



**WOMEN'S
INFORMATION CENTRE**

WIC NEWS

The monthly Bulletin of the
Women's Information Centre

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FROM WIC'S MANAGEMENT

Dear readers,

We are presenting you the number 15 of the WIC News Bulletin, which contains a strong emphasis on the Great Lake Region Conference and in particular on related events focusing on gender issues.

In particular the first article in the section *THE MINISTRY IN ACTION* proposes the full text of the speech of Dr. Asha Rose Migiro, Hon minister for Community Development, Gender and Children at the event held in Dar es Salaam.

The second article presents a summary of the main issues raised by the First Lady Mama Mkapa at the Great Lakes Region First Ladies Summit organized by the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children at Sea Cliff Hotel in Dar es Salaam.

In the section *ISSUES* the first article presents the full text of the official message of the First Ladies of the Great Lake Region to the first summit of Heads of State and Government.

The second article in the section presents an overview of the main issues related to children in conflicts raised by the recently released UNICEF report on the "The State of the World's Children 2005".

Finally, the *Documentation Centre* section continues to provide our readers with suggestions for further reading and for interesting websites to visit, all related to issues presented in this number.

Your comments are welcome.

Enjoy the reading,

WIC Management

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**MESSAGE FROM THE WOMEN
OF THE GREAT LAKES REGION
FOR THE FIRST SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE
AND GOVERNMENT**

DAR ES-SALAAM, 19-20 NOVEMBER 2004

READ BY HON DR ASHA-ROSE MIGIRO

MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, GENDER AND CHILDREN

THE MINISTRY
IN ACTION

Your Excellency President Benjamin William Mkapa, President of the United Republic of Tanzania,
Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government,
Your Excellencies First Ladies,

Your Excellency President Olusegun Obasanjo, Chairman of the African Union,

Your Excellency Kofi Annan, United Nations Secretary General,
AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, representing the President of the Commission of the African Union,

Co-Chairs of the Group of Friends of the Great Lakes Region,

Honourable Ministers present,

High Commissioners and Ambassadors,

Representatives of the United Nations agencies,

Heads of Delegation,

Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Distinguished Delegates,

Invited Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,



**“ The women
of the region
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violence”**

On behalf of the women of the Great Lakes Region, who have held various consultations at national and regional levels, culminating in the Regional Women's Meeting that brought together Gender Ministers, of women Parliamentarians, women in Government, civil society and NGOs, held in Kigali, Rwanda, in October 2004, I have the honour to bring to the attention of Your Excellencies the highlights of the resolutions of the Regional Women's Meeting, as follows:

In their deliberations the women recalled the principles enshrined in international and regional instruments, such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), various UN Declarations and Resolutions, in particular Security Council Resolution 1325

The African Union Declaration also guided them on Gender Equality and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights as well as the Protocol on Women's Rights in Africa.

The women of the region expressed deep concern over the multi-dimensional conflicts in the region, the increase of sexual and gender based violence, and especially the use of rape as a weapon of war.

They were further concerned over the reality that women continue to carry the heavy burden of conflict, thus increasing their vulnerability and reducing their access to basic social services. They were also dismayed by the increased spread of HIV/AIDS, especially among women and children.

Amongst other resolutions elaborated in the full text of the Kigali Declaration of the Great Lakes Region, we the women, humbly call upon Your Excellencies, the Heads of State and Government to;

Enact and enforce national and regional legislation that protects and upholds the human rights and dignity of women and girls;

Take concrete measures to end the culture of impunity and enforce punitive action against perpetrators of such heinous crimes as genocide, massacre, rape and other gender based atrocities;

Harmonize national policies for the treatment, care and provision of services to victims of conflict, those affected or infected with HIV/AIDS, vulnerable and marginalized groups, especially women and children;

Secure the inclusion of gender perspectives in macroeconomic policies; guaranteeing economic opportunities for women to access credit, own property and other factors of production;

Fulfill requisite responsibilities towards all displaced persons and ensure speedy enactment and adoption of national and regional policies on refugees and internally displaced persons;

Institute a regional mechanism, with requisite resources, to implement the Kigali Recommendation for gender mainstreaming and women's equal participation in the proposed structures of Plans of Action and Protocols that will operationalize the Peace and Security Pact.

Implement affirmative action for women 50% minimum quota as set out by the AU at all decision-making levels;

Finally, Your Excellencies, we reiterate our readiness to contribute to the success of this International Conference in general and, in particular, to fully engage in the quest for regional peace, security, democracy and development.

I thank Your Excellencies for your kind attention

MAMA MKAPA'S CALL ON PEACE AND SECURITY

THE MINISTRY
IN ACTION

The first lady Mama Anna Mkapa said that peace and security could be maintained and sustained if human rights rule of law and gender equity and equality were respected. Mama Mkapa made the remarks at the Great Lakes Region First Ladies Summit organized by the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children at Sea Cliff Hotel in Dar es Salaam.

She said that in order to maintain peace and security, governments should take concrete measures to uphold the rule of law in addition to respecting democratic principles and ensuring equitable development among the people and gender equality.

"Equal and active participation of women and men in policy formulation and implementations, decision-making processes, equitable distribution and control of resources is a necessity if sustainable security is to be maintained and achieved", she said.

"Although women are and by large peace-makers at the family level, they are often left out of mainstream governance and democracy", Mama Mkapa said.

The first lady said that women are not found in sufficient numbers in decision-making levels in the political and social economic sphere, yet equal and active participation of women and men is crucial in ensuring peace and security.

Armed conflicts in the Great Lakes Region have resulted in human suffering and massive loss of human lives, leaving behind widows, disabled persons, orphans and uncared for elderly people and the situation calls for humanitarian support services and safety nets.

"Experience shows that even though women are the caretakers of vulnerable groups in societies, they are nevertheless rarely involved in planning and delivering of humanitarian services", Mama Mkapa noted.

She said that in order for the support to be effective, it was recommended that women who were better placed to influence quality delivery of the support, are meaningfully involved.

Participation of women in conflict resolution and peace building has been well articulated in UN resolution 1325 of 2000 which emphasizes on the importance of bringing gender issues at the centre of peace-building and peace making processes.

Mama Mkapa said that the Great Lakes Region had to empower women to actively and effectively participate in peace and security, governance and democracy as well as in humanitarian and social development issues.

"Women are not found in sufficient numbers in decision-making levels in the political and social economic sphere, yet equal and active participation of women and men is crucial in ensuring peace and security"

Statement by the First Ladies of the Great Lakes Region to the first summit of Heads of State and Government

ISSUES

The following is the statement of the first ladies of the Great Lakes Region to the first summit of head of states and government, read by Ms Maureen Mwanawasa, the wife of the president of Zambia, His Excellency Levy Mwanawasa, on the 20th of November 2004 at Golden Tulip in Dar es Salaam.

"We, the first ladies of the Great Lakes Region, met in Dar es Salaam, the United Republic of Tanzania on the 19th of November 2004 at the invitation of Mama Anna Mkapa, the first lady of Tanzania, under the auspices of the first summit of heads of state and government of the Great Lakes region (GLR).

In line with the summit agenda, we deliberated on the issues of peace, security, democracy and development in the region. We recalled that divisive ideologies and policies and practices of exclusion had led to civil strife and wars in our region, causing enormous destruction and suffering to communities- especially women and children. We were especially concerned that the specter of massacres and genocide has not altogether been banished from the region.

Women have been relegated to second-class citizens in their land of birth. Their rights are trampled upon with impunity in times of peace and in times of war. They suffer untold sexual atrocities as wars are fought and scores settled. Further, due to their household and community roles, women bear the brunt of instability, massive displacements, dehumanizing poverty, environmental degradation, the scourge of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections, epidemics and generalized moral decay resulting from armed conflicts.

Though women have limited access to key factors of production, they remain major agricultural producers, workers, managers, traders, knowledge providers and innovators. They have taken initiatives in community healing and bridge building where relationships appeared irrevocably broken by the endemic conflicts in the region.

The participation of women in conflict resolution and peace building is critical to ensuring growth and stability in our region. We, the first ladies of the Great Lakes Region, salute the efforts of the women of Rwanda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, and Uganda who took firm steps to get onto the negotiation table for peace and reconciliation in their countries.

We commend the African heads of state and government for ratifying global instruments on gender equality and in adopting the protocol on women's rights in Africa and the SADC declaration on Gender and Development including its addendum on the prevention and eradication of Violence Against Women and Children, among other instruments.

The first ladies of the Great Lakes Region have initiated and implemented various projects and programmes on economic and social empowerment of women, that is in entrepreneurship, education, skills training, safe motherhood, health, peace and stability and the fight against HIV and AIDS.

"The participation of women in conflict resolution and peace building is critical to ensuring growth and stability in our region"

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CONT./..

ISSUES

***We call on our
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and Government
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We call on our Heads of State and Government to have initiated and implemented various projects and programmes on economic and social empowerment of women, that is, in entrepreneurship, education, skills training, safe motherhood, health, peace and stability and the fight against HIV and AIDS; accelerate ratification and implementation of the AU protocol on women's rights; ensure equal representation and participation of women in all the structures and mechanisms, meeting, consultations and any other processes and events to be organized within the framework of the international conference on the Great Lakes Region and other for a through affirmative actions.

On our part, we pledge to enhance our effort in support of women's participation in promoting peace and security, democracy and good governance, economic and regional integration, humanitarian responses and social development of our region.

As mothers of the nations, we commit ourselves to the values of dialogue, inclusiveness, tolerance, reconciliation and crafting a common destiny of our people anchored on the wealth of our diversity and our humanity, as opposed to emphasis on the weaknesses of our differences.

We take this opportunity to express our profound appreciation to the group of friends of the Great Lakes Region as well as the co-opted core countries for their solidarity, material and moral support towards the achievement of the goals of the international conference on the Great Lakes Region.

We call upon them not only sustain their support, but also to mobilize the entire international community in the search for durable peace, security, stability and prosperity in the Great Lakes Region.

We warmly congratulate and thank Mama Anna Mkapa, the first lady of Tanzania, for having organized our meeting in Dar es Salaam and we look forward to coming together again as the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region evolves".

The first ladies of Zambia Ms Maureen Mwanawasa, Kenya Lucy Kibaki, Zimbabwe, Grace Mugabe, Sudan, Widad Al Bashir, South Africa Zanele Mbeki and the host Mama Anna Mkapa attended the meeting. Their gender and community ministers represented other first ladies who did not attend the meeting.

The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region was held in Golden Tulip in Dar es Salaam from the 19th to the 20th of November 2004. The conference was attended by at least 13 Heads of States accompanied with their wives.

1.6M CHILDREN KILLED IN CONFLICTS SINCE 1990

ISSUES

Around 1.6 million children have been killed in armed conflict throughout the world since 1990, said the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) report called "The State of the World's Children 2005".

According to the report in 1996 there were 22 major armed conflicts worldwide, 19 in 2003 which represents the second-lowest annual number since 1990. But the report warns that "for every step forward, there seems to be a step backwards as a new conflict erupts elsewhere. Far from being safe, the world at the beginning of the 21st century appears more driven by conflict and fear than before and its dominant political discourse seems to be one of war", states the report.

The report observes that children are always among the first affected by conflict. "Armed conflict affects their lives in many ways, and even if they are not killed or injured, they can be orphaned, abducted, raped and left with deep emotional scars from direct exposure to violence or from dislocation and poverty."

According to UNICEF, the exact number of children currently caught up in conflict as combatants is unknown, but it is likely to be around hundreds of thousands. Children are conscripted, kidnapped or pressured into joining combat forces. Not all of them took part in combat, though the proliferation of lightweight weapons has made it possible even for children under 10 to become effective killers.

The report claims that armed groups and, in some cases, government forces use children because they often prove easier than adults to condition into unthinking obedience and fearless killing. It added that Africa and Asia have the highest numbers of children actively involved in conflict as combatants. It asserts that an estimated 20 million children across the globe had been forced by conflict or human rights violations to leave their homes. As they fled from conflict, families sometimes separated. Left alone, children were more likely to be sexually abused or recruited into combat, the report observed. Of the 20 million children, who had been forced to flee their homes, around one-third were refugees who had been driven across national borders. The other two-thirds were internally displaced, a proportion that has been rising steadily in parallel with the trend towards civil strife, the report said.

"Sexual violence was often a weapon of war, consciously deployed. It could include rape, mutilation, exploitation and abuse. In the conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Rwanda in the early 1990s, it was a deliberate policy to rape teenage girls and women and force them to bear children," the report observed.

"In addition, the poverty, hunger and insecurity generated by conflict can force children into prostitution. In Colombia, for example, girls as young as 12 have been reported to have submitted sexually to armed forces in order to ensure their families' safety." The report concluded that all of these factors increased the likelihood of HIV transmission in conflict zones, while the breakdown of school and health systems inhibited safeguards that could counter these risks. It revealed that landmines claim between 15,000 and 20,000 victims each year. Two-thirds of the 65 countries that suffered mine casualties between 2002 and 2003 had not experienced active conflict in that period.

The report confirms that there is a growing consensus against the use of children as soldiers. In 2000, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Children raised the minimum age for direct participation in hostilities from 15 to 18 years.

Citing the example of Palestine, the report states that more than one generation of Palestinian children were denied their right to basic education. School infrastructure was constantly at risk, at least 269 schools had been damaged between September 2000 and June 2004, nine schools had been completely closed, three of them were currently being used as military outposts and an additional 275 schools were in the line of confrontation.

Another examples is about war-ravaged Afghanistan, where a UNICEF-supported demobilisation programme had assisted 2,203 children in eight provinces since its launch in February 2004. In Afghanistan during 2002 more than three million children had been successfully enrolled in schools after years of warfare and educational neglect. "If we are to safeguard children from the brutality of armed conflicts, a number of actions must be pursued, provided the international community has the political and economic will to implement them," The UNICEF report is available at the documentation centre of WIC it emphasized.

"According to UNICEF, the exact number of children currently caught up in conflict as combatants is unknown, but it is likely to be around hundreds of thousands. Children are conscripted, kidnapped or pressured into joining combat forces"



**WOMEN'S
INFORMATION
CENTRE**

Kivukoni Front
P.O Box 3448
Dar es Salaam
Tanzania

Phone +255 22 2111 459.
Fax: +255 22 2110 933.
Email: info_wic@uccmail.co.tz
Website:
<http://www.mcdgc.go.tz>

info_wic@uccmail.co.tz



Desk editor: Emmy
Marealle
Graphics: Sophia
M.Chando

Pictures:
Page 2: state House

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this bulletin do not
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the views of the
Minsitry of Community
Development, Gender
and Children

WIC DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

The WIC documentation centre is pleased to inform its readers about a recently acquired useful reference material entitled: "*The African gender and development index*", published in September 2004 by the UN Economic Commission for Africa. This report introduces the African Gender and Development Index (AGDI) and its two components, the Gender Status Index (GSI) and the African Women's Progress Scoreboard (AWPS). It indicates the AGDI's strengths and weaknesses. The structure of the GSI are explained and 42 indicators used for its compilation are analysed. All the indicators of the AWPS are explained. The report also provides a preliminary analysis of a study case based on one of the 12 countries that are participating in the field trials of the AGDI.

ABSTRACTS OF KEY DOCUMENTS RELATED TO ISSUE No.15

Proceedings of the workshop on women's meeting on preparations of the international conference on peace, security, democracy and development for the great lakes region / MCDGC. - Dar es Salaam (Tanzania): MCDGC, 2004. - 35 p.: append.; fig.

This is the report of a workshop organized by the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children at Msimbazi Centre, Dar es Salaam, as part of the preparations for the Great Lakes Region International Conference, and in particular for the First Ladies Summit. The main purpose of the workshop was to provide an opportunity for participants to discuss and identify priority issues concerning Tanzanian women with respect to promoting sustainable peace and security in the Great Lakes Region

Assisting children in the great lakes region: a report to donors for funds received by UNICEF in response to the UN great lakes / UNICEF. - Nairobi (Kenya): UNICEF, 1997. - 40 p.; ill.; fig.

This report describes the humanitarian activities undertaken by UNICEF with the funds and in-kind donations received by all its donors in order to meet the urgent needs of women and children leaving in the Great Lakes Region

The International conference on war affected children / Winnipeg. - (Canada): Winnipeg, 2000. - (300)p.: bibliog.; fig.

This document reviews a wide range of actions taken in assisting children worldwide by a different range of actors. It provides a glossary of achievement since 1996 and recommends forward-looking strategies to increasing children's protection in armed conflict. It brings new and expanded focus to five areas, namely small arms and light weapons, women's role in peace-building, peace and security, HIV AIDS, media and communication

USEFUL LINKS

<http://www.womenforwomen.org>

This is a website for women worldwide. It helps women victims of war and violence living on the margin of hope to move from crisis and poverty to self-sufficiency

<http://www.seekjustice.org>

This is an official website of World Vision. It seeks justice for the world's poor, oppressed and marginalized people. It contains links with critical issues concerning children in crisis, global AIDS crisis, regions in conflict etc..