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(i) Preface

Sierra Leone experienced eleven years civil war that brought socio-economic development to stagnation. To redress this unwholesome state of affairs, the Government of Sierra Leone held negotiation with the then Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and signed the Lome Peace Agreement. One of the many recommendations was to set up a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) with a mandate to investigate the causes of the war and make recommendations to promote national healing and prevent recurrence. The TRC made general recommendations and imperative recommendations on women.

The TRC found that women and girls were subjected to systematic abuse during the conflict such as 'torture, rape, sexual abuse, sexual slavery, trafficking, enslavement, abductions, amputations, forced pregnancy, forced labour and detentions'¹. The TRC recommendations aimed at addressing the underlying causes of the conflict, prioritizing the elimination of laws and practices that discriminate against women and introducing effective measures to address and reduce sexual and domestic violence.

The United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2000) and 1820 (2008) address the impact of war and conflict on women and girls including the recognition of and intervention on the gender dimension. Also, these Resolutions address women's contributions to conflict prevention, resolution, transformation, peace processes and peace building.

The UNSCR 1325 as designed is a tool for engendering peace and security process as it can leverage strategic actions for equitable and sustainable interventions for inclusive security, peace and development, especially with respect to women and girls. Nine years on, since its adoption, progress on the ground in developing countries like Sierra Leone in translating the principles and provisions into practice has been minimal, with little or no deliberate coordinated actions. The UN Secretary-General mandated mechanisms that are being encouraged and facilitated by UN Agencies in particular, OSAGI, INSTRAW, UNIFEM, UNFPA, UN Member States and Civil Societies. An essential step in the mechanism is for countries to develop National Action Plans (NAPs). This is a powerful tool for building national consensus and ownership in support of, as well as, guiding effective implementation of the resolution.

To nationally implement the global UNSCRs 1325 and 1820, Sierra Leone decided to develop the National Action Plan (NAP). The NAP was drafted through a rigorous and inclusive process which commenced in September 2008. The final draft was adopted as the Sierra Leone National Action Plan (SiLNAP) in September 2009 at a National Consultative Conference, attended by line Ministries, CSOs and UN Agencies with support from Cordaid, Netherlands. To commence the process, a mapping survey was conducted to establish a baseline on implementing UNSCR 1325 in Sierra Leone and provide data to inform the crafting of the SiLNAP. The survey report revealed among other challenges, low level of technical capacity for effective implementation of UNSCR 1325. At the core of effective and practical translation of the provisions of 1325 and 1820 on the ground is for the SiLNAP to contain "SMART" monitoring and evaluation indicators and highlight good practices for monitoring implementation.

¹ Witness to Truth: Report of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Vol. 2, p.168

The SiLNAP has five pillars with indicators as follows:

- (1) Prevention of Conflict including Violence Against Women and Children (SGBV)**
- (2) Protection, Empowerment of Victims and Vulnerable Persons especially women/girls**
- (3) Prosecute, Punish Perpetrators effectively and Safeguard Women and Girls' Human Rights to Protection during and post conflict as well as Rehabilitate Victims/Survivors of SGBV and Perpetrators**
- (4) Participation and Representation of Women**
- (5) Promote Coordination of the Implementation Process including Resource Mobilization, Monitoring and Evaluation of and Reporting on the National Action Plan**

The Resolution focuses on the three key areas namely: prevention, participation and protection of women and girls in pre, during and post conflict periods. We must therefore ensure that our women and girls are by no means threatened by gender-based violence; otherwise one will hasten to say that there will never be a real chance for peace and security. We must collectively ensure that the needs of survivors of sexual violence are recognized and addressed, and by so doing we will enhance the opportunity for building a more peaceful and equitable society.

As we approach the 10th and 2nd Anniversaries since the adoption of the important Resolutions 1325 on women, peace and security and 1820 on sexual violence respectively, it is very timely for our country to develop the SiLNAP. However, it is sad to note that most women in conflict and post conflict situations continue to experience limited peace and security. We need to be proactive as government, UN System and Civil Society in ensuring that we implement the provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in Sierra Leone. We have gone a long way but we still need to do more without complacency.

Let me assure you of Government's sustained political will and commitment in the implementation of the SiLNAP by providing the leadership to the entire process.

H. E. Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma

President of the Republic of Sierra Leone

(ii) Acknowledgements

The Sierra Leone National Action on UNSCR 1325 and 1820 is firmly rooted in the findings of the baseline assessment/mapping survey and wider consultations conducted by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs in collaboration with WANEP-SL and MARWOPNET-SL. The process to develop the Sierra Leone NAP on UNSCR 1325 and 1820 was conducted by a collaborative effort involving Government through the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs (MSWGCA), Civil Society Organizations, other local NGOs as well as the UN Country Gender Team in particular the National Task Force on 1325 led by WANEP (SL) and MARWOPNET (SL) (WANMAR) with funding support from Cordaid (Netherlands).

This plan would not have come to a logical conclusion without Government's political will and commitment which was manifested through the line ministries especially the Ministries of Defence, Internal Affairs, Local Government and Rural Development, Information and Communication, Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation etc. I am also humbled by the active participation in all the processes by the Hon. Members of Parliament and the Office of the First Lady of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

The Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, WANEP-SL and MARWOPNET-SL remain very grateful to Cordaid Netherlands for their financial support towards the development of this SiLNAP.

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Hon. Dr. Soccoh Kabia

Minister of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs

(iii) Abbreviations and Acronyms

AFC	Agenda for Change
AMNET	Advocacy Movement Network
AU	African Union
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CHISECS	Chieftdom Security Committees
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
CSPEC	Civil Society Peace Building Executive Committee
DACO	Development Aid Coordination Assistance
DISECS	District Security Committees
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ENCISS	Enhancing the Interaction and interface between Civil Society and Government to Improve Poor People’s Lives
FAS	Femmne Africa Solidarite
FSU	Family Support Unit
GBV	Gender Based Violence
G-CiSTF	Government Civil Society National Task force
GRADOC	Gender Research and Documentation Centre
IMC	Independence Media Commission
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDA	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MARWOPNET (SL)	Mano River Women’s Peace Network (Sierra Leone)
MOFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
MSWGCA	Ministry of Social Welfare Gender and Children Affairs
NaC-GBV	National Committee on Gender-Based Violence
NAP	National Action Plan

NGSP	National Gender Strategy Plan
NSC	National Steering Committee
OSAGI	Office of the Special Assistant on Gender Issues
ONS	Office of National Security
OP	Operative Paragraph of the Resolution
PROSECS	Provincial Security Committees
PRSP II	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper II
RSC	Steering Committee
SSR	Security Sector Reform
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SLFF	Sierra Leone Fire Force
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
SiLNAP	Sierra Leone National Action Plan
UN	United Nations
UNGTG	United Nations Gender Theme Group
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund
UNSCR 1325(2000)	United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (October 2000)
UNSCR 1820 (2008)	United Nations Security Council Resolution 1820 (June 2008)
WANEP-SL	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding-Sierra Leone
WIPSEN-Africa	Women in Peacebuilding and Security Network - Africa
WISSIL	Women in Security Sector, Sierra Leone

(iv) Executive Summary

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security and 1820 (2008) on sexual violence were adopted by the UN Security Council as policy instruments. These instruments facilitate and strengthen women's effort in peacebuilding, recognize and provide early response mechanisms to address the impact of sexual violence and gender based violence on women and girls during armed and unarmed conflicts.

Since the adoption of UNSCR 1325 and 1820, there has been active international lobby for the application of these instruments by various interested parties. These have been strengthened by the adoption of other resolutions such as 1886, 1888 in September and 1889 October 2009. Despite the unanimous adoption of these policy frameworks, the development of National Action Plan for full implementation of the resolutions remains a challenge. Therefore, the urgency and need for building a viable constituency for the application of UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 cannot be over emphasized.

For this reason, Sierra Leone started deliberations and discussions at translating Government's commitment into action for the full implementation of UNSCR 1325 at a high level policy meeting organized by the ECA and OSAGI in Addis Ababa in February 2008. This was followed by development and submission of a comprehensive proposal to CORDAID Netherlands for funding. This effort became a reality with the availability of the needed resources and the inception of a national taskforce comprising Government line ministries, Parliamentarians, UN Agencies, WANEP-SL, MARWOPNET, Civil Society Organisations/Coalitions, Interfaith Groups, Traditional Leaders and the Media with the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs taking the lead. This team was later expanded to include other actors at regional, district and chiefdom levels. Once the Terms of Reference of the Government-Civil Society Task Force was established, the process continued further into the implementation of the project activities.

In this regard, the first activity was a nationwide mapping survey to establish a baseline of existing initiatives on 1325 in Sierra Leone. The survey generated data/information which determined existing knowledge gaps and identified priority issues for crafting the National Action Plan.

One thousand survey questionnaires were administered, but only 697 (70%) were completed. The findings of the survey revealed mixed lessons with regard to knowledge of the Resolution, which was particularly low in rural communities. Many activities on the Resolution were ongoing, but were done unconsciously and were uncoordinated. Also, identified as a challenge to application, was the weak capacity of staff both at government and NGO levels and within communities. In addition, there are policy and framework documents like the Gender Acts 2007 and the Gender Strategic Rollout Plan that complement the Resolution. Knowledge of the Resolution was obtained mainly through radio listening and workshops.

Interestingly, 95% of respondents indicated their willingness to align their activities to the provisions of UNSCR 1325 as well as support the process of developing and implementing an action plan. The survey also gathered that there was need to develop a capacity building programme for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the UNSCR 1325 and 1820 nationwide.

The next activities were the regional consultations in Kailahun, Makeni, Bo and Freetown. Thirty participants were drawn from each region. The outcomes included issues relating to SGBV, access to relevant information and recommendations which provided inputs for the

elaboration of the National Action Plan. All the priority outcomes were combined into a composite matrix that served as a working document in the national consultation.

The National Consultative Conference attracted a wide spectrum of participants ranging from the UN, International Community, Office of the First Lady of the Republic of Sierra Leone, Senior Government Officials, Civil Society and the Media as well as resource participants from FAS and WIPSEN-Africa. The three-day conference involved 60 participants in work groups to agree and prioritize issues within a national context. After various group exercises and interactive plenary discussions, the participants unreservedly adopted the draft Sierra Leone National Action Plan (SiLNAP) with Five Pillars as listed:

- 1. Prevention of conflict including violence against women/children (SGBV)**
- 2. Protection, empowerment of victims/vulnerable persons especially women and girls**
- 3. Prosecute, punish perpetrators effectively and safeguard women/girls' human rights to protection (during and post-conflict) as well as rehabilitation**
- 4. Participation and representation of women**
- 5. Promote coordination of the implementation process including resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation of and reporting on the Sierra Leone National Action Plan**

These Pillars reflect priority issues of women's needs and concerns from a gender perspective. They encompass outcome and output objectives, strategies, activities and relevant indicators. There are five outcome objectives, fourteen output objectives and about thirty-six indicators.

In our drive to get a doable Sierra Leone National Action Plan (SiLNAP), UNFPA and UNIFEM supported a workshop to sharpen the indicators of the Action Plan. What came out clearly was a thorough review of priorities on the objectives, activities and indicators of the draft plan.

Another activity was tailored to inform and lobby Parliamentarians to support the process and make commitment to its approval and application. The occasion was climaxed by a shared vision with members of Parliament to facilitate and respond to women's urgent demand to translate the UN 1325 with practical intervention particularly at constituency level. Since then, the Sierra Leone Parliament remains engaged and committed to the implementation of the SiLNAP.

From time to time, we continue to raise awareness and understanding of the general public on the principles, objectives and provisions of the Resolutions as well as the draft Sierra Leone National Action Plan. Most of the feedbacks from these programs helped immensely to shape and fine tune what should go into the final Sierra Leone National Action Plan (SiLNAP) on UNSCRs 1325 and 1820.

However, a plan on a piece of paper will not mean much for development if there is no well defined management, monitoring and evaluation component. This made us to consult local experts from other government line ministries to develop a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework. The M&E framework is anchored on participatory and community based engagement. Therefore, it is imperative that it be aligned with the Sierra Leone second Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) – An Agenda for Change and other institutional and policy frameworks for sustainability.

In all this, the full implementation of the Sierra Leone National Action Plan (SiLNAP) on UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 has been budgeted for, to the tune of **USD\$ 21,301,314**

In conclusion, it is not enough to have a policy framework that promotes women's empowerment and peacebuilding. What is needed as an element in the next steps is ensuring that relevant national budget sources among others, become available for the implementation of the SiLNAP. A Resource Mobilization Strategy for financing the Plan is outlined under Section 3.5.

One approach to achieve this is for Civil Society organizations and the Government to claim UNSCR 1325 as an important tool for women's participation in all levels of decision making on peace and security issues and demand its full implementation from the Government of Sierra Leone.

According to Nelson Mandela "...Rich reward is in the making, an invaluable gift is in preparation, for those who suffered in the name of all humanity, when they sacrificed everything for liberty, human dignity..."

With these words, many Sierra Leoneans will continue to remember the selfless sacrifices made by women during and after the brutal civil conflict in Sierra Leone. Therefore, it is important to note that women are not only victims of violence, but they are also a powerful force toward peacebuilding and decision-making on peace and Security issues.

The message for all of us is to exert enough energy and work hand-in-hand with other stakeholders to build a strong constituency base for the Resolution. Though the UNSCR 1325 and 1820 are universal in their utility and application, a solid and effective implementation of its provision demand an examination of the specific context within which the full implementation of the policy framework would take place and become meaningful to all Sierra Leoneans.