



## BRIEFING PAPER

# Whose Security? Human security seen from a gender and southern perspective

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### **Discussion and results are based on excellent contributions from:**

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### **Realities of conflicts and threat to human security: the way they impact on women's security:**

- Violation and deny of human rights in general and of women's rights in particular
- Curbing of already limited space for addressing discrimination of women in community
- Increase of women responsibilities not reflected in change of gender relations
- Marginalisation, exclusion of certain groups of people (for religious, tribal or economic reasons)
- Threats on livelihoods and competition for access to employment, basic goods and services
- Impunity for sexual and domestic violence against women by justice system in place
- Injustice, incapacity and unwillingness of authorities to apply the law and ensure justice
- State representatives, police or militaries as perpetrators or taking party and protecting perpetrators
- Local media taking party, instigating and legitimating violence
- Patriarchy and cultural models that produce, perpetuate and legitimise (gender based) violence

*“In the name of security, the state and militaries are creating insecurity. When military and arms are used without accountability, the result is rape and shooting of civilians. The state is supposed to deliver security but we are always faced with a sense of insecurity. The state says ‘you need more security’ and in that name, citizens are raped and put in jails. But unless you provide a sense of security, unless you are giving rights and entitlement, nothing is provided.” Indian workshop participant*

### **Challenges to Northern NGOs and international organisations:**

- How to ensure that reconciliation and rebuilding after conflict will lead to a more just and peaceful society?
- How can international actors, the UN in particular, play a role in ensuring that the State plays its role in ensuring justice and applying the law?
- Aid is needed in the long-term to respond to specific women's needs that are often overlooked
- Short term intervention are not effective and can be damaging
- It is important not to sideline local actors or to deprive local organisations from their human resources

- Refugee camp management have to take account of the context and relationship between refugees and host communities
- Whenever there is a conflict there is a need to support the micro-level with service provisions, advocacy must go hand in hand with service delivery to avoid collapse of community structures

**The EU as a global player and worrying trends:**

- Major influence on definition of security by military, with military expertise entering political, economic and social fields and policy circles not open to public
- High youth unemployment and structural unemployables fuelling conflicts in developing countries
- Impunity of Trans-national Companies who are economic driving forces and control most of the natural and extractive resources in developing countries
- Increase in defence budget, at the expenses of social provision in developing countries
- Increase in arms trade and tremendous increase in “cheap” child (girl child) soldiers
- Growing impact of conflicts on civilians, women and children despite a general decrease in the number of conflicts and military casualties
- Growing recourse to private security services, which hire redundant military staff, while state armies are reducing personnel.

For European NGOs working on human security, the **lack of transparency in the security debate** makes advocacy efforts difficult. Lobbying is particularly hard due to the complex share of responsibilities and EU governance architecture on security issues and due to the influential stakeholders and constituencies from the military and business sector.

**At a conceptual level, participants consider the UN Human Security concept a workable concept as it is based on three pillars of security, development and human rights.** In comparison, the debate on the EU security policy is rather narrow and exclusive. However, it could be questioned if it is enough to add the word ‘human’ to the word ‘security’ to make sure that the concepts of peace and justice which are deeply rooted in faith based organisations prevail.

But a major challenge is with the EU member states to ensure implementation of and accountability to the UN human security approach and the **UNSC Resolution 1325** which recognises women’s crucial role in building peace from the ‘village council to the negotiating table’, and their contribution to build a new vision of development, security and peace based on inclusiveness and equality of all citizens.