

FAST FACTS

United Nations Development Programme



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Gender in crisis countries

Conflict, violence, crime and disasters disrupt or destroy a country's basic systems and institutions. While both men and women may suffer, the relatively disadvantaged situation of women and girls, their distinctive social obligations and responsibilities, and especially their exposure to gender based violence often means that they are disproportionately affected by these catastrophes compared to men and may miss out on the benefits of recovery.

Women are often considered an easy target when there is a lack of security, and when the rule of law breaks down, and discriminatory practices may exacerbate a culture of impunity.

Women's greater vulnerability to poverty may threaten their livelihoods to a greater extent than those of men.

At the same time, women are often excluded from decision making in crisis prevention and recovery and are often absent from the negotiating table so their interests may be overlooked.

UNDP's approach

When crises occur, UNDP works to improve women's basic security, by for example, training police and security forces and boosting the number of female police officers.

After a conflict, UNDP works to dismantle the culture of impunity that may exist towards gender based violence, for example, by making courts more efficient, and training prosecutors so that they can try cases of sexual assault.

Women can often be excellent advocates for recovery after a disaster or conflict, as well as for peace, access to justice, security and the rule of law. UNDP works to expand women's citizenship, participation and leadership, and advance women as decision-makers.

To ensure that peace building is sustainable, UNDP works to involve women in all peace processes. UNDP puts special efforts into ensuring that women are not only included, but also lead recovery activities, such as through emergency employment schemes to remove rubble, or repair infrastructure following a disaster.

Transforming government and society to deliver for women means attaining political commitment to address gender issues in countries that are prone to crisis. UNDP works to include women's issues on national agendas.

- *Seventy per cent of the world's hungry people are women and more than 30 million girls are out of school. Disasters and conflict can exacerbate this imbalance;*
- *Women have comprised only eight per cent of negotiating delegations in UN-mediated peace processes since 1992;*
- *In 2010 and 2011, only 22 percent of peace agreements signed contained women's peace and security provisions;*
- *Women, boys and girls are 14 times more likely to die during a natural disaster than men; and*
- *Sexual violence directed towards women and girls is often used as a deliberate tactic in conflict.*

UNDP in action

In 2012, UNDP helped generate 1.86 million workdays in **Burundi, Guinea, Pakistan** and **Somalia** following disasters or conflicts in those countries. This benefited more than 111,000 people, 43,000 of whom were women. Over 13,000 former combatants in these countries, including nearly 5,800 women, were reintegrated into their communities through UNDP supported schemes.



Community activists in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, Pakistan attend UNDP supported training. Photo by UNDP Pakistan

UNDP in action (cont.)

In **Afghanistan**, in 2012, UNDP supported dialogue between community leaders and the police to ensure daily protection for girls on their way to school in the Guldara district. This has resulted in a 60-80 per cent increase in the number of girls enrolled in the 10th, 11th and 12th grades in the district.

UNDP also helped the government to establish the Human Rights Support Unit, which reviews laws and policy related to human rights and has led several reforms, including the drafting of a new law designed to eliminate violence against women.

In addition, UNDP supported the recruitment of over 300 female police officers in 2012, which means that the country now has over 1,400 police women in total. Forty-two of these officers received UNDP supported leadership training in 2012.

In **Tunisia**, UNDP advice, training and other support to women candidates helped ensure that following the 2011 elections, more than 20 per cent of the seats in both chambers of parliament are now held by women, an exceptionally high level.

In **Haiti**, by the end of 2012, UNDP, working with other partners, had helped to create more than 300,000 temporary recovery related jobs since the 2010 earthquake, 69 per cent of which went to women.

The work schemes have provided opportunities for women to learn and gain experience in such areas as debris management, recycling, earthquake resistant construction, riverbank protection and watershed rehabilitation; securing their livelihoods and improving long-term economic security.

In **Iraq**, in 2012, UNDP helped the government to establish five Family Protection Units, which are providing counselling services to women who have experienced gender based violence. In order to improve the capacity of police to investigate and prosecute these crimes, UNDP has helped train 38 police in interviewing, forensics and evidence gathering techniques.

UNDP advocacy has also helped ensure that the government of Kurdistan adopted a domestic violence law in 2012. A similar law has been drafted and is being considered by the Iraqi parliament.

To help reduce the stigma associated with gender based violence, and ensure it is part of the national political agenda, UNDP is establishing a "Centre of Excellence" that will train public servants, the private sector and civil society in gender related topics.

In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, 15 UNDP supported mobile courts are bringing justice to women. By the end of 2011, 330 cases (about 70 per cent of which related to sexual violence) had been heard and close to 200 perpetrators were sentenced for sexual violence related crimes.

With UNDP support, for the first time ever in the country, several high-ranking soldiers were convicted in 2011 for crimes against humanity, rape, and illegal imprisonment. UNDP has also worked to train police in gender responsive approaches to women's security.



At a community centre in South Kiva, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), a victim of sexual violence receives counseling and financial support through a UNDP scheme. Photo by : Junior D. Kannah/UNDP DRC

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