

## **Activities undertaken by Austria to support the fight against gender-based violence**

The Federal Ministry of Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs made voluntary contributions in 2019 to support the fight against SGBV. The primary focus lies on projects for the collection of evidence on SGBV in crisis areas, for instance in Syria and Yemen. For many years, Austria has been a strong supporter of the UN Trust Fund to end violence against women.

Austria is committed to combatting female genital mutilation (FGM) and other traditional inhumane practices in the framework of the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC). In line with the 2019-2021 triannual program for Austrian development cooperation, the fight against FGM, particularly in conflict regions and fragile states, is one of Austria's priorities.

During and after armed conflict, violence against women rises dramatically. Sexual violence against women is employed as a cruel weapon of war, and fleeing from war zones often results in economic and social insecurity. Austria is therefore particularly active in the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 (2000) and UNSCR 1820 (2008), as well as thematically related follow-up resolutions.

In 2007, Austria adopted a National Action Plan (NAP) on Implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which was revised in 2012. The Austrian NAP reflects the commitment of the Austrian Government to implement UNSCR 1325 in the context of Austria's humanitarian, diplomatic, crisis management and development cooperation activities. It aims at strengthening inter-ministerial cooperation and takes account of the follow-up resolutions to UNSCR 1325 as well as the indicators that were developed by both the United Nations and the European Union to track and assess progress on the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

The most important objectives pursued by the Austrian NAP include:

- Increasing the share and representation of women in peace operations as well as enhanced consideration of the objectives defined in UNSCR 1325 in training activities for international peace operations;
- Strengthening the increased participation of women in all stages of peace processes and conflict prevention, especially by promoting local peace initiatives by women and increasing the share of women in decision-making positions in international and European organisations;
- Preventing gender-specific violence, protecting women's rights and accounting for protection and security needs of women and girls within the scope of peace support operations and humanitarian missions and in camps for refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP).

The implementation of the revised NAP is monitored and supervised by a working group led by the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, composed of representatives of all relevant ministries and agencies as well as the Austrian Development Agency (ADA). This working group reviews the NAP's implementation and further development and documents its findings in detailed annual implementation reports that are submitted to the Austrian Government and forwarded to the Parliament. The annual reports are prepared by the working group in consultation with civil society representatives (from non-governmental organisations, research institutions, etc.) on the basis of joint meetings held at least once a year.

The 9<sup>th</sup> annual NAP implementation report – covering the period 1 January 2017 until 31 December 2017 – was adopted by the Austrian Government on 19.12.2018, the preparation of the 10th annual implementation report covering the year 2018 is currently under way.

Furthermore, according to the Gender Policy of the Austrian Development Cooperation adopted in 2017, the implementation of UNSCR 1325 is one of the key areas of engagement for ADC. Since 2018 the Austrian Development Agency is funding the UN Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund with 2 Mio EUR with a view to support grass-roots organisations aiming at the implementation for UNSCR 1325 and follow-up resolutions at the local level. Austria is a member of the Fund's global as well as Iraqi and Palestinian Steering Committees. Overall, ADA has financed or implemented projects in the field of SGBV and 1325 amounting to approx. EUR 75 Mio and projects/programs for further EUR 7 Mio are currently developed.