

# **Building National Architectures for the Prevention of Mass Atrocities and Genocide**

## **The Inclusion of Women and Protection of their Rights as Full and Equal Actors**

a) What are the challenges today of building national architectures?

- Only time gender included in international law → continue traditional gender roles from European standpoint as originated in 1700s. Issue of women's protection as being viewed not as actually protecting women but as protecting social functions.
- Lack of cohesion and consistency between what States agree to and what they implement with regards to obligations to protect and promote women's rights and participation
- Women's rights/participation continue to be siphoned off into "soft" security departments that ghettoize women's rights.

b) What have we learned about building national architectures?

- Need to understand role that women play within social structures. Example of interviewing midwives in Cambodia as these women held critical role within families, social networks, etc.
- Have to think about looking beyond formal institutions of gender equality, and looking at sources within the local context. Understanding how informal social authority of women within local contexts impacts "structural" authority.
- Social movements on women's rights / participation can impact action at the national level. Brazil as an example as civil society working on women's rights/participation one of the strongest. Has led to a number of public policies on this issue, the creation of a Women's Secretariat that is directly linked to the president's office. Violence against women law at national level and regional Convention on violence against women.
- Need to consider context and local dynamics that lead to action / "solutions" for addressing women's rights

- When considering agency we need to understand that that agency must come from the communities themselves (in this case, women).
- Not enough that you have institutional structures, mandate, etc. Need the internalization. Example of NAP in Philippines. Was established and involved broad range of government departments, but it did not act from 2010 to 2013. Also during that time was focused on logistical issues (i.e. holding meetings, appointments). Since 2013 and with efforts of experts, has been able to move forward in true implementation.
- You can't have national architecture for atrocities prevention without having a NAP on WPS. These aren't two agendas pulling in different directions. They are two parts of the same whole. Needs to be front and center of every discussion.
- Need gender lens to apply to atrocities prevention in identifying indicators but also sources of resiliency.

c) What could be the contribution of GAAMAC to address these challenges?

- Build cohesion focused on how to move forward on action to implement policies/commitments related to women's rights/participation, particularly with regards to women's direct involvement.
- Conscious effort / awareness that there are gender considerations and marginalized actors that need to be brought to the forefront

d) Other specific and very relevant issue to be recorded?

- Need to think about how efforts to prevent atrocities does / does not continue stereotypical gender roles / understanding of women
- There has been recognition of the gender implications of armed conflict & peace within last 15 years. This goes beyond victimization and vulnerability.
- There are international frameworks that exist → 1) CEDAW. Although CEDAW was silent on the protection of armed rights of women in armed conflict. Was only in recent years that you had adoption of Recommendation 30 which identifies impact of and role of women in armed conflict. 2) UNSC Resolution 1325, and additional WPS Resolutions as instruments. Impact on how to

address sexual and gender based violence as acts within armed conflict and atrocity crimes.

- Issue of RtoP initially being “gender blind”
- International frameworks need to be internalized.
- Three main issues: Recognition of the gender dimensions; utility of international frameworks; not just mere idea of domestication/localization, but internalization.
- First agreement ever in the world to bear the signature of a woman as the chief negotiator→ Bangsamoro agreement in the Philippines
- Philippines NAP the first to be established in Asia
- Need for communications plan to share “success” stories of RtoP
- Kenya example: 2010 constitution states that there cannot be discrimination, including based on gender. No gender can hold more than 2/3 of posts. This has led to more women in roles in the country. Developed but not yet launched NAP
- Need to find ways when talking about prevention to consider and utilizes civic informal authorities.
- Women’s rights / participation must not be pushed aside into social department issues that frame women’s concerns as “soft” concerns. Must understand this as key issue within security concerns.
- All ASEAN members have ratified CEDAW. Rec 30 notes that all state parties have to report on their implementation of the convention. This is an important hook for engagement / action.
- WPS needs to be within security pillar. Need to move past cultural understanding of “women and children”.
- Regional bodies and national bodies can be shaped in ways that international ones cannot.