

Narrative Report: UN Department of Political Affairs UN Action MPTF Grant UNA016

December 2010- April 2013

- Over the course of the grant period from UN Action (UNA016), DPA, under UN Action auspices, finalized, published and launched the *United Nations/DPA Guidance for Mediators on Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Ceasefire and Peace Agreements*. Prepared in close collaboration with the UN Action network and external partners, this Guidance aims to provide normative and practical advice to UN mediators and mediation support staff. Representing a milestone for the United Nations, it is a critical and long-awaited framework which provides mediators, and mediation support staff, for the first time, with normative principles and actual strategies for addressing conflict-related sexual violence issues in a peace process. Followed by a press conference attended by USG Pascoe, Mr Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah and SRSG-SVC Wallström, the guidance was officially introduced to the international mediation community on 9 March 2012 at a high-level launch organized by DPA and hosted by the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations. Over 130 high-level guests from Member States, United Nations, Mediation Support Network, civil society and the media attended. The “roundtable” of speakers brought together more than 10 eminent mediators and mediation support experts to discuss and introduce the guidance.
- On 9 March 2013, coinciding with the official launch of the guidance, DPA also launched a DPA webpage dedicated to conflict-related sexual violence which features the guidance, the launch event as well as social media on the subject - including a DPA “Twitter”, and videos of interviews with eminent mediators discussing conflict-related sexual violence. The Guidance is available in all six official UN languages, plus German, and made available online. Printed versions include: In addition, four (4) shorter guidance fact sheets were also finalized.
- A training module on addressing conflict-related sexual violence in ceasefire and peace agreements was also developed in English and in French, piloted and conducted on more than ten different occasions during the reporting period. Trainings and briefings on the guidance were given to DPA staff at both HQ and in the field, to all heads of DPA special political missions and UN staff. The UN Action MPTF-funded CRSV expert within DPA also presented the guidance at several conferences and meetings including at The Caux Forum for Human Security (Switzerland) in July 2012 and to an OSCE-led meeting on women and mediation (Vienna) in October 2012.
- DPA is now in the process of implementing the principles and strategies of the Guidance in country specific contexts. In October-November 2012 DPA’s SVC expert (funded by UN Action) was deployed to the Central African Republic/BINUCA. She spent time in Bangui, the capital city, as well as the town

of Ndele, located in the conflict-affected eastern part of the country, to reinforce the support provided by BINUCA to national mediation activities.

- Briefings and outreach were conducted with key actors and stakeholders, including presentation of the content of UN/DPA's "*Guidance for Mediators on Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Ceasefire and Peace Agreements*". This outreach included actors from: the National Mediation Council; the National Mediator; parties to the peace and ceasefire agreements - including with the President of the CPJP who is a main signatory to the prior 2011 DPA/MSU supported ceasefire agreement; Women leaders, including women parliamentarians; Women's groups in Bangui and Ndele; members of the United Nations Country Team, BINUCA Senior Management; as well as the media/press.
- She also conducted a discussion with over 70 women, ranging in age from 12-75 years old in the town of N'dele on their peacebuilding and security concerns, as well as a briefing on international rights and obligations that support women's participation in peacemaking and peacebuilding (SCR 1325 & SCR 1820). They felt "amazed" that the United Nations had sent someone from "New York" to their town – and they saw this as a sign of hope. They implored her to "go back" and talk about them and their needs – as they felt that "the world had forgotten them" – as they are isolated, virtually cut off from access to roads, food, and communication outside of the highly militarized area in and around Ndele (which has yet to undergo DDR) and under serious vulnerabilities to conflict-related sexual violence. *All of the women in the town are illiterate – and one of their main desires is to be able to read and write so that they can participate politically and engage in work. A full time literacy teacher is needed as well as chairs and supplies for a "maison de la femme" [house for women] which exists in Ndele, but without the bare minimum of resources to be operational. (E.g. The house does not have chairs or even a chalk board). Since the December 2012 crisis, the situation has become dire for the women of Ndele – many of whom have fled into the bush, have been raped by armed men and are in serious need of humanitarian aid.*
- DPA's SVC expert's visit also laid the groundwork and entry points for a visit by SRSB Bangura to the country in December (5 -12 December 2012).
- In January 2013, DPA's expert on SVC played a leading role in providing a draft for the mediation team for the Ceasefire Agreement and Declaration of Principles in the Central African Republic of 11 January 2013. The agreement contains three concrete SVC provisions, it: 1) requires the immediate halt of sexual violence by the conflicting parties; 2) makes sexual violence a prohibited act in the definition of the ceasefire; and 3) requires that sexual violence is addressed in a programme of urgent priority agreed to by the parties for the consolidation of peace. In the history of ceasefire agreements, this agreement is only the 4th to include SVC provisions and it is the most comprehensive agreement on conflict-related sexual violence to date.