

Empowering Women through National Action Plans for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions in South Africa

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Abstract

There has been a significant amount of local and international policies and legislation aimed at addressing the empowerment of women and gender equality, including a number of United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs). Through in-depth interviews with ten key players in locally represented international bodies, this paper tackles the issue of slow implementation of the empowerment agenda, particularly in South Africa. It offers mechanisms and suggestions that may assist the country to develop its own national action plan (NAP) and join the handful of other dedicated African countries that have done so. The resolutions, along with other initiatives meant to empower women, inter alia, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are discussed from the perspective of self-determination and autonomy. The primary research question examined was: What does South Africa need to do to overcome the obstacles and utilise the enablers to develop and implement a national action plan to put the various UNSCRs for empowerment of women, into effect? It was clear that not having a NAP is detrimental to meeting empowerment and gender equality objectives. South Africa has all it needs to co-ordinate this, including existing structures, processes and policies, and, most importantly, competent, dedicated women. With collaboration and co-ordination of efforts, allocation of funds, strategy formulation, data gathering and monitoring and evaluation all efforts can be

focused into the desired outcome through the mechanism of effective change management. Government, civil society and the private sector all have roles to play. Several new elements have emerged and these are incorporated into the recommendations for creating a NAP. Not the least of these is the motivating role of the three 2011 Nobel Peace Prize winners, all women. Once the plan is in place, it is a matter of 'just doing it' to bring it into reality.

Keywords: Women empowerment, gender equality, United Nations Security Council Resolutions, national action plans, millennium development goals

Introduction

For a country not at war, South Africa's crime and violence statistics are alarming. The country's injury and death rate is almost twice the global average, with this determined largely by interpersonal and gender-based violence. Half the female victims of homicide are murdered by their intimate male partners (Seedat, Van Niekerk, Jewkes *et al.* 2009). Statistics South Africa (2012) reported that there were 56,000 rapes in 2011, and suggests that this is nine times lower than the actual numbers. Having said this, the same report indicated that perceptions of crime were almost equally divided between 'increased', 'stayed the same' and 'decreased' over previous years, and that government interventions were indeed having a positive result.

In addition to the physical insecurity of gender-based violence, women in post-conflict environments face many challenges. These include acute poverty, social devastation through dispersion of friends, family and networks, finding mechanisms to cope, having limited opportunities for employment and livelihood-generation (Popovic, Lytikainen & Barr 2010). A worst-case scenario can be drawn from Sierra Leone (Hopgood 2010), where women are actively involved in armed conflict conditions; their many roles may include being cooks, labourers, educators, nurses, combatants, wives, mothers, partners - even sex slaves, whilst still enduring gender based violence. These same women are discriminated against, isolated and excluded from their families and communities, their social and supportive networks all but destroyed (Popovic *et al.* 2010). They may be unable to find food, shelter, work and medical attention, which severely limit opportunities for

employment or the generation of a livelihood and general economic independence for themselves and their families.

Empowerment

Zhang and Bartol (2010) have linked psychological empowerment to intrinsic motivation which encourages creativity leading ultimately to better decision making and organisational effectiveness. In doing so they have drawn on the work of Spreitzer (1995) in defining that such empowerment comprises *meaning* (value to the individual), *competence* (belief in own abilities), *self-determination* (able to make choices), and *impact* (influence over outcomes). Although these works relate to corporate environments, it is proposed here that they could apply equally to governments, parastatals, civil society and similar bodies. A related view was presented by Kabeer (2005) in highlighting the central notion of choice-making as the key to empowerment. Embedded in this is the necessity for (visible) choices to be available. Empowered women are able to exercise their choices (through *agency*), utilising *resources* leading to *achievements*. The actions surrounding transformative agency (leading to long-term change) are born within individuals for outward expression – the implication being that it cannot be granted from an outside source.

There is much legislation and many policies worldwide aimed at addressing the empowerment of women; some of these are described in the following sections. The specific focus of United Nations security council resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) (United Nations 2000b) is to address issues affecting women in the context of armed conflict. However, this resolution cannot (and should not) be discussed in isolation, as it is underpinned by the success or otherwise of previous policies and has led to a number of subsequent strategic and planning documents. The emphasis of the resolution on the engagement of women in all levels of decision-making in relation to armed conflict, its prevention and resolution is clearly aligned with millennium development goal (MDG) three, for example. It is also intended to incorporate a gender perspective into humanitarian responses, post-conflict reconstruction, policy development, research, advocacy, dialogue, legislation, resource allocation, planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes (Cohn 2008; Mesa 2010; Popovic *et al.* 2010; United Nations 2011).

The marking of the tenth anniversary of the resolution asked for reflection on, and recommitment to, its full implementation (Mesa 2010).

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

In 2000, 189 world leaders from developed and developing countries came together to set ambitious targets which committed them, in essence, to making the world a better place. They started with the Millennium Declaration (United Nations 2000a) which included the articulation of eight MDGs to be achieved by 2015; the baseline was taken to be 1990.

Gender equality and women empowerment are embedded in the third of the MDGs (MDG3) (Chibba 2011:76). The other goals include halving poverty, reducing mortality (specifically children and maternal) by two thirds, bringing the spread of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria to a halt and reversal, halving the population proportion without clean water and developing a global development partnership.

Kabeer (2005) suggests that MDG3 should be valued both as an end in itself and as a mechanism for achieving other goals, for example, inequitable education across genders forces women into a greater state of poverty and dependence, which, in turn, disempowers them. Strategic priorities (Grown, Gupta & Kes 2005) to assist the attainment of MDG3 are:

- Strengthen opportunities for post primary education for girls while also ensuring that pledges for universal primary education are met concurrently
- Guarantee sexual and reproductive health for women and girls
- Provide efficient infrastructure to decrease women's and girls' time burdens
- Assure women's and girls' property and inheritance rights
- Abolish gender inequalities with regard to employment
- Boost the share of women's seats in national and local government
- Continue to fight violence against women and girls

Critics of the MDGs mainly point out their methodological weaknesses. One of them, Easterly (2009), claims that the MDGs, specifically the poverty-reduction goals, are unreasonable towards Africa in the way the targets are set and in the measuring of each country's

performance. He goes on to argue that the choices accessible for the measurement of the targets advancement should be consistent and take matters such the absolute versus percentage changes into account.

Rodrick (2012:1) is of the opinion that many of the MDGs will not be reached by 2015, and that nations should be looking towards articulating action plans and policies to stimulate further implementation. He feels that these should include specifics such as:

- Carbon taxes and other measures to ameliorate climate change;
- More work visas to allow larger temporary migration flows from poor countries;
- Strict controls on arms sales to developing nations;
- Reduced support for repressive regimes; and
- Improved sharing of financial information to reduce money laundering and tax avoidance.

Other Policies Promoting Women Empowerment and Gender Equality

There have been various resolutions and plans concerning the elimination of discrimination against women. For example, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted 1981 (Byrnes & Bath 2008), and the Beijing Platform for Action, developed at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 which identifies 12 areas of public policy that impact on women (Culler 2000). These, however, have been replaced by the more recent resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889.

The three more recently adopted resolutions of women, peace and security are seen as complimenting UNSCR 1325 in addressing some of its identified gaps, and take the resolution further by including current thinking on moving the women, peace and security agenda forward. However, the four UNSCRs alone will not bring about the anticipated change without the full commitment from all stakeholders at international, regional and national levels.

UNSCR 1820 (United Nations 2008) focuses specifically on the prevention of sexual violence in countries deep in conflict. Achuthan and

Black (2009) criticised the resolution on the points that it was premature; it did not address the broader categories of gender based violence, and could cause the dialogue on women to lose ground by relegating them to the role of victims. Resolution 1888 (United Nations 2009a) was similarly censured by Swaine (2010). It was felt that the resolutions should be grounded in long-term goals such as preventing widespread violence and in strengthening accountability mechanisms in order to prosecute perpetrators. The response to sexual violence is expected to be as strong as to other atrocities (St-Pierre & Centre 2010). This long-term grounding was embedded in UNSCR 1889 (United Nations 2009b) which sets out a number of measures to strengthen the participation of women at all stages of peace processes, the use of international indicators to assist in measuring the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 and to respond to the lack of accountability mechanisms in both UNSCR 1325 and UNSCR 1820. It specifies the inclusion of women in post-conflict peace-building efforts and notes the empowering presence of women in operational settings (Swaine 2010).

All four UNSCRs firmly establish that there is an international initiative grounded in both law and policy, and that the spotlight is on the Security Council to continue to move the agenda of women, peace and security forward. These resolutions cannot stand alone, but can rather add to the huge body of international legislature that promotes and protects women's rights.

The UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women 2011) began its work on January 1st 2011; and had an initial budget of \$500 million (twice the budget of all four former organisations combined). It is a synergistic merging of four separate bodies (United Nations 2011):

- UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)
- Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)
- Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues (OSAGI)
- UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW)

UN Women is intended to facilitate a more efficient functioning of the UN systems in addressing women's empowerment and gender equality.

The organisation works towards public accountability for women's rights, women's leadership in democratic governance, transformation of policy processes to decrease women's poverty, ending violence against women and addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic. It needs to be more than a simple amalgamation of the four bodies (Burki 2010) and to prove itself to the international community, although it would be likely to need an initial budget closer to \$1 billion.

Implementing the UNSCRs: National action plans (NAPs)

Member states are encouraged to produce National Action Plans (NAPs) for implementation of the various resolutions. The NAPs increase the visibility and accountability of national efforts to implement policies, assist with countering implementation challenges, integrating policies and operations within government, co-ordinating programmes and developing monitoring and evaluation measures.

Thirty-seven countries have employed NAPs (Peace Women 2011); a relatively small number which makes it difficult to measure the progress and impact of the different initiatives. Only nine of these countries are from Africa, and South Africa is not one of them. This appears to be rather an indictment on its commitment to the empowerment agenda. Despite this, the country's objective of achieving gender equality is guided by a vision for human rights, which includes acceptance of equal and inalienable rights of all men and women. This is a primary tenet under the Bill of Rights in the South African Constitution (Republic of South Africa 2004). In terms of this Act, the country has emerged from an apartheid past to a democratic society that respects and promotes the rights of all its citizens irrespective of gender, race, class, age and disability through black economic empowerment (BEE) initiatives, social grants and works programmes (Chibba 2011). In addition, Ramacharan (2009:1) has indicated that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is in support of the 'sensible macroeconomic policies, structural reforms to eliminate barriers to growth and employment, and the design of suitable conditions for private sector development have assisted the country in its endeavours'.

However, despite such forms of recognition, South Africa seems not to have gone as far as it could have in terms of the constitution (Republic of South Africa 2004). A country NAP does need to be developed to crystallise

the plans for moving forward and to maintain credibility as a serious actor in this arena. Leckie (2009) suggests that for the MDGs to remain sustainable, they need to be partnered with the broader social and gender justice initiatives internationally. This would include formalised national-level action plans that rely on country-specific political, socio-economic and cultural contexts, and need to be made explicit. The content and emphasis of NAPs varies from country to country but they all work as influential tools to start discussions with relevant stakeholders, advance policy development and then to translate those policies into tangible actions for implementation within the individual country.

Obstacles to Developing and Implementing NAPs

A number of authors and resolution documents (Charlesworth & Wood 2001; Moser 2007; United Nations 2009b; Popovic *et al.* 2010; United Nations 2011) have contributed towards identifying obstacles to the development of NAPs. These are presented in the context of the United Nations and many specifically refer to UNSCR 1325, but they may equally be considered when analysing possible reasons for the lack of a South African NAP, and in implementing the other UNSCRs.

- i. The difficulty in collecting relevant data, the lack of capacity and the skill to process and report on data, and the lack of standardised tracking systems. These shortcomings lead to a lack of baseline data for analysis
- ii. Security risks posed to data collectors and informants in many post-conflict contexts that would need to be taken into account
- iii. The question of who is ultimately responsible for implementation; gender departments may lack resources and sufficient influence
- iv. The lack of funding dedicated to women, peace and security, and the lack of monitoring and evaluation efforts towards this goal
- v. The lack of political will
- vi. The lack of awareness, knowledge and understanding of the UNSCR 1325 and the need to develop its NAP within a country. For example, al-

though in-roads have been made, there is still relatively low awareness in Africa, SADC and SA about the resolution. This may be connected to the view that UNSCR 1325 is inapplicable to low-intensity intra-state conflict (e.g. SA).

- vii. Competing priorities
- viii. The perception that gender issues are not important and therefore not valued, or are already sufficiently addressed in national policies in some countries.
- ix. Translating broad goals to tangible policies and practices.
- x. Poor co-ordination of efforts regarding women, peace and security between the different stakeholders in a country which would make it much easier to integrate resolutions if the various mechanisms were more complimentary.
- xi. The resolution is viewed as a tool for women only and not one that can also be used by men as well. It fails to engage the issue of 'men', their role, interests and interactions with the resolution's implementation.
- xii. Lack of knowledge about how to measure structural change brought about by UNSCR 1325.

The understanding of 'justice', particularly in post-conflict situations, needs to be clarified for that particular context. In addition, debate is necessary to establish whether justice should be punitive (criminal justice) or recuperative (transitional justice). This could include customary and/or traditional justice systems), which might be more accessible and culturally sensitive for gender-based violence in the African context.

For many member states it is much easier to put women into employment posts, knowing they lack skills and need further training than to engage fully with the spirit of the resolutions and MDGs (Olanisakin 2007). This is mostly experienced with member states that supposedly want to meet the regional and global quotas, but are not doing this in a systematic way.

The Research Question

What does South Africa need to do to overcome the obstacles and utilise the enablers to develop and implement a national action plan to put the various UNSCRs for empowerment of women, into effect?

Research Methodology

A qualitative approach was taken to seek answers to the research question. Ten in-depth interviews from a population of stakeholders in the field of women, peace and security in South Africa were conducted. The population comprised employees from UN Women, the Department of International Relations and Co-operation, the Ministry of Women, Children and Persons with Disabilities and the Rwandan Women Association. Two civil society organisations were also included.

The sampling frame was middle-to-senior managers only. Once they had agreed to participate in the research, each interviewee was sent the interview guide with a cover letter ahead of the scheduled meeting to give them sufficient time to prepare and be able to share in-depth insights to the questions posed.

Results and Discussion

A number of issues were raised through the interviews, confirming the need for a NAP, and describing steps to facilitate the development thereof.

The absence of a NAP in SA hinders the advancement of women empowerment and gender equality – the development of a NAP should be prioritised.

Respondents felt that a NAP is needed in SA because women are still underrepresented in ministries for peace and security – although 44% of parliamentary seats is a good achievement. In line with Leckie (2009), they were of the view that a NAP is essential for building a fairer society and to move the empowerment agenda forward. A respondent explained:

There are lots of analysis frameworks that can be used to get a gender

perspective into government. For example the People Oriented Planning by UNHCR, Harvard Gender Analysis Framework, Gender Planning in the Third World (Caroline Moser), Gender Analysis Matrix (GAM) and the Gender Equality and Empowerment Framework (Sarah Longwe).

SA should encourage the exchange of ideas and co-operation in order to develop a definitive NAP. For example, it was recommended that SA draw on the experiences of both Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In general, collaboration between the different stakeholders needs to be strengthened, and this should take place among the international community, regional support systems and within SA. This point had been recognised by Swaine (2010) and UN Women (2011).

A key point here is that SA needs to develop the NAP and then put it into action. The best plan in the world is valueless if it just sits on a shelf somewhere (Haugen & Davis 2010).

Co-ordination of Efforts

Following collaboration, once NAP development has begun, ministries and bodies *within* SA need to work together in a harmonious manner as pointed out by Popovic *et al.* (2010) to achieve an optimal result with stakeholder buy-in. One respondent illustrated the problem:

The co-ordination between the different stakeholders tends to be random and poorly measured, which gets in the way of development and implementation of the resolution.

SA has committed itself to the MDGs and has embraced them into a national set of ten priorities and a total of 95 indicators (Republic of South Africa 2010) aimed at resolving development challenges. Despite this, there was a great sense from the respondents that not much could be done without an essential planning phase, which needs to be transparent. SA needs to take this step, as, although the country is buoyed up by a framework of legislation, policies and procedures that include a Ministry for Women, Children and Persons with Disabilities, it still needs the co-ordinating assistance of its own NAP.

Participation of Women

The sample confirmed that women's unique and gendered experiences make their deliberations and participation crucial, as highlighted in resolutions 1325 (United Nations 2000b), 1820 (United Nations 2008), 1888 (United Nations 2009a) and 1889 (United Nations 2009b). All respondents were in agreement that women's views were essential:

South Africa simply can't move to healing, restoration and peace without the active participation and moderating influence of the female perspective.

This inclusion of women in debates around empowerment is key to success, if the definitions of real empowerment offered by Kabeer (2005) and Zhang and Bartol (2010) are to be taken seriously. Such participation can be escalated to higher levels through achievement recognition as women recognise and express their own influence over long-term outcomes. Such women are the foremost change agents in the country (Mogadime, Mentz, Armstrong *et al.* 2010).

There is growing attention to the requirement for 'gender equality' concerns to include men in the discussions; while gender equality has become synonymous with 'women', it is ultimately about relational connections between men and women (Mesa 2010; St-Pierre & Centre 2010). Akpotor (2009) believes that in the light of the MDGs towards the UNSCR 1325, both men and boys should be made to better understand how to further equality issues and work together with women and girls in the attempt to meet the set targets. He goes on to say that in the African context, men are placed at an advantage over women and this is exacerbated by culture, religion and beliefs that undercut women's rights politically, economically and socially. In fact one of the recommendations made by UN Women (2011) and Peace Women (2011) is to include gender-based sensitivity training into the agenda.

Change Management and Strategy Formulation

Collaboration is an essential part of strategy (Mintzberg & Waters 2006) and policy formation (Bishwakarma, Hunt & Zajicek 2010), and initial assessments should feed into all phases of action planning and implementation processes. The SA government would also need to apply a

well-documented change management approach in order to enhance the likelihood of successful implementation (Kotter & Schlesinger 2008). The first step would be to do a stock take of current resources and review what is needed to acquire the skills and additional resources such as data gathering and analysis, per Popovic *et al.* (2010) that would help the country develop and implement a NAP. Women's experiences are important if the resultant recommendations are to factor in gender differences and assume more rounded human rights approaches.

The SA government could use the literature, for example Mintzberg and Waters (2006); Matheson (2009); Walker *et al.* (2001); Bishwakarma *et al.* (2010); Kotter and Schlesinger (2008) and Haugen and Davis (2010) on policy and strategy formulation and implementation to assist it with explicit steps towards the formulation and implementation of the resolution.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation should include indicators that assess the origination, management and value of the many initiatives (St-Pierre & Centre 2010; Kramer, Seedat, Lazarus *et al.* 2011). The development of standardised indicators is necessary to track, monitor and evaluate the development of a NAP. The indicators must integrate local needs and capacities and also attempt to measure the long-term effects and sustainability of the implemented initiatives.

Monitoring and evaluation is imperative to advance and manage the impact of existing and past women, peace and security initiatives. A respondent highlighted the Rwanda case study:

The Gender Observatory in Rwanda was put in place for collecting, analysing and presenting national gender equity progress. It works with other government institutions. The monitoring and evaluation process is seen as indispensable to keep gender mainstreamed at all levels, to identify effectiveness and to identify gaps in the gender policy which will be a basic for decision making.

Indicators to track UNSCR 1325 have been initiated at the global level; SA needs to tailor-make these for the country. Respondents consider these of great assistance in furthering the resolution's implementation because:

Indicators are signposts of change along the path to developing a NAP; they can help the country to understand where it is along the development time-line, where it needs to be by a certain time period with the focus on the ultimate prize of the NAP.

The NAP must include clear lines of responsibility and delegation of tasks for each stakeholder involved in the development of the NAP. This ensures that stakeholders can be held responsible if their specific task remains outstanding.

Elimination of Quotas

All respondents were adamant that gender-based quotas can become purely symbolic or women may be given token positions without real decision-making ability or power. One stated:

A monitoring and evaluation process that does not engage women during agenda development, substantive talks and implementation loses legitimacy and misses potentially helpful initiatives by excluding half of the population.

Gender dynamics are essential so that they can be part of the implementables to ensure that women's experiences inform post conflict negotiations and reconstruction and development programmes. The 'token women' perception is damaging because those women are viewed to have received their positions as a result of quotas and not for their qualifications.

Funding

The funding barrier was raised by Popovic *et al.* (2010). Earmarking specific funds dedicated to UNSCR 1325 is required to monitor the available resources more proficiently. Certain respondents shared their knowledge of the following initiative:

The SA Department of Defence has indicated that a gender sensitive budget has ultimately been put in place with specific funds allocated for women's dialogue to create a women's programme for leadership.

It is necessary to construct a methodology for gender budgeting. This strategy could contribute to the lucrative financing of a NAP, independent of external funding. These budgets can come from different government departments that will be significant for the peace and security aspects of the agenda; in the SA context this could include the Department of Defence.

Representation

SADC member states have progressed in increasing the representation of women in the security sector (defence forces, police and correctional services). There is, however, room for much greater improvement to meet the 50/50 goal, as progress in the respective countries is ad hoc and uneven. The Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Gender into the SADC Organ is premised on improving coherence and co-ordination – by creating this framework and its Strategic Indicative Plan, member states can embark on a coherent and co-ordinated plan of action to implement the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. The framework can also act as a monitoring and evaluation tool for the SADC Organ.

Too often peace and security assumes a masculine identity presumed from images of males with arms of war, male power and strength. This expands on Olanisakin (2007)'s comments because he believes that more than an 'add women and stir' strategy is required, thereafter resulting in women's organisations and representatives waiting for invitations in order to take part in official meetings with governments. When invited, they have little bargaining power to ensure their suggested agenda is considered.

There is disagreement whether UN Women (2011) would produce significant results, but the respondents could not comment appropriately since the organisation is still relatively new. The AU released its 'Gender Policy' in 2009, building on a number of policy commitments, including UNSCR 1325. Respondents were at opposite ends regarding their observations, with some considering that African feminism as an asset, some regarding it as a liability.

Mainstreaming gender into the SADC Organ on politics, defence and security co-operation compels member states to increase the representation of women in the security sector. Respondents concurred entirely with this initiative, as one commented:

Empowering Women through National Action Plans

Impacts on women post conflicts are dreadful and can go on for long afterwards. These include unemployment, post-traumatic stress and prostitution. With more women represented in the security sectors, they will be the best people to assist appropriately.

Another respondent stated that:

The SA Department of Defence increased their target number of women in training for peacekeeping operations from 34 to 44 for 2009/2010, so they intend to train at least 44 female officers in peacekeeping per year.

The Role of Government

Because of the central role government plays in conflict resolution, peace building and reconstruction, national governments are the most influential stakeholders in the development and implementation of UNSCR 1325 (Walker *et al.* 2001). Certain respondents were steadfast in their belief that they have been continuously let down, providing the following observations:

In SA there is conflict in communities and townships due to the lack of service delivery, with people being disheartened about the repeated broken promises from government since 1994. It is felt that the SA government is failing to address the scars of Apartheid, pre 1994.

and:

Apartheid was not only about race – it entrenched and reinforced discrimination based on gender in all races and cultures. African women had it worst. They still battle to deal with deeply entrenched cultural stigmas.

The Role of Civil Society

A number of respondents felt that women's organisations and representatives from civil society do not have a sufficient place in official meetings. This

results in the conducting of parallel meetings to the official ones. More than one respondent mentioned that:

Government should facilitate communication so that the voices from the local communities to be heard. The wealthy are heard through visible platforms, laws and policies, but the poor do it through violence. They feel there is no other way. Government can change this.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon declared the creation of UN Women to be historic, and asserted that the agency will extensively boost UN efforts to promote gender equality, and eradicate discrimination around the globe (DeCapua 2010).

Basic Resources

The following issues were raised as being strong facilitators for the development of a NAP in SA.

- Under the leadership of the AU, together with institutions such as the African Development Bank and the UN Economic Commission (UNECA), the development of a standardised ‘template’ for developing a NAP in Africa would aid in monitoring and evaluation efforts, specifically in areas where women are afraid to speak about their experiences.
- Making sure that the UNSCR language is accessible and understood by all stakeholders, even if this means translating it to a number of South African languages e.g. Afrikaans, Zulu and Sotho.
- Facilitating the development of a manual for women consisting of institutions that will take on their challenges at all levels within the country – local, regional and national.
- Generating a database of women experts within the field of women, peace and security. This ensures furthering the resolution rather than duplication of ideas and initiatives.
- A pilot study to see how peace and security can be attained for women at the local level e.g. Alexandra Township in Johannesburg. It is anticipated that this would in due course lead to women empowerment.

- Day care centres
- Flexible working hours

South Africa has a history of violent responses to perceived problems and communities need to learn from other countries' experiences in developing a NAP (Charlesworth & Wood 2001). 'Twinning' should be encouraged because women go through the same situations worldwide, and this initiative would enable countries to share lessons learnt. Rwanda has taken part in this process; it was implemented by the exchange of experiences and capacities with other countries.

New Factors Emerging from the Research

Other factors that arose after interviewees were requested to mention any factors that were not discussed during the course of the interviews. These follow, and are deliberated further.

The Role of the Private Sector

Private sector stakeholders work through foundations formed specifically to carry out their CSR mandates that also entail initiatives for women economic empowerment and it is the organisation's obligation to acknowledge and implement the Code of Good Practice on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace. A respondent illustrated this by saying:

Sexual harassment in the workplace is a reality and if left unattended, can really slow down productivity. In 2003 it was found that 77 per cent of the women and 20 per cent of the men in South Africa had been sexually harassed at some point. This includes offensive comments, suggestive emails and sexual advances.

There is a need to create a CSR framework, which encompasses all the guiding principles, international and human rights standards affecting women, peace and security, which would assist private sector stakeholders to maintain a framework towards which they can develop. The government would also be able to measure how well the sector as a whole is doing to advance the women, peace and security agenda.

Employment and Unemployment

South Africa has high levels of unemployment, and it is higher among women than men. The government has initiated numerous different projects to assist women entrepreneurs, such as Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment but this is still insufficient. A number of respondents concurred with the remark:

Only 3 per cent of all South African women are classified as managers or senior officials and 4 per cent as professionals. A high proportion of the women professionals are employed by the government as teachers and nurses. In Africa, limited education and employment opportunities for women decrease annual per capita growth by 0.8 per cent. Had this growth taken place, Africa's economies would have doubled over the past 30 years.

Another respondent went on to say:

The South African government poverty reduction strategy relies substantially on social grants as a tool to alleviate poverty. What are desperately needed are possible opportunities for women to generate their own income.

The Global Financial Crisis

In response to 2008's global financial crisis, a number of respondents stated views in support of the quote that:

In the short term, economic stimulus packages need to be made available for women. In the long term, government needs to produce a new financial and economic architecture that includes a gender perspective.

South African women who work are often found within specific sectors and occupations such as NGOs and retail. Women have little or no representation in high-level decisions within the economic or finance sectors. This continues to lead to future policies that add to the inequalities between women and men.

Empowering Women through National Action Plans

Women have been adversely affected by 2008's global financial crisis. The impact has been felt mostly in these three areas:

- The loss of jobs and decreased real wages and benefits
- The decline of social services from government
- The increased work burden and stress from unpaid responsibilities in the household and community

Combating Dread Diseases

HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases identified in MDG6 (Republic of South Africa 2010) need further attention. Respondents shared some pertinent findings, for example:

In almost every African country, there is a higher prevalence in women than men. The cultural practices, 'second-class' status of women are hugely important influences

and:

The on-going discrimination and humiliation of women has made their self-esteem plummet and they often don't have the resilience to stand up to abusers, resulting in depression, health problems, unwanted pregnancies and STDs including HIV/AIDS.

As the MDG 2010 (Republic of South Africa 2010:74) report so aptly said:

The AIDS epidemic in SA is affecting health, livelihoods, and economic growth, as well as the lives of individuals, families and workplaces. HIV prevalence levels remain high in comparison to other countries in Northern, Western and Central Africa. Although the prevalence has stabilised, the differential infection rates are due to the predominance in rural provinces attributed to gender power relations and the emergent sexual relationships between older men with young girls that expose the girls to HIV as a result of the gender power inequalities.

Alvaro Bermejo, Executive Director of the International HIV/AIDS Alliance, stated that ‘we need to tackle MDG 6 in conjunction with MDGs 4 and 5, in a way that puts patient needs at the center of our responses ... Health cannot be “projectised”’ (Devex and United Nations 2011:20). A review of the improvement made specific to the health goals (Goals 4, 5 and 6) in SA resulted in the findings that progress has been unsatisfactory or even reversed for some. Chopra, Lawn, Sanders *et al.* (2009), however, do believe that the country still has enough time to alter its trajectory, and possibly can meet the 2015 deadline.

Recognition of Women Nobel Prize Winners

For 2011, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded jointly to three women: Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (Africa’s first elected head of state), Liberian Leymah Gbowee (Liberian peace activist) and Tawakul Karman of Yemen (leading figure in Yemen’s pro-democracy movement) (Antwi-Boateng 2012). A number of respondents felt that it was right to recognise their achievements:

It is necessary to acknowledge these women rights activists for their non-violent struggle for the safety of women and for women’s rights to full participation in peace building work globally.

It has been identified (Antwi-Boateng 2012) that this triple award has triggered renewed motivation to engender democratization in Africa and create a culture of peace as the social norm, rather than the prevailing culture of violence. The award was praised by one of the respondents as ‘worldwide, women have been working tirelessly for peace and social justice – the prize is recognition of their very real efforts’.

Clear Definitions

An unresolved research finding that was established is that SA needs to have its own definition of the word ‘peace’ because the ‘absence of war’ (Sandy & Perkins 2002) seems insufficient, illustrated by South Africans at the local level burning and destroying infrastructure out of frustration with the government. Even though the country is not at war, it is not at peace.

Conclusion

The UN has made dramatic on-going contributions to women empowerment, through a number of continually evaluated resolutions. Governments are familiar with the ‘gender call’ but pledges to gender-specific priorities continue to be more rhetorical than real. In order to eventually achieve women empowerment by means of gender equality initiatives, the appeal for increased women participation at the middle-to-high management levels within the local, regional and national government ranks should be understood to imply meaningful participation, and not just representative, because this in turn, results in women being appointed as tokens. Strong cultural hindrances exist as a barrier to implementation of the resolutions.

... we are making inroads into creating a more gender-representative security sector in the region. However, the translation of representation into gender sensitivity and gender responsiveness has yet to be validated. Clearly there is much more needed than the inclusion of women in the security sector to create a more secure environment for women. Numbers are important, but they have to be accompanied by a transformation of the patriarchal and sexist culture of the security sector and their inclusion must lead to real changes in response to the security needs of both men and women. It is to the latter aspect that much of our attention on gender and security sector reform should be refocused in the coming years (Peace Women 2012:1).

Recommendations

Recommendations are made microcosmically to South Africa and macro-cosmically to the United Nations. They are similar and need to be considered at the appropriate level to be useful.

A variety of stakeholders can be part of the development and implementation of NAPs to advance gender mainstreaming in any country. NAP enablers have been identified in this and previous research – it is recommended that these be used by governments and other bodies to advance the agenda on these issues.

Further research could seek to learn from NAP implementation in other countries. Content and thematic analysis of the existing 35 plans and subsequent reports may be valuable in expanding on ideas that may be applicable in other countries, including South Africa.

Further collaboration with the actors involved in other initiatives such as the MDGs is also recommended. Unless continued support is given to prevent and redress violence against women and girls using the backdrop of the MDGs, the health, social and economic outcomes of such violence can limit the potential benefits of the UNSCR 1325. SA has committed itself to the MDGs, together with the UNSCR 1325, in order to tackle the socio-economic and cultural challenges that continue to underpin aspects of gender inequality.

Further research should also continually seek and employ enablers for the empowerment of women.

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