



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2011-12



“In no other area is our collective failure to ensure effective protection for civilians more apparent...than in terms of the masses of women and girls, but also boys and men, whose lives are destroyed each year by sexual violence perpetrated in conflict.”

– *United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, 2007.*

1. Context

Conflict-related sexual violence has been one of history’s greatest silences. Long dismissed as the random acts of renegade soldiers, wartime rape has been steeped in a self-serving myth of inevitability. Absent from ceasefire agreements, dismissed from disarmament programmes, and rarely mentioned at the peacetable, it is a war tactic that lingers long after the guns fall silent. Widespread impunity has kept rape off the historical record and under the security radar.

Armed conflict creates a climate for sexual violence: communities are awash with small arms and light weapons; moral, social and legal restraints give way to a culture of sexual entitlement; and many combatants treat women and girls as the “spoils of war”. Children born of rape and their mothers face stigmatisation and economic exclusion. Desolate villages and fallow fields bear stark witness to the terror of sexual violence in displacing populations and shredding the social fabric of communities. The wars that have raged in Bosnia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan and Timor-Leste have made the military logic of mass rape undeniable.

Yet rape victims caught up in conflict are among the world's least visible people in some of the most austere, remote regions. Sexual violence is a tactic of choice precisely because survivors are reticent to report. Known victims are stigmatized: wives may be rejected by husbands, survivors may be perceived as "unmarriageable", pregnant women may be accused of adultery or of tainting family "honour." This misplaced blame and shame has deep roots in a historical absence of accountability. Sexual violence, whether a single act or a concerted campaign, is categorically prohibited under international law. It can constitute a war crime, a crime against humanity, or a constitutive act with respect to genocide. Sexual violence ranks among the grave breaches of international humanitarian law, and is reflected in the 1998 *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, 1949 Geneva Conventions, and jurisprudence of the international criminal tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. Yet, of some 14,200 rape cases registered in South Kivu, DRC between 2005-2007, just two percent of perpetrators were ever called to account. Of 10,000 genocide-related trials heard by Rwandan national courts, just three percent included convictions for sexual violence. Moreover, formal justice rarely means reparations or services for survivors.

Over the past three years, the tide of history has begun to turn. Conflict-related sexual violence has been recognized as a self-standing security challenge that can no longer be relegated to lowest on the hierarchy of war-time horrors. In June 2008, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted **Resolution 1820**, which acknowledged sexual violence as a tactic of war, and recognized its potential to undermine peace and security. Resolution 1820 demanded the "immediate and complete cessation by all parties to armed conflict of all acts of sexual violence against civilians." In calling for women's participation in peace-talks, urging sanctions for perpetrators, and requiring that sexual violence be excluded from amnesties, Resolution 1820 was both a milestone in itself, and a reinforcement of its path-breaking predecessor, Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). Specifically, it recognized that sexual violence of a widespread or systematic character not only threatens civilians, but undermines the security of communities and, in many cases, nations as a whole. It impedes peace processes not only because it precludes women's full participation, but also because it is used to circumvent ceasefire agreements. Resolution 1820 expressly welcomed the "coordination of efforts" marked by UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict, and its work to "create awareness about sexual violence" and "ultimately, put an end to it." It empowered security actors, including UN and regional peacekeepers, to respond to sexual violence with as much alacrity as they would to any other atrocity.

In July 2009, the Secretary-General submitted the first report on implementation of 1820 (S/2009/362). In response, the Security Council unanimously adopted **Resolution 1888** on 30 September 2009, calling for concrete measures to operationalise and institutionalise commitments made through Resolution 1820. This follow-on resolution strengthened the UN Action network by mandating coherent and strategic leadership in the form of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Margot Wallström was appointed to the position in February 2010. It further called for a team of rapidly-deployable experts on the rule of law, Women Protection Advisers, the development of joint UN-Government Comprehensive Strategies to Combat Sexual

Violence, improved data on trends, emerging patterns of attack and early-warning indicators of sexual violence, and annual reports from the Secretary-General on the implementation of Resolutions 1820 and 1888.

Using the UN Action network as the consultative mechanism, in 2010, the Secretary-General compiled his second report on implementation of Resolution 1820, as well as 1888 (S/2010/604). This report defined the concept of conflict-related sexual violence, illustrated its nexus with international peace and security using examples from the field, and proposed a new accountability architecture built around this concept. The Security Council made this recommendation a reality on 16 December 2010, through the adoption of **Resolution 1960**, co-sponsored by 60 States. This new accountability system seeks to ensure that mass rape will no longer be met with mass impunity. Resolution 1960 calls upon the Secretary-General to include information in his annual reports on parties “credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for acts of rape and other forms of sexual violence”, as well as listing in an annex to these annual reports parties credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for “patterns of rape and other forms of sexual violence in situations of armed conflict that are on the Security Council agenda” as a basis for focused engagement, including through relevant sanctions committees. In addition, it calls upon the SRSG-SVC and senior UN officials to engage in dialogue with parties to armed conflict to secure specific and time-bound commitments to prevent and address sexual violence. This resolution ensures that conflict-related sexual violence will no longer go unreported, unaddressed or unpunished.

2. Goal and Overview

United Nations Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict (UN Action) unites efforts across the UN system with the goal of ending sexual violence during and in the aftermath of armed conflict. Launched in March 2007, the network currently embraces 13 UN system entities, namely: DPA, DPKO, OCHA, OHCHR, PBSO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, UN Women and WHO, and is supported by a small coordinating Secretariat reporting to the SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict.

UN Action builds upon existing inter-agency mechanisms and was created in direct response to the “Calls to Action” of the June 2006 Symposium on Sexual Violence in Conflict and Beyond in Brussels. In June 2007, the Secretary-General’s Policy Committee endorsed UN Action as “a critical joint UN system-wide initiative to guide advocacy, knowledge-building, resource mobilization, and joint programming around sexual violence in conflict”. In December 2010, the Secretary-General’s Policy Committee further tasked the UN Action network to develop monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements on patterns, trends and perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence, as well as a framework of early-warning indicators – both in direct response to Resolutions 1888 and 1960.

3. Guiding Principles

UN Action's efforts are guided by six principles:

- Rape is not an inevitable consequence of conflict. It must be prevented.
- Gender-based violence, including sexual violence, is a violation of fundamental human dignity and rights.
- Attempts to end sexual violence must address gender-based inequalities by empowering women, and protecting and promoting their human rights.
- The constructive involvement of men and boys is vital.
- Survivors of sexual violence must guide advocacy and programming efforts to end sexual violence and secure peace.
- Sexual violence in conflict is one of history's great silences. We all have a duty to act.

4. Approach

UN Action seeks to amplify existing efforts across the UN system and its peacekeeping operations to address conflict-related sexual violence – reinforcing “good practice”, strengthening coordination and avoiding duplication of effort. To achieve this synergy of action, it harnesses the comparative strengths of each UN entity for a “force-multiplier” effect, recognizing that sexual violence requires a broad-based, multi-sectoral response.

UN Action aims to:

- Align the UN's work more effectively behind national efforts to address sexual violence;
- Deepen partnerships with civil society actors working to address the issue;
- Harness the comparative strengths of each UN system entity;
- Work alongside existing UN coordination mechanisms including the Gender Sub-Working Group of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), the Area of Responsibility (AOR) on Gender Based Violence within the Protection Cluster, and Protection of Civilians initiatives;
- Position responses to sexual violence in conflict more centrally within UN platforms and mechanisms including CAPs, CERFs, PRSPs, and CCA/UNDAFs;
- Enhance the UN's response to Security Council Resolutions 1820/1888/1960, in the context of 1325/1889, 1612/1882, 1674/1894 and 1308, thereby broadening the constituency for addressing sexual violence against civilians.

Working through UN Missions (Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions) and UN Country Teams (UNCTs), UN Action seeks to both strengthen the UN's *response to survivors*, but also to *prevent* sexual violence, including through *protecting* women and girls, and to take action to address *impunity* – recognising that the problem is a security as well as a human rights, humanitarian and developmental issue. UN Action is supporting women's engagement in conflict prevention activities, peace negotiations and post-conflict recovery processes. This helps to ensure that sexual violence is on the agenda of the police, security forces, justice and social sectors before and after conflict.

It also promotes efforts to provide survivors with the economic security and reparations required to rebuild their lives. In post-conflict settings, UN Action seeks to connect with governance and reform processes that improve women's access to decision-making and strengthen their voices in public affairs, with the long-term goal of advancing gender equality and women's empowerment.

5. Deliverables for 2011-12

A. COUNTRY LEVEL ACTION

During 2011-12, UN Action will intensify its strategic support to UN Missions selected as priority countries by the SRSG-SVC - namely **the DRC, Sudan (Darfur and South), Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Central African Republic, Colombia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina**. UN Action will respond to requests for support from country-based SRSGs and RC/HCs on a case-by-case basis according to the specific strategic and technical needs of each UNCT/UN Mission. The principal aims will be: (i) to support the development and implementation of Comprehensive Strategies to combat sexual violence, as mandated by SCR1888 (OP 23) and a number of country-specific resolutions, and (ii) to encourage joint programming by the UN system, in keeping with "one UN" principles, involving peace and security, humanitarian affairs, human rights and development actors. Efforts will be guided by best practice and international human rights, humanitarian, criminal and refugee law, and implemented in close collaboration with Government and NGO partners.

UN Action will engage with relevant inter-governmental mechanisms and regional bodies to ensure that responses to sexual violence are prioritised. The network will also support GBV coordination efforts, the development of mission-wide Protection of Civilians strategies which embrace sexual violence, and the acceleration of companion processes including the development, implementation and roll out of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and the GBV Information Management System (GBV IMS). Capacity building efforts will continue, to enable the UN to deploy skilled Sexual Violence Advisers and Women Protection Advisers to drive and coordinate the UN's response.

Deliverables: During 2011-12, the UN Action network will:

- 1) Provide **strategic support to at least 5 of the 7 priority countries** to help UN Missions to develop, or advance the implementation of, joint Government-UN Comprehensive Strategies to Combat Sexual Violence – led by the UN Action Secretariat with engagement from all UN Action entities.
- 2) Strengthen support to and engagement with **regional and sub-regional bodies and initiatives, as well as regional security/defence organizations** such as NATO, AU, EU and OSCE, to bolster their response to conflict-

related sexual violence and to share lessons learnt – led by the OSRSG-SVC with engagement from all UN Action entities.

- 3) Develop guidance and design and implement orientations and briefings for **Women Protection Advisers** – DPKO and OHCHR to lead.
- 4) Develop **scenario-based pre-deployment/in-service training modules** on prevention and response to conflict-related sexual violence based upon the *Analytical Inventory* for military peacekeeping personnel, and pilot in a select number of countries (OP11, 1960) – DPKO and UN Women to lead, with support from the UN Action Secretariat.
- 5) Support the rapid deployment of the **Team of Experts** on rule of law (OP 8 of SCR1888) – OSRSG-SVC to lead.
- 6) Systematically integrate sexual violence response and prevention elements into **HIV policy and programming** in UN Action priority countries and settings – UNAIDS Secretariat to lead supported by UNFPA and WHO.
- 7) Strengthen efforts to make responses to sexual violence integral to **mediation, peacebuilding, transition and recovery processes** – UN Women and PBSO to lead.
- 8) Intensify **capacity building efforts** through support to a diverse range of training and field support initiatives, including learning lessons from the provision of strategic and catalytic support by the UN Action network – UN Action Secretariat to lead.
- 9) Institutionalise systems to track **allocations and expenditures on sexual violence programmes** through UN managed financing mechanisms (e.g. CAPs, CERF, CHFs, PBSO, MDTFs) and other sexual-violence related funding modalities, as part of a broader effort to track gender related allocations – OCHA to lead.
- 10) Identify entry points for the UN system to reinforce and enhance **community-based solutions for preventing and addressing sexual violence** in two of the UN Action priority countries – UNHCR and UNDP to lead.

B. ADVOCACY FOR ACTION

During 2011-12, the UN Action network will continue to raise awareness and foster public outrage against the use of sexual violence as a tactic of war and an impediment to the restoration of peace and security. Led by the SRSG, it will galvanise political support for a more effective response, and mobilise resources to end sexual violence during and immediately after the cessation of conflict. An increasing part of the advocacy effort will be undertaken with partners in countries where war-related sexual violence has been

identified as a significant issue, with a view to triggering action by Government authorities and non-state actors. Advocacy strategies will include engaging the media, public events, development of publications, and lobbying to raise awareness and generate political will.

UN Action will help to sustain political momentum for the full implementation of Resolutions 1820, 1888 and 1960, and support preparation of annual reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council. UN Action will also undertake targeted advocacy work with identified constituencies such as UN peacekeepers, national military and police personnel, journalists, ICC officials, *ad hoc* war crimes tribunals and other transitional justice mechanisms.

Deliverables: During 2011-12, the UN Action network will:

- 1) Continue to build **internal support** for the work of UN Action across the UN system at global and country levels by, inter alia, preparing papers for the Secretary-General's Policy Committee, supporting relevant UN bodies and meetings, organising briefings for senior staff from UN Action member entities, and strengthening UN Action's Advocacy Working Group, comprising representatives from UN Women, DPI, OCHA, UNFPA and UNICEF – led by UN Action Secretariat.
- 2) Continue to **develop and implement an advocacy strategy** centered on the theme: "Get Cross: No security without women's security!" – led by UN Action Secretariat.
- 3) Continue to build the **Stop Rape Now** campaign through further developing the website, Facebook/Twitter/YouTube outreach, the montage of 200,000 "Get Cross!" photos, rolling out the PSA, and through public events including an initiative for journalists using relevant communications networks – led by UN Action Secretariat.
- 4) Undertake targeted advocacy to **highlight situations where sexual violence is used as part of the repertoire of armed violence**, political repression (including in the context of elections/referenda), and ethnic unrest – led by UN Action Secretariat and OSRSG-SVC.
- 5) Provide support to **amplify advocacy on conflict-related sexual violence in two or three of the UN Action focal countries receiving strategic support** – UN Action Secretariat to lead.
- 6) Encourage **recognition of effective responses to sexual violence in conflict** through annual SRSG's Award(s) for "Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict" – led by the OSRSG-SVC and UN Action Secretariat.

- 7) Ensure sustained attention to sexual violence by the **Human Rights Council and its mechanisms**, as well as **human rights treaty bodies** – OHCHR and OSRSG-SVC to lead.
- 8) Engage the **International Criminal Court (ICC)**, *ad hoc* tribunals and national courts focusing on situations where they are, or should be, pursuing prosecutions of sexual violence as a serious violation of international law – OSRSG-SVC, supported by UN Action Secretariat.
- 9) Build the **support of donors, Member States and NGOs for the work of UN Action** through annual donor meetings, and regular meetings with Member States and NGOs – led by the UN Action Secretariat with involvement from all UN Action entities.
- 10) Develop and disseminate tools to advance the implementation of Resolutions 1820, 1888 and 1960 – led by the UN Action Secretariat through the UN Action Advocacy Working Group.
- 11) Support the **S-G's Campaign UNiTE to End Violence Against Women**, including the Africa-wide campaign, and ensure that there is adequate focus on addressing conflict-related sexual violence – UN Action Secretariat with full engagement from all UN Action entities.

C. Knowledge Building

During 2011-12, the UN Action network will develop and roll out specific tools and systems to improve the data on patterns and trends of sexual violence in conflict, as well as gaps in the UN system's response – particularly in the area of protection and prevention. Efforts will be made to identify, catalogue and promote good practices in prevention and response to conflict-related sexual violence.

Deliverables: During 2011-12, the UN Action network will:

- 1) Develop guidance on **monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements** on conflict-related sexual violence to help identify individuals and parties to armed conflict credibly suspected of patterns of sexual violence (OP8, 1960) – OSRSG-SVC to lead.
- 2) Field test and roll out the **data collection (survey) tool** in one post-conflict setting to deepen understanding of patterns of sexual violence in a specific context (OP24, 1888) - WHO to lead.
- 3) Roll out the **incidence monitoring and reporting tool (the GBV IMS)** at country level to improve the flow of information on reported cases of sexual violence (OP 24, 1888) – UNFPA, UNHCR and UNICEF to lead.

- 4) Review and develop **early-warning indicators** to ensure systematic reporting on **emerging patterns of attack** which results in a rapid, effective response to spikes in sexual violence and political/social instability (OP 24, 1888) – OSRSG-SVC to lead.
- 5) Finalise and pilot test **performance benchmarks** to measure the UN's capacity to prevent and respond to sexual violence in specific field settings (OP 15, 1820) – UNICEF to lead.
- 6) Develop a prioritised **research agenda on the prevention and response to conflict-related sexual violence** – WHO to lead.
- 7) Undertake a critical and action-oriented review of lessons learnt and best practice on integrating sexual violence prevention and response into **DDR programming**, and develop tools for the inclusion of sexual violence responses into DDR – UN Women, UNFPA and UNDP through the Inter-Agency Working Group on DDR.
- 8) Develop a better understanding of the motivations and repertoire of violence used by **non-State actors** to inform guidance and preventive diplomacy strategies – OCHA and UNICEF to lead.
- 9) Develop and roll out **practical guidance and training for mediators** on integrating sexual violence into peace mediation processes – DPA to lead.
- 10) Develop recommendations/guidance based upon the findings from the conference on **mental health and psychosocial services** for survivors of sexual violence – WHO to lead, supported by UNFPA and UNICEF.
- 11) Strengthen data collection and analysis on the **links between conflict-related sexual violence and HIV** – UNAIDS Secretariat to lead.
- 12) Undertake a critical review on the impact of various forms of **medico-legal evidence** in sexual violence trials and develop a guidance note – WHO and UNODC to lead.
- 13) Develop an overall **prevention framework** that will help expand prevention efforts, and include specific guidance on prevention of conflict-related violence prior to, during and after conflict. This will include longer-term measures to help change underlying social and community norms that sustain violence – UNICEF to lead.
- 14) Review the comparative advantage of **female police and military, including the all women Formed Police Units (FPUs)** in preventing and responding to conflict-related sexual violence – DPKO to lead.

- 15) Review the value and effectiveness of different “**one stop shop**” models and related centres that aim to respond to the needs of survivors in conflict-related settings – UNICEF and UNFPA to lead.
- 16) Develop a Guidance Note on **reparations for conflict-related sexual violence**, including collective, symbolic and other forms of reparations – OHCHR to lead supported by UN Women.

6. Institutional Arrangements

Governance: Strategic oversight for the work of the UN Action network is provided by a Steering Committee consisting of Principals from DPA, DPKO, OCHA, OHCHR, PBSO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, UN Women, WHO, the UNAIDS Secretariat and the SRSB-CAAC. This Committee meets quarterly and provides policy and strategic guidance to the UN Action network. It is chaired by the SRSB-SVC, Margot Wallström.

Coordination and funding: The UN Action Secretariat comprises a Coordinator, an Advocacy and Women’s Rights Specialist, and Programme Assistant. The Secretariat supports the day-to-day activities of the UN Action network, liaising closely with a task force of Focal Points from the 13 UN entities, which meets every month. The UN Action Secretariat provides strategic and technical support to both the UN Action network and the SRSB-SVC, and is situated within the OSRSG. Extra-budgetary resources are mobilised from a range of donors to fund the outputs of the UN Action network. These are primarily managed through a Multi-Donor Trust Fund.

Deliverables: During 2011-12 the UN Action network will:

- 1) Fund a small coordinating Secretariat to support advocacy, knowledge generation, fundraising, implementation, monitoring and reporting on UN Action’s Strategic Framework, as well as coordination of the UN Action network.
- 2) Support the efforts of UN Action member entities to scale up their work on conflict-related sexual violence and to deliver critical outputs through the UN Action network.
- 3) Provide support to the SRSB-SVC in her capacity as head of the network and help to bridge the work of her Office to the broader UN system at global and country-level.