committed to enhancing the capacity of women to act as mediators in solving Africa's conflicts. 22 women were trained in 2015 in collaboration with ACCORD and UN Women and several more in 2016. There is need to further support this initiative to support training of mediators at the community level and for high level formal peace negotiators both as members of delegations or as facilitators. Women need to be trained to a level that would include them in the roster of mediators of the UN and other international and regional bodies that negotiate peace. Burundi currently

has over 500 women mediators at the community level covering every province. These women were initially trained as GBV mediators. There is need for further training to enhance their capacity in the delicate process they are currently engaged in; facilitating community peace in the current crisis to contain the refugee influx to neighboring countries.

#### 4) Main stakeholders

Institutions in member states with responsibility for development of accountability frameworks for women's peace and security, women's peacebuilding networks, regional institutions like the AU and ICGLR with convening power of member states on agreed frameworks on WPS, special envoys on peace and security viz. the AU Special Envoy on WPS and O/SESG-GL and UNCTs (including Gender Theme Groups) for support to governments for the development/revision of 1325 National Action Plans.

#### 5) Proposed response

Technical assistance and advisory support through UN Women country offices for the development of country accountability frameworks for women, peace and security (national action plans on women, peace and security); capacity enhancement and facilitation of women's meaningful participation in ongoing peace processes; support for research on emerging threats to women's peace and security including violent extremism; and support for the training of women peace mediators for community, national and high level mediation.

Main outcomes:

- National frameworks on women, peace and security developed/ revised in member states
- Au Regional Monitoring Framework on 1325 finalised and rolled out to member states
- Women are capacitated to participate effectively in ongoing peace processes
- Increase in number of women trained to participate in peace processes; as members of negotiating teams, representatives of women's peace networks, technical experts, and mediators of facilitating teams.
- Ongoing peace negotiations and agreements integrate women's needs and rights.

Main activities:

1. Technical support for the development and/or revision of National Action Plans on 1325 (ESARO)
2. Strengthening women's regional peace networks (ICGLR Women's Forum) for engagement with formal and informal peace processes and transitional justice mechanisms. (Burundi & DRC)
3. Support the development and roll out of a customised curriculum for training women mediators at community, national and regional levels. (Burundi, DRC, Uganda)
4. Finalise and circulate research on emerging threats to peace and security in ESAR. (ESARO)
5. Support leadership skills development of women refugees and IDPs in DRC, Burundi, Tanzania & Rwanda
6. Support AU to finalise and roll out monitoring framework on SCR 1325
7. Support AU to convene Progress Meeting on 1325 in 2017.

#### 6) Fulfilment of the guiding principles for priority regional interventions

The interventions are linked to 2 of the 6 guiding principles of the UN Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework, viz. gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women and addressing conflict drivers identified in the conflict analysis. SGBV has been identified as a key manifestation of the conflict in the Great

Lakes region with an impact on the socio-economic development of the region through reduced productivity of women. Gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment is a cardinal principle of the United Nations that is proven to have a transformational effect when integrated into all aspects of planning and programming, including for the Great Lakes region. The interventions proposed will provide national frameworks to addressing women's peace and security, build women's capacity to participate in the processes and strengthen the capacity of regional institutions to monitor progress and hold governments accountable.

## 7) Capacity to address the issues identified

UN Women has worked with countries in the region on development/revision of NAPs, including South Sudan, Sudan, Kenya, Rwanda and Burundi. The NAPs for Kenya and South Sudan are finalised and awaiting validation and formal adoption respectively. NAP for Sudan is in the final stage of development with support from the UNCT and with technical leadership of UN Women and the UN gender thematic group. In Uganda UN Women and UNFPA supported the revision of the indicators of the expired NAP from 600+ to 15 measurable indicators. UN Women has the knowledge and experience for the development of NAPs. The Governments of Burundi, DRC, Rwanda and Uganda provided strong coordination through their respective gender machineries to develop their NAPs through consultative processes with the support of international partners, especially the UN through members of the Gender Thematic groups. Funding for implementation of activities has mostly been dependent on donor funding. At the global level UN Women was the secretariat for the Global Study on progress of the implementation of UN SCR 1325 for the 15 year celebration and has supported the development of the key frameworks for global monitoring of 1325, including indicators and monitoring and reporting frameworks. The UN Women regional office in Nairobi in 2016 commissioned a report on progress of implementation of UN SCR 1325 in 14 states in East and Southern Africa and therefore has the baseline to support the development/revision of NAPs. UN Women country offices will work with other UN Agencies within their respective areas of expertise to support this process. In terms of women's participation in peacebuilding, UN Women will build on its experience and networks in the region. UN Women supported women in South Sudan and Uganda to come up with a women's agenda for peace and supported women to consult from the grassroots to the negotiating table to get women's key peace and recovery needs included in the peace agreements. UN Women has supported senior gender advisers to peace missions to ensure gender sensitivity. These include the offices of the AU Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security, the O/SESG-GL, and IGAD to name a few. UN Women will recruit technical expertise for support to the NAP through the UNV office in Nairobi.

## **C. Intervention 3: Increased women's economic empowerment and resilience.**

### 1) Type of Regional Intervention

The following is a national intervention with regional implications. The resilience of persons affected by conflict is to a great extent related to their economic situation. For women and girls it increases their vulnerability to sexual exploitation and high risk behavior such as transactional sex, and violent relationships. Persons (men, women, boys and girls) who do not have access to productive resources such as land, jobs, livelihoods etc. find it much more difficult to reintegrate upon return or to survive in displaced or post conflict situations. Women headed households and youths are disproportionately impacted because of their increased responsibilities and limited access to the means of production (e.g. access to land, skills, jobs etc.). This holds true for displaced persons, refugees, and persons in conflict and post conflict situations in the Great Lakes Region. The Great Lakes region is rich in natural resources but yet it is one of the poorest in the sub region<sup>1</sup>. Refugees, IDPs and returnees in the respective countries have limited access to quality social

services as a result of their governments' control of the resources. The natural resources are both a major driver of the conflict and their mismanagement or lack of management a consequence of conflict. Conflict also creates a conducive environment for criminal elements to thrive as there is little accountability and a safe corridor for them to exercise their exploitative acts across borders. The UN Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework has several Pillars to address economic stabilization, both as stand-alone pillars<sup>1</sup> and under youth employment and Gender and SGBV with a strong focus on cross border trade, access to land, and accountable management of natural resources. This intervention will address the in country needs of affected groups of women and children and link with regional initiatives such as cross border trade.

## 2) Introduction and background

For decades, Africa's Great Lakes region<sup>1</sup> has been characterized by conflicts. The impact of this instability and violence are gendered. Women and men, girls and boys are affected differently by conflict on account of gender roles and responsibilities and the gendered distribution of resources and opportunities. Systemic discrimination in a range of areas including education, health care, employment and control of assets has resulted in women being statistically poorer than men. These poverty implications are widespread, leaving many women without basic human rights, little protection from violence, and limited roles in decision-making.

The conflict and insecurity have greatly affected the economy and livelihoods in the Great Lakes region, with most of the countries scoring very low in the human development index. Women's economic livelihood has been greatly impacted by this situation. They form 70% of the workforce and are the main producers of food. Conflict and displacement have increased female headed households without commensurate opportunities to fulfil this role. Displacement and the threat of violence have disrupted their economic activities. They have lost access to land, lack opportunities to carry out their traditional productive activities in displaced situations and therefore need to learn new skills to leverage on available and/or new economic activities. Recovery programmes often lack the data and engagement with women to holistically address women's economic recovery needs. The allocation of humanitarian funds to women's needs, including livelihoods is usually inadequate. This project will complement other projects focusing on economic recovery and reintegration by supporting humanitarian actors with gender sensitive tools for analyses and knowledge (including data) to integrate gender in their programmes; ensure UN Agencies' compliance with commitment 3 of the UN SG 7 Point Agenda on Gender Responsive Peacebuilding<sup>1</sup>; enhance women's capacity to engage humanitarian actors, participate in cross border trade and support catalytic projects on women's livelihoods in refugee and displaced settlements in DRC, Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda. This will ensure humanitarian and recovery institutions have the skills, knowledge and data for planning, implementing and monitoring for inclusive livelihoods and economic recovery. Women and women's organisations will also be supported to engage in the planning, implementation and monitoring processes to ensure their needs are addressed. Catalytic programmes for women's economic recovery will be supported for good practices to be up-scaled by Agencies that have the required funds and mandate for economic recovery and sustainable livelihoods.

When women participate in and benefit from peacebuilding and recovery efforts and when post-conflict institutions are gender-responsive, then peace dividends will be more inclusive, security organs will benefit all, and economic recovery will be accelerated; because including women in the recovery brings broader benefits to communities and nations. Lack of viable economic opportunities, mismanagement of natural resources, and inequitable access to benefits of state resources have consequences on and are drivers of conflict in the Great Lakes region; with a disproportionate impact on women and youths. Increasing economic opportunities for women and female youths will reduce their vulnerability to high risk economic activities and sexual based violence and consequently increase their resilience to recover from conflict.

Priorities F, G and I of the O/SESG-GL's Roadmap for sustainable peace address socio-economic development as a means to sustainable peace.

F): Facilitate socio-economic development to consolidate peace gains and advance regional economic integration

- Facilitate regional development initiatives in particular facilitate support for cross border regional projects

G): Mobilize active forces of the region: women, youth and civil society, to build the constituencies under the PSC Framework and promote a shared vision for peace and prosperity in the region

- Empower women as economic agents – support cross border trading ; ensure that women benefit equally from natural resource and agriculture-based initiatives

I): Lead and coordinate the international community's support to the implementation of the PSC Framework, including through the mobilization of resources and strengthened donor and partner relations.

- Quick impact projects for women and youth

The above are also in line with SDGs 1 and 8.

### 3) Intervention rationale

Humanitarian and development partners have not consistently addressed the needs of women in recovery. This is due to lack of data and analysis of women's needs, the inability of women to engage with the development of recovery programmes and lack of understanding of gender and women's empowerment and familiarity with the main frameworks of mainstreaming the same into the humanitarian response among stakeholders, including UN Agencies. Funding for women's empowerment programmes has decreased, and greater emphasis has been on quick impact programmes that target tangible and quantitative outcomes. The project will enhance the gender responsiveness of humanitarian and development actors. It will support their capacity to use the available tools to undertake gender responsive needs assessments in the areas of livelihoods and sustainable economic development to ensure that women's needs are identified and programmed and budgeted for; the project will support sex disaggregated data collection to ensure that relevant baselines are available to measure progress on women's economic recovery; it will support capacity development of women IDPS, refugees and returnees to participate in and benefit from planned economic activities like policy development on the extractives, cross border trade and will provide funding for catalytic interventions identified by the Women's Platform for Peace for ensuring peace dividends for women in the area of sustainable livelihoods in recovery.

The main stakeholders will be:

- UN Agencies, NGOs implementing partners and government institutions responsible for recovery programmes – they will benefit from trainings on integrating gender into humanitarian programmes, needs assessments, and use of existing monitoring tools for measuring progressing on UN gender commitments in peace and recovery;
- UN Agencies implementing livelihoods and economic reintegration programmes (e.g. UNDP, FAO, and UNHCR etc.) – support will be provided to ensure that women are integrated in the programmes and their capacity built to engage and benefit. This is particularly so for cross border trade and policy development on the extractives.
- Women's Platform for Peace – for implementation of quick impact projects for women and youths. The Platform has already identified projects that will provide peace dividends for women, including in economic recovery. The project will mobilise much needed funds for the Platform.

- Women’s organisation and networks – the project will build their capacity to mobilise and come up with agendas for their economic recovery for dialogue with the relevant agencies and participation in the programme development processes. Their capacity to monitor and report on recovery funding will also be supported.

#### 4) Proposed response

##### Main outcomes:

- Women’s needs identified and integrated in economic recovery and livelihoods programmes;
- Humanitarian and development agencies implement Commitment 3 of the UN SG’s 7 Point Agenda for Gender Responsive Peacebuilding – allocate specific resources for women’s needs;
- Women have enhanced access to productive resources and policy developments on extractives and land are gender responsive;
- Quick impact cross border programmes for women in livelihoods and sustainable economic recovery funded.

##### Main activities:

1. In collaboration with regional advisers in other Agencies, develop and/or promote use of existing tools on mainstreaming gender in humanitarian actions for relevant UNCTs and national institutions in the Great Lakes region;
2. Gender analysis of country and regional budgetary allocations for recovery and humanitarian programmes;
3. Develop a regional template and generate country gender profiles in the humanitarian area to support humanitarian workers with sex disaggregated data;
4. Support training and support for women in cross border trade and in livelihood programmes in refugee and IDPs camps;
5. Provide funding for catalytic projects for women’s economic recovery;
6. Enhance capacity of women to participate in the development and monitoring of economic recovery programmes.

The activities will enhance women’s and youths’ benefits from economic recovery programmes, reduce their vulnerability to SGBV and other consequences of poverty and their ability to engage in decision making processes.

#### 5) Fulfilment of the guiding principles for priority regional interventions

The project interventions will support gender mainstreaming in economic integration, cross border trade and sustainable management Pillars; they will address the employment needs of women and youths, by ensuring that policy discussions on the management of natural resources include them, that interventions include their capacity enhancement to participate effectively in the policy development and implementation discussions. The project will also support catalytic projects on livelihoods to ensure peace dividends for women while the benefits of engendered policies are in development.

#### 6) Capacity to address the issues identified

UN Women has supported livelihood programmes for IDPs and refugees in several countries in the Great Lakes region including Uganda, DRC, Rwanda, Sudan and South Sudan; either on its own or in collaboration with other Agencies like FAO, and WFP. It has pioneered relevant studies on gender and extractives, gender and agriculture (the Gender Gap in Agriculture) and the cost of GBV on the economy. These will be invaluable

information for programme development in economic recovery in the Great Lakes region. UN Women also sits on the Advisory Board of the Women's Platform for Peace of the O/SESG-GL which will be one of the main partners for the implementation of the quick impact projects for women and female youths. The respective governments in the Great Lakes region have strong gender machineries to coordinate policy discussions on gender mainstreaming; external technical expertise and commissioned studies would be needed in specific areas to ensure the relevant substantive knowledge is available for effective mainstreaming of gender and women's empowerment; and of course civil society participation.

## 7) Partners

Partners will include relevant UN Agencies for Pillars on Sustainable management of natural resources, Economic integration, cross-border trade and food and nutrition security, Youth employment and livelihoods and Gender and SGBV. Other UN partners will include members of the Humanitarian Country Team and UN Women in the targeted countries. Relevant government institutions responsible for policy development, including the national machineries for gender, private sector, viz. the mining companies, civil society organisations and local governments. The Women's Platform for Peace will be the key partner for implementation of the catalytic projects on economic recovery and re-integration.