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Contact:
info@peacebuild.ca

Policy brief

The United Nations Women, Peace and Security Resolutions: From Rhetoric to Reality

SUMMARY

On June 15th, 2011, Peacebuild, with financial support from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, convened the fourth in a series of six workshops on various peacebuilding and conflict prevention policy issues. This workshop focused on how the norms in the United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security have and can be operationalized. This policy brief builds on reports from around the world and synthesizes the findings and recommendations arising from the workshop discussions and the three issue papers prepared to inform and stimulate those discussions. It highlights policy and programming options aimed at improving Canadian and global responses to violent conflict through the implementation of the resolutions.

THE RESOLUTIONS

As of mid-2011, there were five Security Council Resolutions that explicitly focus on what is now known as the “women, peace and security” agenda: Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960. Together these set out an ambitious agenda to increase women’s participation in peace and conflict processes, to prevent violent conflict and to protect women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).¹

In October 2000, the Security Council passed Resolution 1325. The discussion and passage of the resolution was seen as a landmark process -- the first time

¹ See the Peacewomen website for easy access to the full text of all five Resolutions.
http://peacewomen.org/security_council_monitor/about-women-peace-and-security-agenda

the Council had recognized the specific roles of women and men in armed conflict and peacebuilding. It urged increased participation of women in conflict prevention and peace negotiations.

UNSCR Resolution 1820, adopted in 2008, recognized sexual violence as a tactic of war and an impediment to peace. It demanded that parties to armed conflict take special measures to protect civilians, including women and girls, from all forms of sexual violence in armed conflict.

UNSCR Resolution 1888 was adopted one year later and also focused on sexual violence in armed conflict. It strengthened 1820 through assigning leadership, building judicial response and specifying reporting mechanisms. It also called for the appointment of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General to provide leadership and UN coordination on sexual violence in conflict.

UNSCR Resolution 1889, also adopted in 2009, emphasized women's political and economic decision-making in peacebuilding. It urged gender mainstreaming in all post-conflict recovery initiatives and called for a monitoring mechanism (including global indicators to track the implementation of Resolution 1325), on women's roles in conflict and post-conflict situations.

In December 2010, the Security Council passed Resolution 1960, which again focused on sexual violence in conflict. It introduced "naming and shaming" mechanisms, including a request to the Secretary-General to include detailed information on parties to armed conflict that are "credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for acts of rape or other forms of sexual violence." It also includes provisions for a more robust monitoring and data collection arrangement.

Together these resolutions form a wide-ranging set of standards which are often grouped under the categories of prevention, protection, participation and relief/recovery. The resolutions have been the subject of much debate and even criticism.² It should be remembered, however, that they are political documents containing compromises negotiated to ensure agreement. Even though they are Security Council Resolutions and are often considered to be part of international law, they are not legally binding on states. They do, however, form an internationally recognized normative agenda.

It is also important to point out that the WPS resolutions are complemented by other Security Council resolutions, especially related to the protection of civilians and children affected by armed conflict.³ For example, Resolution 1674 on the protection of civilians condemns sexual and gender-based violence, the recruitment of children into armed groups, the forced displacement of civilian populations, trafficking of women and children, and sexual exploitation and abuse. It calls on all parties to implement measures to prevent such violations and end impunity, and also calls for the special needs of women and children to be taken into account in peace processes.

² See, for example, the two opinion columns on the website for a documentary on Women, War and Peace: Anderlini, Sanam (2010). *1325 is a Starting Point*. <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/episodes/women-war-peace/essay-1325-is-a-starting-point/6355/> and Donovan, Paula (2010). *1325 Has Failed Women*. <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/episodes/women-war-peace/essay-1325-has-failed-women/6346/>

³ UN Security Council Resolutions on the protection of civilians: [1265 \(1999\)](#), [1296 \(2000\)](#), [1674 \(2006\)](#), [1738 \(2006\)](#), [1894 \(2009\)](#). UN Security Council Resolutions on children and armed conflict: [1261 \(1999\)](#), [1314 \(2000\)](#), [1379 \(2001\)](#), [1460 \(2003\)](#), [1539 \(2004\)](#), [1612 \(2005\)](#), [1882 \(2009\)](#).

Corey Barr is an independent consultant with a background in conflict and post-conflict studies, with a focus on gender and human rights.

Nicola Popovic is an independent consultant who has worked for a number of civil society organizations, in academia and with the UN. She has conducted research on the implementation of Resolution 1325 at the national level, gender and security reform and gender training for peacekeeping personnel.

Barr and Popovic co-authored a forthcoming study entitled "*Planning for Action on Women, Peace and Security: National-level implementation of Resolution 1325.*"

Kristine St-Pierre is a research analyst and gender adviser at the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre. She is actively involved in issues concerning Women, Peace and Security including gender training and monitoring the implementation of the WPS resolutions.

Hayley Lopes is a graduate student in Conflict Studies at Saint Paul University. The current focus of her research is the gendered dimensions of conflict and the connection between military masculinity and sexual violence perpetrated by peacekeepers.

THE WORKSHOP

Thirty-five people gathered in Ottawa on June 15th, 2011 to discuss how the Women, Peace and Security Resolutions have and can be operationalized. Participants included representatives from Canadian civil society organizations, academics, and government representatives (CIDA, the RCMP, and DFAIT). The workshop was held under the Chatham House Rule of non-attribution.⁴ However, authors gave permission to quote from their presentations.

A previous Peacebuild workshop had been held on "women's political participation in post-conflict transitions." It looked at women's specific needs and risks when attempting to participate in political and other processes, men's involvement and the role of the international community (including providing financial support, political will, supporting grassroots women's organizations and using long-term timelines).⁵

As mentioned above the Women, Peace and Security Resolutions comprise a broad agenda and call for action in numerous areas. In this workshop, the focus was on 1) the military, police and peace support operations; 2) relief and recovery and 3) sexual and gender-based violence.

Three papers were prepared in advance to help inform the discussions:

- *Implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Peace Operations: Overview of Recent Efforts and Lessons Learned* by Kristine St-Pierre of the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre;
- *A Critical Review – Militarized Masculinity in Peacekeeping Operations: An Obstacle to Gender Mainstreaming* by Hayley Lopes of St-Paul University;
- *From Global to Local: How UN Agencies Build Capacity to Implement the Women, Peace and Security Resolutions at the National Level* by Nicola Popovic, a Gender and Security Sector Reform Consultant with UN Women, and Corey Barr, independent consultant.

⁴ "When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed." <http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/about/chathamouserule/>

⁵ See <http://peacebuild.ca/themes-projects-emerging-issues-e.php> for the policy brief and the background papers for this workshop.

GAINS, GAPS AND CHALLENGES

“Bureaucratic inertia, leadership vacuums, empty rhetoric and fundamental misunderstanding about this agenda in many quarters have marked the past decade.”⁶

In the autumn of 2010 the international community marked the 10th anniversary of UNSCR 1325. There were many meetings, celebrations, stocktakings, assessments and reports. It was noted that progress has been made in a number of areas, including:⁷

- In many post-conflict countries, the number of women in government has increased significantly and women have used the public decision-making spaces to advance women’s rights;
- There is increased awareness of gender differences in the way conflict affects civilians;
- Women’s peace coalitions have grown – at the national and international levels.

Resolution 1325 has been an important tool in supporting mobilization and advocacy efforts;

- Transitional justice mechanisms are increasingly responding to war crimes against women with steps to protect women witnesses;
- Post-conflict needs assessments, post-conflict planning processes and financing frameworks

have, in some cases, acknowledged the importance of women’s participation and concerns;

- The UN has developed indicators to monitor progress of the implementation of the WPS UNSCRs.



However, significant gaps remain:

- Despite all the reports, advocacy efforts, and training, there are still significant gaps in knowledge of the resolutions and the responsibilities of various actors. “The net effect is

⁶ International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN) and MIT Centre for International Studies (2010) *What the Women Say: Participation and UNSCR 1325*, p. 11

⁷ This section draws on UNIFEM (2010) *Overview: 1325 Women Count for Peace*, United Nations (2010). *Women Count for Peace: The 2010 Open Days on Women, Peace and Security*, CARE International (2010) *From Resolution to Reality: Lessons Learned from Afghanistan, Nepal and Uganda on Women’s Participation in Peacebuilding and Post-Conflict Governance*, & ICAN/MIT (2010).

that a decade on, across the UN and diplomatic system – especially in country offices and government ministries – awareness, knowledge and understanding of the resolution is still haphazard.”⁸

- Only 16% of peace agreements signed since 1990 contain specific provisions on women’s rights and needs;
- While gender analysis is found in post-conflict needs assessments, less than 8% of proposed recovery budgets identify spending priorities addressing women’s needs, and just 5.7% of actual budgetary outlays of multi-donor trust funds on post-conflict countries finance gender equality or women’s empowerment projects;
- Employment programs to revitalize post-conflict economies still tend to privilege employment for men and there is inadequate investment in women’s property rights and livelihood prospects;
- Sexual and gender-based violence is rampant and often continues after peace deals are settled;
- Domestic or international prosecution of war crimes against women remains at a low level;
- Arrangements for women’s security and survival needs in camps for refugees and internationally displaced persons often continue to be weak.
- Humanitarian actors often fail to respond to the needs and priorities of girls and women as well as gender-based violence.
- The mobilization of women on WPS issues is often focused in the capital and major cities, leaving out local women.

In general, there was agreement on the overall gaps. More money, more leadership, more political will, greater accountability, more attention, improved awareness, more expertise are all needed.⁹ The workshop aimed to explore these gaps and outline promising directions.

PROMISING DIRECTIONS

“Ten years ago, on 31 October 2000, the United Nations Security Council took an important and unprecedented step into new territory. Recognising the vulnerability of women and girls to violence during and after armed conflict and the absence or low level of women’s representation in efforts to prevent war, build peace and restore devastated societies, the Council passed resolution 1325.”¹⁰

The WPS Resolutions cover a wide, varied and often overlapping set of issues. This workshop was only able to skim the surface of many important discussions. It was clear that more attention is required to delve deeper and explore options in more detail. This section attempts to capture

⁸ ICAN/MIT (2010), p. 3

⁹ On financing issues, see CORDAID and the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (2010). *Costing and Financing 1325: Examining the Resources Needed to Implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 at the National Level, as well as the Gains, Gaps and Glitches on Financing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.*

¹⁰ United Nations Population Fund (2010). *From Conflict and Crisis to Renewal: Generations of Change. State of the World’s Population 2010.*

some of the issues raised during the day,¹¹ supplemented by other resources and reports. Unless otherwise indicated, the points highlighted below are from the workshop discussion. Throughout the discussions it was clear that issues are often inter-related. For example, if women's rights are not secure, including rights to land and to credit, then economic participation is difficult; discussions of sexual and gender-based violence often involve the role of the military and police; and women's economic participation and opportunities are dependent on basic physical security.

Even with the day's wide-ranging discussion, there were many issues that the workshop was not able to take up, including, for example, the proposed indicators to track global progress on implementing the resolutions, programs aimed at former combatants, strategies to deal with resistance, the broader issues involved in security sector reform, and efforts to increase attention to gender equality dimensions of humanitarian response, transitional justice, economic recovery, and electoral processes.

MILITARY, POLICE AND PEACE OPERATIONS

“The misconception persists that gender mainstreaming is synonymous with increasing the number of women in peacekeeping. In reality it is a commitment to identifying the differential impacts of conflicts on the lives of women, men, girls and boys, and to proposing practical solutions to respond to the specific needs identified. The lingering perception also exists that gender mainstreaming is solely about the empowerment of women. Although this is necessary in many cases to bridge longstanding gaps in political, educational and economic opportunities for women and girls that can be compounded by conflict, empowerment remains just one component of a broader goal of building equal opportunities for both women and men to participate in post-conflict processes.”¹²

Issues & Good/Promising Practices

Taking Stock of the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Peacekeeping

In 2010 the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) released an 'impact study' on how peacekeeping operations had implemented UNSCR 1325. It came to a 'mixed verdict' on progress to date: “Significant progress has been made in supporting women's participation in electoral processes, in the security sector and in establishing policies and institutional mechanisms to support gender mainstreaming. However, results remain modest in other areas, such as providing physical protection to women against conflict-related violence, increasing the numbers of women serving in peacekeeping and harnessing senior leadership commitment to this agenda.”¹³

¹¹ Given space reasons, this brief does not always do full justice to the interventions from panel speakers. Apologies if key points have been omitted.

¹² United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (2005). *Gender Mainstreaming in Peacekeeping Operations – Progress Report*. New York. p. 2.

¹³ Peacekeeping Best Practices Section, DPKO (2010). *Ten-year Impact Study on Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security in Peacekeeping*. Final Report to the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Department of Field Support. New York.

Developing and Implementing Policy

The workshop background paper by Kristine St-Pierre reviewed the policy initiatives undertaken by the UN, the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to implement the commitments in Resolution 1325.

According to St-Pierre, despite advances, “the lack of information, resources and political will remain the primary obstacles to putting greater emphasis on gender in peace operations.”¹⁴



Gender Advisors and Gender Units

A key strategy of the UN’s DPKO has been to deploy gender advisors within peacekeeping missions. They have varying mandates including ensuring the incorporation of a gender perspective as part of the mission’s rules and operations, promoting and supporting the active participation of women in post-conflict reconstruction processes and conducting gender training and sensitization on gender issues. St-Pierre noted, however, that these units are often “understaffed, under resourced and lacking the adequate technical expertise to support the implementation of their mandates in relation to UNSCR 1325. Their role and responsibilities within missions are also dependent on the support from mission leadership.”¹⁵

Gender Training

St-Pierre argued that “much more work must be done not only to raise awareness on WPS resolutions, but to build the capacity of regional and national actors to ensure that women’s rights and gender perspectives are fully incorporated in peace operations and policy.”¹⁶ This echoes a finding of a recent report on Women, Peace and Security by the Canadian Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights focusing on Canadian actors: “The Committee looked in particular at the training provided to Department of National Defence/Canadian Forces (DND/CF) and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) personnel. The Committee determined that the UN resolutions were not being specifically dealt with and elaborated on in

¹⁴ St-Pierre, Kristine. (2011). *Implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Peace Operations: Overview of Recent Efforts and Lessons Learned*. p. 11

¹⁵ St-Pierre (2011), p. 5

¹⁶ St-Pierre (2011), p. 11

any level of detail during training or in the professional development of DND/CF and RCMP personnel.”¹⁷

Different tools and curricula have been developed for gender training for peacekeepers and related deployed military and police.¹⁸ For example, DPKO has developed general and more specific training (such as on combating trafficking in women and girls) for peacekeepers.¹⁹ The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) along with UN-INSTRAW (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women) have also developed training materials for support the incorporation of gender equality issues into security sector reform initiatives.²⁰

However, it has become clear that different types of gender training are needed in different circumstances and for different audiences. Each level of staff has different roles to play and therefore requires different skills and knowledge.²¹

The background paper by Hayley Lopes noted that even though gender training has been developed for peacekeepers, it is not mandatory for all personnel and often overlooked for middle and senior management. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of troop contributing countries to provide this training and this is not always done.²²

Deploying More Women

Increasing the number of women participating in peacekeeping and civilian police deployments is an often-stated goal and commitment in the WPS resolutions.

An officer with much experience in international policing outlined how the Royal Canadian Mounted Police has taken steps to increase the number of women deployed in civilian police missions. Efforts have included surveys to understand why women do not want to be deployed (obstacles are often related to family concerns), and increasing information for women considering deployment. The UN has requested that women make up 20% of policing operations. Currently 8% of deployed police officers are women, but in the past it has been as high as 15%. In police forces across Canada, women make up 19.4% of police officers.

The UN has also experimented with all female units, specifically the unit from India in Liberia, the unit from Bangladesh in Haiti and the unit from Samoa in East Timor. These deployments are generally considered successes. Lopes suggested that these types of deployments have the potential to show what peacekeeping missions could look like in the absence of militarized masculinity.²³

¹⁷ Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights, Senate of Canada (2010). *Women, Peace and Security: Canada Moves Forward to Increase Women's Engagement*. p. viii

¹⁸ See Lyytikäinen, Minna (2007) *Gender Training for Peacekeepers: Preliminary Overview of United Nations Peace Support Operations*. UN-INSTRAW. Gender, Peace and Security Working Paper 4 for an overview of initiatives to that date.

¹⁹ See <http://www.peacekeepingbestpractices.unlb.org/pbps/Pages/Public/viewprimarydoc.aspx?docid=449>

²⁰ See <http://www.gssrtraining.ch/>

²¹ St-Pierre (2011), pp 14-16.

²² Lopes, Hayley (2011). *A Critical Review: Militarized Masculinity in Peacekeeping Operations: An Obstacle to Gender Mainstreaming*.

²³ Lopes (2011), p. 27

The workshop briefly touched on some of the complexities and contradictions that can emerge when women's roles in militaries are expanded. Given military norms, structures, objectives and missions, increasing women's participation is not an unambiguous project.²⁴

Better Understanding of 'Militarized Masculinity'

The workshop paper by Hayley Lopes argued that it is important to understand and address "militarized masculinity," especially in relation to sexual violence during armed conflict. The paper pointed out that even though militarized masculinity is primarily discussed in academic circles, it is important to try to understand the concrete implications of this. "Long-term and mandatory training and education at the national level about militarized masculinity and its consequences are key elements in making gender mainstreaming efforts in peace operations more effective."²⁵

The Importance of Senior Leadership

The importance of leadership in implementing the WPS Resolutions is an ongoing theme. St-Pierre pointed out that "while gender mainstreaming using a bottom up approach can serve as a means of convincing staff in the field of its relevance through a direct demonstration of its positive impacts on operations, in the absence of leadership and support from the highest levels, such an approach will not be sustainable in the long run."²⁶

Suggested strategies

Strategies suggested in the discussions and background papers include:

- Bring military officials into these discussions. How can we engage members of the Canadian Forces?
- Improve gender training. Ensure that gender training meets the needs of each audience. Develop ways of raising issues of militarised masculinity in workshops and sessions.
- Liaise with and involve women's organizations in in-field training
- Explore the 'success conditions' for gender units/gender equality advisors. These mechanisms are generally proposed as solutions, but they are often ineffective. More analysis is required on what can make them effective.

²⁴ In part, discussion was triggered by a video clip proposed by NATO on the Female Engagement Teams (FETs) in Afghanistan. See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VE6ZMnZ1Ucw>

²⁵ Lopes (2011), p. 22.

²⁶ St-Pierre (2011), p. 12

RELIEF AND RECOVERY

*“Recovery and rebuilding in post-disaster and post-conflict contexts offer the possibility of not only reconstruction, but also transformations... Yet often, the experience is that there is a quick reversal to established gender norms in the reconstruction phase. This poses the challenge that despite gender sensitive approaches being implemented more broadly today, there seems to be still inadequate attention to deeper understanding of the construction of gender norms and the ways in which to transform to more equitable gender relations”.*²⁷

Issues & Good/Promising Practices

Supporting Women’s Organizations

The importance of supporting women’s rights organizations, especially those working in areas of armed conflict was highlighted during the workshop. A paper circulated by KAIROS at the workshop noted “the needs of women’s rights groups in each region are the same. Regardless of their context, women’s groups need ongoing political and financial support for local peacebuilding efforts, along with strong overseas partnerships (from both government and civil society) for developing and supporting programs of education, outreach, policy development and action.”²⁸

The nature of this support and how this support is structured was also mentioned. One background paper pointed to the importance of transparency in donor-recipient relationships and in involving the affected women in the planning of initiatives.²⁹

National Action Plans

One of the main ways governments have worked to implement the WPS Resolutions is through the development of National Action Plans (NAPs). To date, 26 countries have created National Action Plans and others are in the process of developing theirs. Plans vary significantly with a primary difference being between NAPs in developed countries and NAPs in countries emerging from conflict.³⁰

In their background paper, Nicola Popovic and Corey Barr stressed the importance of involving women from conflict-affected regions in developed country action plans and quoted the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office: “Sharing information with and consulting CSOs, including women’s organizations, in conflict-affected countries prioritized for action would ensure relevance of the action plan and support stronger monitoring processes. It is important to

²⁷ Nata Duvvury, CO-director of the Global Women’s Studies Programme at the National University of Ireland, Galway quoted in UNFPA (2010), p. 84

²⁸ KAIROS (2011). *Women’s Rights as Tools for Peace: KAIROS Collaborative Research and Analysis 2011*. p. 3.

²⁹ Popovic & Barr (2011).

³⁰ Popovic & Barr (2011), p. 15

provide specific funds to support the participation of women from conflict-affected countries in European NAP processes.”³¹

Yet national action plans are not without their critics and shortcomings. One recent report argued: “national action planning is delaying actual action... The existence of bad NAPs and policies can be counterproductive, as governments claim credit for them but are rarely questioned or assessed on their implementation and impact.”³²

Cooperatives

Anna Brown from the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) presented on research carried out on the role of cooperatives in post-conflict communities. Focusing on a case study from Nepal, the presentation highlighted how during the 1996-2006 conflict membership in cooperatives helped women to support one another economically and socially and in very difficult circumstances, regardless of caste or age. “Women became leaders in their communities, earning trust, regardless of their political affiliation.”³³

In 2007, CCA and a Nepali organization, Centre for Microfinance (CMF) launched a project entitled Ensuring the Inclusion of Women in Nepal’s Emerging Democracy: Developing Women’s Savings and Credit Co-operatives as Schools of Democracy, with CIDA funding. This initiative provided training for women in advocacy, education/debate, leadership skills and the constitutional discussions going on at the time.

Research on the role of women’s cooperatives in Nepal and this initiative found that:

“(W)omen co-operative members face conflict in multiple forms in their environments, be it direct violence within their households or more insidious forms of conflict in the larger society. Further, even as women co-operative members pointed to the crucial importance of peace for their lives, they recognized that peacebuilding calls for larger social transformation and the elimination of injustices through awareness and action, rather than just individual instances of conflict resolution and mediation alone. It also becomes apparent that women co-operative members have undertaken a wide variety of strategies to mediate conflict, address injustices and violence and build lasting peace... Through the power of organized action and collective strength women’s co-operatives have emerged as sources of emotional, moral and political support for women, as spaces for their collective voices and action to flourish, and as guardians of justice and peace alongside their financial and/or production roles”³⁴

The research also noted that these initiatives were not without their dilemmas and challenges. For example, gender role stereotypes can often assume a ‘natural affinity’ between women and peace. As well, women are often contributing their unpaid labour to these peacebuilding processes, which can be difficult to sustain considering all the other demands on women’s time.

³¹ Popovic & Barr (2011), p. 19

³² ICAN/MIT (2010), p. 4.

³³ Ann Brown, Workshop Presentation.

³⁴ Ibid.

Development and Provision of Training

Given the need for more skills and expertise in numerous organizations and institutions, training has assumed an important role. The United Nations has been involved in providing training for national peace and security actors and building the capacity of women (both individually and organizationally) to be involved in national peace and security initiatives. For example, UNIFEM (now UN Women), has provided training on gender-based violence and the UN Development Programme has trained women involved in political processes.³⁵

However, more work is needed on what constitutes good training, how to match training to required skills and how to evaluate the impact of training.

UN Coordination and UN Women

In January 2011, UN Women came into being. This new organization brought together various UN institutions that had responsibility for promoting and supporting women's rights and gender equality. Initiatives relating to women, peace and security that had been previously scattered in four organizations are now coordinated by the women, peace and security cluster of UN Women in New York.

It is hoped that this new structure will contribute to better coordination and more effective programming. To date, although various UN organizations have been involved in initiatives to support the implementation of the WPS Resolutions, "coordination and collaboration between different actors remains a major challenge."³⁶

The workshop heard from two speakers on UN Women. Christine Ouellette, the UN Women Country Program Director/Afghanistan, addressed UN contributions to national efforts and strategies to implement UNSCR 1325+ in Afghanistan. Efforts to date include the strengthening of the capacity of women's organizations to have a voice in national discussions, the recognition that women's equality involvement in building peace is essential by the Review Conference of the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme, and the development of coordination mechanisms. However, much remains to be done in light of the systematic discrimination faced by women. The protection and security of women activists needs to be a priority and the international community can play an active role on these issues.

Almas Jiwani, President of UN Women Canada, noted that the role of the Canadian organization is primarily raising funds for the global organization, while working to increase awareness within Canada of the importance of women's rights and the women, peace and security agenda

Suggested Strategies

Strategies suggested in the discussions and background papers include:

- Create more discussion on the Canadian National Action Plan – how it will be implemented and monitored;³⁷

³⁵ Popovic & Barr (2011), p. 18

³⁶ Popovic & Barr (2011), p. 6

³⁷ For the text of the Canadian National Action Plan, see: www.international.gc.ca/START-GTSR/women_canada_action_plan_action_femme.aspx

- Support more investment in trying to understand what types of measures or activities are actually effective;
- Carry out WPS project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in a participatory way, involving civil society actors from the target countries in an inclusive way;
- See capacity-building as a mutual learning process rather than a unilateral transfer of information;

Develop compelling arguments that speak to a wide-ranging audience. For this, the collection of age and sex-disaggregated data to facilitate gender analysis is essential to demonstrate the differential impact of conflict and peace processes for women, men, boys and girls.

SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

*“Responses to sexual and gender-based violence...have been very narrowly defined, under-resourced and inconsistently addressed throughout the peacebuilding frameworks and priority plans. In part this is because very little exists in the way of evidence-based approaches to sexual and gender-based violence prevention, protection, physical and psychosocial recovery. Despite political will, we have no clear answers. We have not anywhere prevented sexual violence, and need caution about current approaches”.*³⁸

Issues and Good/Promising Practices

Ending Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict

Awareness of the scope and damage done by sexual and gender-based violence during armed conflict is growing. The issue is now on the radar of the global media.³⁹ However, solutions still seem to be in short supply.

Diana Sarosi of the Nobel Women’s Initiative gave an overview of the use of sexual violence in conflict and spoke of the need to look at rape in armed conflict as part of a continuum of violence and a multi-faceted problem, involving peacekeeping forces, private security companies as well as militaries. She highlighted the links between violence against women and militarism, citing estimates that 52 assaults happen every day in the United States military, prompting some to claim that the biggest risk to American military women is not the enemy, but fellow soldiers. To date, women’s organizations around the world have been active documenting and reporting cases, researching, raising awareness, working to change laws, providing services to survivors and lobbying politicians. However, as the call to action of the Nobel Women’s Initiative states: “The global community must step up its efforts in putting comprehensive strategies in place that protect women, bring perpetrators to justice and delivery immediate and long-term services for victims and survivors. A more coordinated effort involving civil society, government, the

³⁸ Jordan Ryan, Assistant Administrator of the UNDP and Director of the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, quoted in UNFPA (2010), pp 82-83.

³⁹ Just one week before the workshop, the UK’s Guardian (online version) had an article with the headline “Libya mass rape claims: using Viagra would be a horrific first.” <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jun/09/libya-mass-rape-viagra-claim>

military and other people working on the ground is required if this issue is going to be adequately addressed.⁴⁰

Learning Lessons from International War Crimes Prosecutions⁴¹

Doris Buss of Carleton University reviewed analysis of challenges and successes in international war crimes prosecutions for sexual violence. The success rate of prosecutions has been disappointing for many and there have been some attempts to understand why. To date key elements include real political will/commitment to pursue these cases (rather than just the appearance of this commitment), specific sexual violence expertise and solid and accurate recordkeeping.

Furthermore, definitions can influence how issues are interpreted. For example “rape as a weapon of war” can be an important way of looking at the deliberate use of sexual violence. However, it can also limit what is documented, with cases of violence that do not fit with the expected pattern of aggressor and victim being excluded (for sexual violence against men or violence against women within the perceived ‘aggressor’ group).⁴²

Working to Change Canadian Laws and Practices

Joanne St. Lewis provided background on POWER Africa-Canada (Progress & Opportunities for Women’s Equality Rights Africa-Canada). It is a partnership of Canadian and African women’s rights groups and scholars that seeks to advance the human rights of women and girls in Africa through research and the development and implementation of strategic initiatives. It was formed in April 2008 in response to requests from African women’s equality advocates for support with the research and development of the legal theory relating to the sources of women and girls’ systematic disadvantage. It is housed at the Human Rights Centre for Research and Education at the Faculty of Law, University of Ottawa. POWER looks at the connection between sexual violence and the extractive industry, which often involves Canadian mining companies. It engages law students and holds public events.⁴³

Addressing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by Non-Military Personnel

Workshop discussion noted the importance of looking at sexual violence committed by non-military personnel, including aid and humanitarian workers. The international community has been working on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse for almost a decade, following a 2002 report by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and Save the Children UK on the prevalence of sexual exploitation and abuse in West Africa, documenting allegations against 40 agencies. The UN and other organizations (including international NGOs) have been active in raising awareness of this issue, developing codes of conduct, training staff, and putting in place supportive mechanisms.

⁴⁰ Nobel Women’s Initiative (2011), *War on Women: Time for Action to End Sexual Violence in Conflict*. p. 17

⁴¹ Women’s Initiatives for Gender Justice is doing interesting work. See: <http://www.iccwomen.org/>

⁴² For more on the limitations of framing ‘rape as a weapon of war’ as the dominant narrative, see Rosan Smits & Serena Cruz (2011) *Increasing Security in DR Congo: Gender-Responsive Strategies for Combating Sexual Violence*, Clingendael Conflict Research Unit Policy Brief, #17.

⁴³ See <http://www.cdp-hrc.uottawa.ca/projects/power/> for additional information.

However, significant work remains to be done. In 2010, a review of these efforts found that while progress has been made on the establishment of prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse policy, this has not translated into managerial and staff understanding and acceptance of these policies. The policies and technical guidance have not been communicated to the field with sufficient authority or clear direction. And the guidance, in itself, has not been accessible. With the exception of three of 14 agencies considered (by means of a self-assessment exercise), implementation is patchy, poor, or non-existent. The review found that the most critical gap in organizational support in preventing sexual exploitation and abuse is that of visible senior management leadership to actively promote such policies and to proactively support preventive activity, while holding field managers accountable for implementation.⁴⁴

Does Focusing on Sexual Violence Help Advance the Broad Goals in the WPS Resolutions?

There was inconclusive discussion in the workshop of whether or not a focus on sexual violence was too narrow to move the entire WPS agenda forward. On one hand, there seems to be momentum behind efforts to engage the public and politicians on the issue of rape in armed conflict and this is a significant issue to address. Should we be worried that other issues such as women's participation in peace negotiations, economic opportunities for women and men in post-conflict reconstruction and progress on women's rights in post-conflict legal systems will be forgotten? More discussion is needed.

Suggested Strategies

Strategies suggested in the discussions and background papers include:

- Strengthen support for women's human rights defenders and women peace activists. Ensure their security;
- Pay attention to strategies that have worked in IDP/refugee camps to reduce violence (such as providing cooking and heating fuel, locks on latrines, adequate lighting, etc.);
- Promote real multi-disciplinary dialogue and engage non-traditional interlocutors. Find ways to get different groups, organizations and interests to actually talk to each other (not just be in the same room);
- Ensure that specific expertise on sexual violence is recognized as important and included in processes, including war crimes prosecutions;
- Speak to survivors and find out their needs. Make sure they are consulted and involved in initiatives;
- Look at perpetrators as well as victims. Hold militaries and armed groups accountable for their actions. "We can't just keep talking about the women in these situations";
- Look for longer-term visions and strategies, not just 'quick fixes';

⁴⁴ Reddick, Moira (2010). *Global Synthesis Report: IASC Review of Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN, NGO, IOM and IFRC Personnel*. Submitted to the IASC Working Group for consideration at the 77th Meeting, Geneva, 7-9 July 2010.

- Work with men (and younger men) and engage them as allies. What is the best way to hold discussions on alternatives to ‘militarized masculinities’? How do we engage in discussions that are inclusive and respectful?
- Strengthen work on codes of conduct relating to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, including their full implementation;
- Locate work on sexual violence within the context of ending militarism and building peace broadly defined.

CONCLUSIONS

“Even though the normative framework may be comprehensive and clear, the transformation of policy into practice is long and complex. In terms of Resolution 1325 in particular, different actors need to collaborate, often in contexts that are already challenging”⁴⁵

The workshop discussion underscored the broad nature of the WPS Resolutions. Many themes, topics and ideas were discussed and participants agreed that one day was too short to explore issues in detail. However, a number of gaps in implementing the WPS Resolutions were highlighted: the need for more resources, greater political support, smarter strategies, greater awareness, more engagement of men, greater participation of leaders (both inside and outside of organizations), more cross-silo discussion and learning...

The importance of bringing to bear specific expertise on gender equality issues was also mentioned repeatedly throughout the day: the importance of high quality and effective gender training, effective gender units within peacekeeping missions, influential gender focal points within organizations, and sexual violence teams in war crimes prosecution mechanisms. These insights complement the recommendation in a recent report on women’s experiences in making peace in Asia and the Pacific: “gender analysis is technical skill – include it as such.”⁴⁶

There were also questions regarding why, ten years after Resolution 1325, we have so little evidence on what works and so few examples of good practice. Is this an indication of how little effort and resources have actually been invested? Or is it a lack of evaluation of what has worked and what has not? As one background paper noted, there “seems to have been little reflection on the actual impacts of these efforts. For example, while the increasing number of National Action Plans is commendable, to date there is an informational gap in what the impact of these plans has been.”⁴⁷

Yet participants did see sparks of optimism in the papers, discussions and various experiences. There was interest in continuing to learn and share experiences, with an emphasis on the importance of government/NGO dialogues and exchanges. There was also interest in following up on Canada’s National Action Plan – how it will be implemented and monitored, and the role of civil society in this process.

⁴⁵ Cordaid and the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (2010), p. 18

⁴⁶ Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (2011). *Peacemaking in Asia and the Pacific: Women’s Participation, Perspectives and Priorities*. March. p. 101.

⁴⁷ Popovic & Barr (2011), p. 18

SELECTED READINGS

- CARE International (2010) *From Resolution to Reality: Lessons Learned from Afghanistan, Nepal and Uganda on Women's Participation in Peacebuilding and Post-Conflict Governance*
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Acronyms

CCA	Canadian Cooperative Association
CSOs	Civil society organizations
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DFAIT	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (Canada)
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations (United Nations)
UN	United Nations
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
PSEA	Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
WPS	Women, peace and security

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Peacebuild - The Canadian Peacebuilding Network
Paix Durable - Le réseau canadien pour la consolidation de la paix
1216 – 1 Rue Nicholas Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7B7 Canada info@peacebuild.ca
Tel: + 613 241 3446 www.peacebuild.ca