Women, Peace and Security:

The Canadian NGO Experience

Robyn Collins & Saskia Ivens • Consultants, GPWG • March 2007
Executive Summary

Women and girls in conflict-affected areas and in humanitarian emergencies commonly experience an erosion of their security, rights and equality. They are more vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation, and have less access to resources. Women and girls also have remarkable resiliency and agency in their communities; yet, they are often marginalized in peace-building efforts and post-conflict reconstruction. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) on Women, Peace and Security (2000) explicitly addresses the impact of conflict on women and girls and seeks to safeguard their rights and equality before, during and after conflict.

*Women, Peace and Security: The Canadian NGO Experience* is an overview of current initiatives by Canadian NGOs to advance the women, peace and security agenda, including gender equality and the full and equal enjoyment of human rights by women and girls, boys and men as requisite conditions for stable peace.

The report is based on a survey of Canadian NGOs who operate in conflict-affected areas, asking about their programming on women, peace and security. All NGOs who responded to the survey manage programs to improve the situation of women and girls in conflict-affected areas. Celebrating the good practices, policies and experiences gleaned from survey responses, the report also offers practical recommendations for Canadian NGOs to further their work in addressing the needs and rights of women and girls in the world’s conflict-affected areas, such as:

- Improve own and local partner organizational capacity to include gender equality policies, assign responsibilities for gender equality to staff, and provide staff training on gender equality;
- Exchange experiences with other NGOs and local partners, especially good practices, and guidelines and tools for program planning and monitoring;
- Improve the capacity to monitor, evaluate and report program results by developing gender equality indicators and gender-based evaluation tools;
- Report how the commitments set out in UNSCR 1325 are incorporated in programs;
- Develop a mandatory code of conduct consistent with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) statement to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse, and provide related staff training as well as discuss with local partners;¹
- Increase collaboration on gender equality programming in conflict-affected areas among stakeholders at the international, national and local level to develop a joint agenda to improve the situation and status of women and girls;
- The Government of Canada and other donors are explicitly recommended to provide more funding for community-based programming on women, peace and security in conflict-affected areas.

¹ The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) is an inter-agency forum for coordination, policy development and decision-making involving the key UN and non-UN humanitarian partners: [http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/content/about/default.asp](http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/content/about/default.asp)
Acknowledgements

The Gender and Peacebuilding Working Group (GPWG) gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) to research and produce Women, Peace and Security: The Canadian NGO Experience.

We would like to thank David Lord and Candice Vetter of the CPCC Secretariat for their support. We also would like to thank those who generously gave their time in developing this initiative: Beth Woroniuk, Suzanne Taylor, Jennifer Salahub, Isabelle Solon-Helal, Françoise Nduwimana, Kristiana Powell, Jackie Kirk and Yasemin Ugursal and to Marja Hughes for her dedication and patience in editing the report.

Most importantly, we would like to thank all the NGOs who made time to participate in the research. The surveys were a rich source of information and greatly enhanced the significance of the report. The responses indicate a high level of interest and dedication on part of responding NGOs to engage in stronger programming to advance the women, peace and security agenda.

Moreover, research not only underscored the cooperative tradition of the Canadian NGO community, it also showed the way to increase understanding and collaboration to advance the women, peace and security agenda in concrete and practical terms.

Thank you for your combined efforts!

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIDA</td>
<td>Canadian International Development Agency</td>
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<td>CPCC</td>
<td>Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee</td>
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<td>DFAIT</td>
<td>Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade</td>
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<td>DRC</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
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<td>GPWG</td>
<td>Gender and Peacebuilding Working Group (of the CPCC)</td>
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<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
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<td>IASC</td>
<td>Inter-Agency Standing Committee</td>
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<td>IDP</td>
<td>Internally Displaced Person</td>
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<tr>
<td>LEAP</td>
<td>Learning Through Evaluation with Accountability and Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental Organization</td>
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Section 1: Introduction

Women and girls in conflict-affected areas and in humanitarian emergencies commonly experience an erosion of their security, rights and equality because of lower social, economic and political status as compared with men and boys. Women and girls are more vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation, and have less access to resources in conflicted-affected situations. Women and girls also have remarkable resiliency and agency in their communities; yet, they are often marginalized in peace-building efforts and post-conflict reconstruction.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) on Women, Peace and Security (2000) explicitly addresses the impact of conflict on women and girls and seeks to safeguard their rights and equality before, during and after conflict. While the United Nations requests member states to implement the resolution's objectives, Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) play a pivotal role in supporting and advancing the women, peace and security agenda. The resolution’s objectives that are relevant to the NGO community include the full and equal participation of women in peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction, the protection of women and girls and respect for their rights, and gender equality training.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this report, the women, peace and security agenda was framed broadly to include not only the commitments in UNSCR 1325, but also the wider international goals related to the rights of girls and women and gender equality. Even though UNSCR 1325 provides the strongest platform to date to ensure the participation of girls and women and the inclusion of a gender equality perspective in peace and security processes, the resolution is not considered comprehensive in its approach to gender equality, women and peace-building.

1.2 Methodology

For the purpose of this report, the women, peace and security agenda was framed broadly to include not only the commitments in UNSCR 1325, but also the wider international goals related to the rights of girls and women and gender equality. Even though UNSCR 1325 provides the strongest platform to date to ensure the participation of girls and women and the inclusion of a gender equality perspective in peace and security processes, the resolution is not considered comprehensive in its approach to gender equality, women and peace-building.

The report is based on a survey of Canadian NGOs who operate in conflict-affected areas (as opposed to advocacy, research and policy work), asking specific questions about their program themes, code(s) of conduct, organizational capacity, and monitoring and evaluation in relation to women, peace and security, with space for additional comments and elaboration (see Annex 5). Telephone interviews were carried out for NGOs who preferred to reply by telephone. The survey took place between January 9 and February 6, 2007.

Forty-five surveys were distributed to NGOs who operate in conflict-affected areas and 22 responded (a return rate of almost 50 per cent), including leading organizations in humanitarian assistance, human rights, development and peace-building (see Annex 3). The short time span for completing the survey (officially 10 days, in practice up to 16 days) may have caused some NGOs to decline a response, but this was not indicated as the main reason for not completing the survey. For the most part, surveys were not completed owing to limited human and financial resources, including a general lack of time, staff travel, delay in forwarding the survey to appropriate staff,
other priorities, and funding and application deadlines. About one-third of NGOs who declined to respond did so because they felt the survey questions did not relate to their mandate. A couple of NGOs did not respond owing to procedures related to working within a larger, international organizational context.

The report’s recommendations are based on a critical analysis of survey responses. In analyzing the surveys, all responses were treated equally to present similarities and differences among survey respondents as signifying where Canadian NGOs demonstrate strengths and where gaps may require further support.

1.3 Structure

The report is organized to present results first, and their rationale(s) and source(s) second. Section 2 of the report highlights key survey findings followed by recommendations for future action. Section 3 provides a more detailed account of survey responses specific to NGO programming on women, peace and security, gender equality as a cross-cutting theme, code(s) of conduct, organizational capacity, and monitoring and evaluation.

The report’s annexes provide information about the GPWG and CPCC; suggested readings that include guidelines and evaluation tool kits on women, peace and security; an explanation of UNSCR 1325; a list of Canadian NGOs who were selected to receive a survey; and the survey questions.

1.4 Limitations

The survey and report focus exclusively on Canadian NGOs that operate in conflict-affected areas, because this is where the security and rights of women and girls are most fragile.

Despite the GPWG’s best efforts to make contact with all key NGOs who operate in conflict-affected areas, the survey did not include all. Due to limited time and resources, the scope of the research was directed at operational organizations and not advocacy, research or policy organizations.

Two important themes that deserve greater attention in future research were beyond the scope of this report’s research: The situation of uniquely vulnerable groups of women in conflict-affected areas, such as young girls, adolescent girls and young women, and elderly women; and the effect of research and advocacy on gender equality in conflict-affected areas. Future research might address the extent to which NGOs take into account these issues in their programming, and the obstacles and opportunities in doing so, including how commitments to gender equality are manifest in the advocacy initiatives of NGOs.
### Section 2: Findings and Recommendations

#### 2.1 Canadian NGO Experience in Women, Peace and Security: Major Findings

Survey responses from Canadian NGOs who work in conflict-affected areas yielded a number of findings about their programming experiences related to women, peace and security.

In terms of programming, survey results showed that:

- All responding NGOs have specific programs on gender equality and women’s rights in conflict-affected areas. These programs encourage the participation of women and girls in peace-building, implement or support protection of the rights of women and girls, or provide training for local populations on gender equality and women’s rights;

- Canadian NGOs or their local partners mainly implement programs at the community-level in conflict-affected and post-conflict areas;

- Successful practices include working with women and other members of local communities, traditional leaders and local governments;

- A majority (85%) of responding NGOs consider gender equality to be a cross-cutting theme for all their work in conflict-affected areas. They try to address gender equality primarily through equitable participation of women and men at all the stages of their programs;

- Half of responding NGOs report having challenges in finding adequate context-specific methods to discuss gender equality and gender stereotypes in societies;

- Although 90% of NGOs have heard of UNSCR 1325, most do not plan or know how to incorporate the resolution’s objectives as an integral part of their work.

In terms of NGO organizational capacity, including monitoring and evaluation, survey results showed that:

- Less than 50% of NGOs have a code of conduct for their staff or their local partners to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse of women and girls;

- Only 55% of NGOs have a general policy on women’s rights and gender equality;

- Most (75%) NGOs have not provided gender equality training for staff working in conflict contexts in the past three years. Orientations for new staff and volunteers who will work in conflict contexts include two hours of training on average on gender equality issues specific to conflict-affected areas;

- Most NGOs without staff in conflict-affected areas do not feel the need to allocate human and financial resources to discuss a code of conduct with their local partners, or train them on the code of conduct;

- Only three of the larger NGOs (15%) have a designated staff member in the area of women, peace and security. More organizations have designated staff for either gender equality or conflict issues, but not combined. Another 25% of NGOs assign all staff the responsibility to incorporate a gender equality perspective in programming for conflict-affected areas;

- Half of NGOs have specific guidelines or tools on how to work in conflict-affected areas using a gender equality framework;

- All responding NGOs encourage either more networking, more information sharing, or better guidelines and tools on gender equality programming;
Some 55-70% of NGOs are in favor of increased staffing to include a position that combines gender equality and conflict issues or to give more attention to gender equality in conflict-affected areas. Some 30% of NGOs explicitly describe the need for more specific funding from major donors for programs on gender equality and women’s rights in conflict-affected areas;

Most (70%) NGOs do not have specific gender-based evaluation tools;

NGOs who use gender-based monitoring and evaluation tools report that it continues to be a challenge to assess whether these tools adequately report results for women and girls.

2.2 Recommendations for Better Practice

Survey responses from Canadian NGOs who work in conflict-affected areas gave rise to the observation that they experience the following obstacles to advance the women, peace and security agenda, including improved monitoring and evaluation:

- Limited human and financial resources;
- Limited organizational learning on gender equality and conflict issues;
- Commitments to gender equality are not considered as high a priority as other programming areas in preventing and responding to conflict.

These obstacles mutually reinforce each other. A lack of resources contributes to limited learning on gender equality in conflict-affected areas. Limited organizational learning inhibits a stronger commitment to gender equality programming. The low priority attached to gender equality programming in turn fails to command the necessary human and financial resources to advance the women, peace and security agenda.

The recommendations that follow are directed to the Canadian NGO community and the Government of Canada. The recommendations aim to enhance programming on women, peace and security, and to include a gender equality perspective that seeks to ensure that women and men benefit equally from NGO programming that takes place before, during or after conflict.

2.2.1 Recommendations for Programming

**Canadian NGO community:**

- Work with women, other members of local communities, traditional leaders, and local government;
- Improve and increase collaboration on gender equality programming in conflict-affected areas among stakeholders at the international, national and local level, and establish a joint agenda on improving the situation and status of women and girls in conflict-affected areas.

**Government of Canada:**

- Improve and increase collaboration on gender equality programming in conflict-affected areas among stakeholders at the international, national and local level, and establish a joint agenda on improving the situation and status of women and girls in conflict-affected areas;
- Invest in comprehensive gender equality programs in conflict-affected areas, moving away from initiatives that do not feed into a national effort or a wider local gender equality agenda;
- Provide more funding for community-based programming in conflict-affected areas in general and community-based programming on women, peace and security specifically.
2.2.2 Recommendations to Incorporate Commitments in UNSCR 1325 as an Integral Part of NGO Work

**Canadian NGO community:**

- Strengthen capacity to incorporate the commitments set out in UNSCR 1325 through awareness-raising with staff and periodic training;
- Report how all initiatives in conflict-affected areas are supporting the practical advancement of the women, peace and security agenda by ensuring that all conflict, peace and security programs are addressing gender equality.

**Government of Canada:**

- Support the operationalization of UNSCR 1325 into programming as a standard for government and civil society in conflict-affected areas;
- Require NGOs to report on how programs support the women, peace and security agenda.

2.2.3 Recommendations to Promote Protection of Women and Girls by Signing a Mandatory Code of Conduct to Prevent Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

**Canadian NGO community:**

- Develop a code of conduct to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, and differentiate between a code of conduct that reflects the Canadian workplace and one that reflects working with vulnerable populations in conflict-affected areas;
- Provide training on the code of conduct before staff start assignments in conflict-affected areas and provide refresher courses;
- Discuss a mandatory code of conduct and related training with local partners in conflict-affected areas.

**Government of Canada:**

- Require NGOs to employ a mandatory code of conduct for all staff, male and female, working in conflict-affected areas to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse. Such codes must be consistent with IASC core principles (see page 19).

2.2.4 Recommendations to Promote Enhanced Programming on Gender Equality and Women, Peace and Security by Strengthening Organizational Capacity

**Canadian NGO community:**

- Communicate commitment to gender equality in an organizational gender equality policy;
- Assign clear responsibilities to staff to incorporate a gender equality perspective in the work of the organization and, if the size of the organization allows, recruit specific staff with expertise on gender equality in conflict issues;
- Provide adequate training and on going capacity-building for all staff on gender equality and gender analysis specific to programming in conflict-affected areas;
- Request commitment to gender equality from all staff and only recruit new staff who are committed to gender equality and are knowledgeable on gender equality or willing to learn;
- Integrate a gender equality perspective in all work related to conflict-affected areas and exchange lessons learned and good practices, guidelines, and program planning and development tools;
Strengthen context/country/region-specific information exchange and coordination among NGOs working in the same conflict-affected areas;

Contribute to capacity-building of local partners on gender equality in conflict-affected areas by undertaking or encouraging context-specific training and using the expertise of local gender equality experts and women’s organizations;

Strengthen the general capacity of local partners by encouraging networking among local organizations and exchanging policies, best practices, guidelines, and programming tools.

**Government of Canada:**

- Increase own staffing and focus on gender equality in conflict-affected areas;
- Operate as a central source of knowledge on gender equality in conflict-affected areas.

### 2.2.5 Recommendations to Improve Program Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting on Women, Peace and Security

**Canadian NGO community:**

- Develop indicators for monitoring, evaluation and reporting specific to the women, peace and security agenda;
- Develop, exchange and use existing context- and conflict-specific gender-based monitoring, evaluation and reporting tools;
- Design ways to monitor, evaluate and report long-term results of gender equality programs in conflict-affected areas;

- Equip local communities with the tools to define and measure results themselves;
- Strengthen capacity to report on the positive and negative effects of programs on women and men, girls and boys, including those not directly intended as beneficiaries.
Section 3: NGO Programming on Women, Peace and Security

Most (80%) of NGOs who responded to the survey work in both conflict- and post-conflict-affected communities. About 10% of NGOs work only in post-conflict areas and another 10% only in conflict areas. These NGOs incorporate elements of conflict prevention in many of their programs, especially since the conflict situations they work in are fluid. Examples of conflict prevention include training on good governance and democratic elections, awareness-raising of local partners or their communities about women’s rights and reporting mechanisms on gender-based violence, resource management, and promotion of women’s community role in the prevention of conflict. Programs are implemented in a wide range of conflict-affected areas including:

- Afghanistan
- Angola
- Burundi
- Colombia
- Democratic Republic of Congo
- East-Timor
- Guatemala
- Haiti
- Israel and the Palestinian Territories
- Iraq
- Kenya
- Nepal
- Peru
- Rwanda
- Sri Lanka
- Sudan
- The Russian Federation
- The Solomon Islands
- Uganda

3.1 Programs that Address Gender Inequalities in Conflict-affected Areas

UNSCR 1325 objectives include increasing women’s participation in conflict resolution and peace-building, the protection of women and children, and gender equality training. Most (80%) of responding NGOs have programs related to the participation of women and girls in peace-building. These NGOs are either implementing agencies or work with local counterparts. Some 75% of NGOs implement or support programs that protect the rights of women and girls. And 60% of NGOs provide training on gender equality and on women’s rights for local partners or their target groups in conflict-affected areas.

3.1.1 Community-based Gender Equality and Peace-building

NGOs who responded to the survey say that 50% of their programs on the participation of women and girls in peace-building focus primarily on peace and democracy education or other education on women’s rights. They support the forming of women’s groups, training in governance or peace and democracy, and women’s involvement in decision-making in traditional conflict-resolution structures. About 20% of these NGOs have provided workshops on gender equality and peace-building for other civil society organizations or high-level representatives of the United Nations. In many instances, activities directly related to gender equality and peace-building are combined with activities to improve the livelihood of women and girls. As a result, 30% of the programs focus primarily on women’s economic development with a more implicit peace-building component. The remaining 20% of programs on the participation of women and girls in peace-building are about strengthening the capacity of local NGOs.

About 60% of responding NGOs explicitly mention the need to work at the local level with women and other members of the community. A good example is a case study by CHF (see Case Study #1). Other examples highlight the need to work with women and men from local communities, traditional leaders and local government. All responding NGOs mention that the situation of women and girls can only be improved by local women’s inclusion in peace-building. To be more effective in doing so, NGOs report that in some cases traditional
leaders have to be asked permission and made aware of women’s role in building peace, while local government needs to be sensitized. NGOs also emphasize that more collaboration is needed at international, national and local levels between stakeholders and donors to accomplish the agenda on women, peace and security. About 15% of NGOs also believe that such collaboration is necessary to ensure that interventions have a long-lasting positive effect on more women and girls.

3.1.2 Protecting the Rights of Women and Girls

Approximately 40% of NGO activities to protect the rights of women and girls focus primarily on psychological and legal support for victims of conflict-related gender-based violence. In some instances, this includes addressing the effects of HIV on livelihoods. Another 25% of programs provide education on peace and democracy related to protection issues. And 15% of programs seek to improve the livelihood of women and girls through income-generating activities and microfinance.

Finally, 20% of programs with a major component on gender-based violence try to increase the social status of women and girls as a way to address the root causes of gender inequality and gender-based violence. Discussing women’s and men’s assigned roles and responsibilities in society, these programs try to increase women’s household decision-making and address existing power relations between men and women. Good examples are CARE’s case studies in Burundi and the Russian Federation (see Case Study #2).

In many instances, these programs combine a number of gender equality and peace-building elements. About 25% of responding NGOs explicitly mention that their programs on gender-based violence include advocacy at the local level. Two of these programs also address impunity and encourage the documentation of gender-based violence during conflict (see Case Study #3 and #4). About 70% of programs with a major focus on gender-based violence are implemented in post-conflict situations. NGOs provide support to victims of gender-based violence during war, but realize that the cessation of political violence does not automatically reduce gender-based violence.

Although the survey grouped women and girls together, at least 45% of responding NGOs explicitly describe programs that aim to benefit girls and young women.
These NGOs work on building the capacities of war-affected young mothers by providing psychological or legal support, documenting the protection of girls and young women, or improving the security of household livelihoods by encouraging girls and young women to participate in income-generating and savings activities.

**Case Study #2**

**CARE Addresses Root Causes of Gender Inequality and Gender-based Violence**

The prolonged war in the Russian Federation has led to strains on family life, which in turn has exacerbated gender-based violence. Major reasons are role reversals between men and women as a result of the war, which further eroded men’s ability to fulfill their traditional roles and responsibilities. Through a community-based approach and a mobile popular theatre group, CARE Canada has raised awareness of these strains and has provided confidential, community-based counseling services.

Two of CARE’s programs in Burundi seek to address power relations between men and women. The programs specifically focus on involving women in decision-making both in the household and in the community, along with increasing women’s access to, and control over, productive assets. CARE promotes women’s confidence by forming Solidarity Groups to undertake income-generating activities.

**Case Study #3**

**Inter Pares Empowers Women in Peru, Guatemala and Colombia to Address Sexual Violence during Armed Conflict**

This Inter Pares project enhances social, political and legal conditions for women victims of sexual violence in the context of war. The purpose is for these women to overcome victimization, become protagonists, and develop the capacity to fully exercise their rights as citizens and agents of change. Legal action by the victims themselves is seen as a way to break impunity and hold governments accountable to the law. Activities include: psycho-social, legal and peer support for women survivors, including sensitization activities with the women’s families and communities to minimize re-stigmatization and re-victimization; organizational and rights-based training to organizations of affected women; national and international exchanges and capacity-building in legal approaches and psychological support; multidisciplinary teamwork to protect affected women; local and national public education, including radio, theatre, and photo exhibits of women telling their stories; and local and national policy advocacy campaigns. The program also provides the opportunity for participating organizations to join forces internationally, share resources and learn from one another in a mutually supportive process. Beneficiaries include indigenous women, poor rural and urban women, and their families, and the civil society organizations that support them. The local human rights and women’s organizations have direct relationships with the affected women, research institutions, and mental health specialists and academics.
**Case Study #4**

**Rights & Democracy coordinates Coalition for Women’s Human Rights in Conflict Situations**

Rights & Democracy coordinates the work of the Coalition for Women’s Human Rights in Conflict Situations, a network of women’s organizations that promotes dialogue and action to defend women’s rights. The main focus of the Coalition is to promote the prosecution of perpetrators of crimes of gender-based violence in transitional justice systems in Africa. The aim is to create precedents that recognize violence against women in conflict situations and to find ways to obtain justice for women survivors of gender-based violence. Working at the local and international level, Coalition members act as a resource for consultation and debate on the integration of a gender equality perspective in post-conflict transitional justice systems. Coalition efforts also seek to strengthen international and regional capacity to monitor respect for women’s human rights in conflict and post-war situations by creating appropriate accountability mechanisms and assessing their transferability to other contexts. An example of the Coalition’s work is the organization of a series of workshops in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) on gender justice and the International Criminal Court. This activity supported DRC activists in their advocacy for gender justice. A five-day training workshop in Kisangani (DRC) focused on international and African regional mechanisms dealing with the protection and rights of victims and witnesses to crimes, especially violence against women. The workshops also focused on the struggle against impunity and the process for peace in the DRC in order to reinforce capacities to bring sexual violence cases before local tribunals. One purpose of the workshop was to train NGO members to enable Congolese organizations to document sexual violence against women, particularly in eastern Congo. As a result of these practical training sessions, participants submitted the Kisangani Declaration to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, urging him to take sexual violence into account in the Court’s investigations and to ensure victim protection throughout the legal process.
3.1.3 Community-based Gender Equality Training

Some 60% of responding NGOs or their partners provide training on gender equality and the rights of women and girls. Training is provided to women’s organizations, other NGOs, or directly to the population, and includes a focus on the gender-aspects of, for example, governance, human rights and conflict resolution. CARE Canada has provided training to people and organizations working in camps for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) (see Case Study #5). Three organizations indicate that they have occasionally organized training workshops for female and male higher-level decision-makers, as in the case of the International Centre for Municipal Development of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (see Case Study #6).

Case Study #6
The International Centre for Municipal Development Trains Municipal Staff in Gaza

The International Centre for Municipal Development of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities has provided training on gender equality to municipal staff in Gaza. The training was part of the Palestinian Municipal Management Project, a four-year project funded by CIDA and managed by the Centre. The program targeted 25 senior municipal staff and officials to enhance their understanding of the need for gender equality awareness among municipal staff to improve their skills in providing municipal services that better respond to the needs of women in the community, and in working with their women colleagues.

Case Study #5
CARE Canada’s Training on Gender in Emergencies

CARE Canada has developed a guide on Gender in Emergencies for use in camps for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in East Timor, in collaboration with a local NGO and Office of the Advisor to the Prime Minister on the Promotion of Equality. Training was provided to camp managers, coordinators, site liaison officers, NGOs, and other agencies.

3.2 Gender Equality as a Cross-cutting Theme

The majority (85%) of NGOs who responded to the survey consider gender equality to be a cross-cutting theme in their organization. This means that every strategy, policy, and program sector and area assesses implications for women and men. It also means that the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs explicitly address the social, political and economic implications for women and men.

Gender-equality as a cross-cutting theme ensures that all programs and policies, whether they focus on women and girls or not, clearly and systematically consider how actions may either bring about or hinder greater equality between women and men. In this manner, cross-cutting programming brings a gender equality perspective—recognition and consideration of the different roles, relations, responsibilities, and experiences of women.
and men—into programming that does not necessarily focus on women and girls. It does not take away from stand-alone programs on gender equality or women and girls.

In the context of peace-building, cross-cutting can also imply that gender equality and consideration for the rights of women and girls is incorporated in programs across a spectrum of pre-conflict, conflict, and post-conflict situations. Case Study #7 is a good example of a cross-cutting program in a post-conflict situation.

At least 30% of NGOs report that although a gender equality perspective is incorporated in their official policies and mandates, and that they strive to include a gender equality focus in all programs, the realization of this objective is more difficult. They emphasize that even though all programs aim to benefit women and men equally in situations in which they are both disadvantaged and affected by conflict, this may not happen. They realize that without more attention to women’s roles, priorities and concerns, their situation may not improve as much as that of their male counterparts.

About 50% of responding NGOs describe broad programs in conflict-affected areas that aim to integrate gender equality as a cross-cutting theme, or that contain subprograms on gender equality. Examples of these gender equality components are support for victims of gender-based violence, or promotion of women’s entrepreneurship.

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**Case Study #7**

**Defence for Children International – Canada and Development Workshop Engage Young Women and Men as Ambassadors of Peace and Citizenship**

Defence for Children International – Canada and Development Workshop operate a project called Youth Ambassadors of Peace and Citizenship in six of the most war-affected provinces in Angola. The project actively engages young people in peace-building and social reconstruction. A related objective is to enhance the understanding of adult leaders about youth issues, including their right to participate in decision-making. Although this project does not have an explicit focus on the rights and needs of girls, efforts are made to integrate a gender analysis into training sessions, peace promotion activities and community projects. During the leadership training sessions, youth are encouraged to discuss the gender dimensions of each of the topics covered. In relation to community-project proposals, the evaluation and approval criteria make sure that proposed activities do not reinforce gender stereotypes or perpetuate gender-based inequities. In addition, every effort is made to ensure a gender balance among the participants in training sessions and peace promotion activities. Male leaders are encouraged to create space for their female peers and to be conscious of the tendency of young men to dominate in public settings. At the same time, young women are encouraged to act as role models for their female peers by asserting themselves and by developing their leadership skills.
3.2.1 Incorporating a Gender Equality Perspective through the Participation of Women and Girls

The most common approach of responding NGOs to advance gender equality in conflict-related programming is to involve women and men equally as planners and decision-makers in program development.

About 70% of responding NGOs equally encourage their male and female staff to participate in training, meetings and internal committees. Several of these NGOs request that one or more of their female officers are present when dealing with authorities or in meetings with other agencies to ensure that gender issues are addressed.

In the field, about 30% of participating NGOs use instruments such as questionnaires and surveys, to solicit the opinions of local women and girls about their experiences with a particular program. These NGOs also organize meetings and focus groups with local women and girls to discuss concerns or the necessity for different forms of needs assessments. Another 5% report that one of their gender-based evaluation tools is to count how many women are invited to and engaged in a particular project. Approximately 10% of responding NGOs feel that if their organizational vision and mandate broadly reflect feminism, they serve as a built-in safeguard for gender equality and women’s rights.

While these attempts at including a gender equality perspective in program planning and implementation appear to be inclusive, it is crucial to examine whether simply relying on the participation of local women and girls adequately addresses their priorities and concerns, especially when their social, economic and political environment is not conducive to these goals. Also, if women from groups in society other than those most affected by conflict are involved as decision-makers, their participation alone may not be representative of all women’s priorities and concerns and may not effect the desired improvement.

Practical experience indicates that needs assessments of women’s rights or other forms of gender analysis, commitment to gender equality among staff, and unambiguous monitoring and evaluation tools, including the use of sex-disaggregated data, are at least as important to gender-responsive programming in conflict-affected areas as equal participation of women and girls. An example of the need for a comprehensive gender equality approach is a case study by World Vision Canada in the DRC (see Case Study #8).

Case Study #8
World Vision Canada offers Lessons Learned on Including Women in DRC’s Constitution

In early 2006, discussion on gender equality in the DRC took on a heightened awareness. The country’s new constitution, adopted in December 2005, made explicit reference to women’s rights and protection. This clause and the massive participation of women in the referendum sparked national discussion on the meaning of gender equality and women’s rights. In one of World Vision Canada’s project areas, this discussion took the form of debates and forums on the community radio station and at public meetings on democracy and human rights. At the World Vision office, research on lessons learned made it clear that a more comprehensive strategy was needed to incorporate a gender equality perspective in all the organization’s work. Together, these events led to the development of a multi-faceted gender equality strategy, which included research on gender-based violence and addressing gender issues from multiple perspectives, including emphasizing the participation of men and boys.
3.3 Codes of Conduct to Prevent Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Since the security, rights and equality of women and girls are particularly fragile in conflict-affected areas, organizations working in these areas would do well to observe and to be seen to observe standards that reflect international human rights law. To prevent sexual exploitation and abuse by NGO staff and local partner staff in conflict-affected areas, it is good practice to request all staff working in these areas to sign a code of conduct.

Less than 50% of NGOs who responded to the survey provide a code of conduct for their staff or local partner staff. Those who do, adhere to any one of the following codes of conduct or versions thereof:

- CIDA Codes of Conduct
- Code of Conduct for Working with Vulnerable People
- Gender and Development Policy
- Human Resources Code of Conduct
- IASC Statement of Commitment on Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
- Personnel Policy
- Prevention of sexual abuse in the workplace
- United Nations Codes of Conduct
- Organization Value Codes

Half of responding NGOs do not have a code of conduct because they themselves do not work directly in conflict-affected areas. Rather, most report that their local partners work in conflict-affected areas and that they are responsible for their own policies. The NGOs do not prescribe minimum standards for their local partners, nor are they fully aware of the standards their partners do subscribe to.

About 25% of NGOs who have staff in conflict-affected areas do not have a code of conduct specific to their organization. Instead, they use codes of conduct outlined by the United Nations. About 25% of NGOs have a zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, although they do not indicate a process whereby a staff member or a local community member can report allegations of misconduct.

3.3.1 Voluntary or Mandatory Consent

Half of responding NGOs are confident that their staff in conflict-affected areas do not require mandatory codes of conduct to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, believing that such principles are “common sense” and “implicit” in their human resources policies in Canada.

An overwhelming 80% of responding NGOs are unsure if their local partners in conflict-affected areas have a mandatory code of conduct, while others indicate that a code of conduct is not mandatory for local partners whose staff consists mainly of women.

Some responding NGOs report that the development of a mandatory code of conduct is an important aspect of future planning, but is dependant on future financial support from donors.

3.3.2 Distinction between codes of conduct in the Canadian workplace and in conflict-affected areas

Approximately 50% of responding NGOs do not distinguish between a code of conduct that governs working with vulnerable populations and a code of conduct that governs the workplace in Canada. These NGOs report that the same code of conduct to prevent sexual abuse and harassment in the workplace in Canada extends to humanitarian and development workers deployed in conflict-affected areas.

It is critical for NGOs to make the distinction between a code of conduct for working with vulnerable populations in conflict-affected areas and a code of conduct for working in the Canadian workplace. Increased insecurity
and fear that accompanies outbreaks of violence results in populations that are more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. This situation is exacerbated by weak legal, social and economic systems that cannot adequately prevent or respond to violence, abuse and exploitation.

Heightened insecurity and vulnerability that accompanies violent conflict necessitates codes of conduct that reach far beyond the scope of what is appropriate and inappropriate behavior in the Canadian workplace. Codes of conduct specific to conflict affected areas are also critical in protecting Canadian staff by equipping them with the capacity and common minimum standards on how to protect themselves and others, and how to identify and report misconduct.

### 3.3.3 IASC Statement of Commitment on Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) has developed a statement of commitment as a guide for organizations to use in creating codes of conduct for international development and humanitarian aid workers to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation. While most instances of sexual abuse and exploitation are committed by men against women, girls and boys, it is important to realize that women, too, can abuse and exploit girls and boys. Moreover, female workers may witness exploitation and abuse and have an equal obligation to report such misconduct.

The IASC statement includes six core principles that should be incorporated explicitly into codes of conduct for international development and humanitarian staff, male and female, who are deployed in conflict-affected areas. The six core principles are:

- No sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18 regardless of local age of consent laws;
- No exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior. This includes the exchange of development or humanitarian assistance destined for beneficiaries;
- Sexual relationships between aid workers and beneficiaries are strongly discouraged as these are based on inherently unequal power dynamics;
- The obligation to report a fellow worker should concerns or suspicions of sexual misconduct arise;
- Sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian workers constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment;
- Humanitarian workers are obliged to create and maintain an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and abuse, and that promotes the implementation of their code of conduct. Managers at all levels have particular responsibilities to support and develop systems that maintain this environment.

In addition to the above core principles, the IASC outlines ten commitments to ensuring full implementation of these principles.

Most of the 50% of responding NGOs who currently have a code of conduct for staff working in conflict-affected areas report that their content is relatively consistent with IASC principles.

NGOs might use the core principles developed by the IASC as a good example when developing their own code of conduct. They might further use the additional IASC commitments in the statement to spark a dialogue with local partners in conflict-affected areas on the preventive benefits of working with a code of conduct.

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3.4 Taking a Look in the Mirror: NGO Self-evaluation of Organizational Capacity

The survey asked NGOs to rate on a scale of 1 (poor or minimal) to 6 (excellent) their organization's performance in achieving specific results in women's rights and gender equality in conflict-affected areas. The average rating was 3.5.

The self-evaluations suggest that while responding NGOs trust that they make visible women's rights and gender equality in all their work, the consensus is that they could be doing more with enhanced capacity. They suggest that current obstacles include:

- Gender equality is not given top priority by the NGOs themselves and by local partners in conflict-affected areas;
- A lack of access to gender equality training;
- A need for more staff with gender equality expertise;
- A need for unambiguous gender-based evaluation tools;
- Clear guidelines for monitoring the effects of gender equality programming.

Responding NGOs who do not currently work in conflict-affected areas, but have local partners who do, often rated themselves considerably lower than the average score. They expressed the desire to reflect on how better to manage and monitor programs and projects by including a gender equality perspective and its effect on women and girls in the absence of conflict.

3.4.1 Organizational Commitment to Gender Equality

Only 55% of organizations have an organizational policy on women's rights or gender equality. The advantage of such a policy is the official recognition of the need for a gender equality perspective in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating programs, as well as providing official direction to staff to incorporate a gender equality perspective in the work of the organization. It is the foundation for developing and implementing gender equality as a cross-cutting theme and programs that address inequalities between women and men, girls and boys.

A policy in the form of a gender equality strategy may further guide an organization on how to integrate a gender equality perspective in all activities. Besides promoting an organization's commitment to gender equality, a gender equality strategy can serve as an action plan, including a description of planned activities, responsibilities for implementation and monitoring, and institutional reform and allocation of financial resources required.

That being said, the development of a gender equality policy does not guarantee the inclusion of a gender equality perspective by all staff, in all programs. To apply gender equality as either a cross-cutting theme or as a specific focus, an organization needs to combine reporting on policy and program implementation, staff training, production of related handbooks and manuals, unambiguous guidelines, monitoring and evaluation tools, and mechanisms to learn from evaluations. In addition, the commitment by staff to gender equality is vital. Commitment can be encouraged by training and on-going capacity-building that takes into account a staff member's potential resistance to addressing gender issues, and can be assessed upon recruitment of staff following a clear demand for commitment to gender equality in job descriptions.

Finally, the gender equality policy that 55% of responding NGOs report to have does not necessarily establish a link to gender equality and women's rights in conflict-affected areas. One responding NGO says that this link has been made. Another organization has a gender policy in the form of a strategy that guides staff in integrating a gender equality perspective in all their work in conflict-affected areas.
3.4.2 Gender Equality Training for Staff and Partners

Details of gender equality training by responding NGOs for staff and partners include:

- Approximately 50% of NGOs with staff and volunteers who work in conflict-affected areas provide them with gender equality training and biannual voluntary refresher workshops;

- About 35% of NGOs indicate that they would benefit from gender equality training at an organizational level;

- Most (75%) NGOs have not provided gender equality training for staff who work in conflict-affected areas in the past three years. Of these NGOs, 30% indicate that training may be available through their international affiliates or through their own individualized, in-house training programs;

- Some 40% of NGOs explicitly mention that their local partners would benefit from capacity-building on women, peace and security and related networking with other local organizations;

- Staff and volunteers deployed to conflict-affected areas receive an average of two hours of orientation on the vulnerability of women and girls in conflict-affected areas and how to work with these specific populations;

- NGOs who do not have staff in conflict-affected areas report that they do not feel it is necessary to allocate human and financial resources to training on their code of conduct for their staff or local partner staff;

- NGOs with partners who work in conflict-affected areas feel that it is the partner’s responsibility to provide training on their own code of conduct;

- About 30% of NGOs who do not currently offer training on working with vulnerable populations in conflict-affected areas report that they plan to do so in fiscal year 2007 or 2008.

Programming and training in gender equality in conflict-affected areas is not only important for the communities in which NGOs work, but also for staff and local partners. Yet, for many responding NGOs training consists solely of providing a code of conduct.

Comprehensive gender equality training can be geared to specific tasks and responsibilities, staff knowledge on gender equality and women’s rights in conflict-affected areas, and resistance to addressing gender equality. Training sessions can take place as often as required, while annual refresher courses are recommended. A sustained capacity-building approach to training would be helpful in ensuring more than one-off workshops. Training can include as many of the following component as desired or possible:

- Codes of conduct and the NGO’s code of conduct in particular;

- Discussion about both the changing roles between men and women, including the priorities and concerns of women and girls, men and boys in pre-overt- and post-conflict situations;

- Education on why and how the security and rights of women and girls are fragile in conflict-affected areas;

- Education and discussion on how to recognize women’s and girls’ agency and involve such agency in peace-building;

- Approaches on gender-specific issues where certain subjects are a cultural taboo;
Strategies to affect change and communicate gender equality and women’s rights in local communities including women and men, girls and boys;

Capacity-building in needs assessments and planning exercises to take into account a gender equality perspective;

Capacity-building in monitoring and evaluating results, including the use of sex-disaggregated data.

### 3.4.3 Staff Capacity on Gender Equality

In addition to gender equality training, responses from NGOs suggest that it is beneficial to allocate responsibilities to staff to incorporate a gender equality perspective in the work of the organization. It also is beneficial to allocate specific staff members to focus on gender equality. These measures may help to ensure that a focus on gender equality in conflict-affected areas is always present in planning and reporting on programs.  

Only three (15%) of the larger organizations among responding NGOs have a designated staff member in the area of women, peace and security. These staff members are usually responsible only for a specific country or they work in the humanitarian assistance department.

Other details about staff capacity on gender equality among responding NGOs include:

- About 25% of responding NGOs report that incorporating a gender equality perspective in programming for conflict-affected areas is the responsibility of all staff members;
- Some 60% of NGOs do not have specific staff with responsibility for gender equality, nor do they make it explicit that every staff member is responsible for incorporating a gender equality perspective;
- Among these NGOs, some have few staff, while others indicate that they have staff with specific responsibilities on gender equality or on peace-building, but that they may lack the expertise specific to gender equality in conflict-affected areas;
- Smaller NGOs do not have a designated person with gender expertise, because they have few staff and even fewer resources to create such a position;
- Some 55-70% of NGOs would prefer to increase staffing to include such a position or otherwise give more attention to gender equality in conflict-affected areas;
- About 30% of responding NGOs indicate the need for additional funding to have an expert in gender equality in conflict-affected areas on staff, or for more specific funding on gender equality programming in conflict-affected areas from major donors;
- Most (85%) NGOs, both those with and without staff responsible for incorporating a gender equality perspective in the work of the organization, collaborate with partners who have expertise on gender equality in conflict-affected areas.

### 3.4.4 Embracing Resistance

While all responding NGOs appear to be highly responsive to cultural differences and traditional practices, about 50% encounter resistance to gender equality. This can occur internally within organizations (in Canada or abroad) because of a lack of adequate support and understanding, or resistance can come from local partners and communities because of an unwillingness to participate or disapproval by men and boys to include women and girls in programs or decision-making.
About 25% of NGOs report that the local communities they work with are not “on the same page” in terms of universal human rights, while 5% report having witnessed development workers negatively affect projects by attempting to “enforce” a women’s rights agenda counter to strong local preferences.

A majority (70%) of responding NGOs report that one of their leading challenges is changing the attitudes of men and boys about gender equality and their perception of women and girls, their roles and their responsibilities. In many current peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction projects, men and boys tend to dominate and fail to make room for women and girls to participate.

Although a majority of NGO programs and projects seek to encourage the inclusion of women and girls, many do not have a minimum standard for the number of girls and women that need to participate, even though such a standard is important to the effective participation of women and girls. But while participation is an essential means and goal of gender equality, it is important to recognize that increased numbers alone is not sufficient. Equality between women and men, boys and girls needs to address their power relations in a culturally sensitive way.

NGOs strive to find culturally sensitive approaches to discussing gender equality and gender stereotypes. Good examples of such practices are presented in case studies #9 and #10. Since a majority of NGOs collaborate with local partners who have expertise on gender equality in conflict-affected areas, they might encourage networking among local partners to build the capacity of those without this expertise.

For the most part, NGOs continue to balance their sometimes limited knowledge of gender equality and women’s rights, the need to include women in their programs, and the realities of resistance to gender equality.

### Case Study #9
**The SubSahara Group Embraces Resistance**

In some cases, gender-equality-driven programs implemented in communities where gender equality is not perceived to be beneficial and development risk being counter productive. When this is the case, SubSahara field staff relies heavily on local guidelines. For example, by placing more emphasis on the African Union (AU) charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights rather than the United Nations Charter and Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the concept of women’s equality is better received in some countries.
3.4.5 UNSCR 1325: How much is it guiding us?

UNSCR 1325 is an excellent set of commitments, but how do we connect these to the everyday life of people and the evaluation of our programs?

-- NGO survey response.

Most of the NGOs who responded to the survey work in a broad spectrum of development and humanitarian assistance. In planning or implementing programs, most do not consider advancing the women, peace and security agenda, or UNSCR 1325 specifically, as a cross-cutting theme or as a foundation of conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction. A few NGOs point out that CIDA requires reporting on aspects of UNSCR 1325 as part of their funding criteria.

Surveys responses indicate that while 90% of NGOs have heard of UNSCR 1325, most do not a) intentionally plan their programs based on the objectives set out in UNSCR 1325 or b) make the link between how much their programs and policies could contribute to advancing the resolution’s commitments to support greater equality between men and women, and the advancement of girls and women through peace and security processes.

Furthermore, survey responses suggest that at least 25% of responding NGOs feel that while there are plenty of meetings, conferences and official documentation related to the women, peace and security agenda, there is a gap between commitment and practice.

About 5% of NGOs report that as women, peace and security commitments such as those outlined in UNSCR 1325 are increasingly incorporated into international laws and policies, staff could use the resolution’s objectives to define indicators to monitor and evaluate NGO programs.

A common sentiment among survey respondents is a need for concrete guidelines and comparative case
studies where gender equality and/or the women, peace and security agenda has been the yardstick in developing and implementing policies and programs. This suggests the need for a mechanism to share programs, evaluations and lessons learned beyond existing networks and information exchanges among Canadian NGOs.

3.5 Gender-based Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

Although 85% of responding NGOs consider gender equality to be a cross-cutting theme in their work, this is not always reflected in their monitoring, evaluating and reporting. For a handful of responding NGOs, gender equality is the foundation of monitoring, evaluation and reporting. For the majority, however, gender equality is a smaller component in monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

A majority (70%) of responding NGOs do not use specific gender-based tools for their in-house monitoring, evaluation and reporting. Survey responses indicate that gender-based monitoring and evaluation tools may be available, but staff are not required to use these tools, or do not know how to use them to monitor, evaluate and report on gender-specific findings. Gender-based indicators specific to peace and security in conflict-affected areas especially require further attention, because women and girls are particularly vulnerable and because indicators to measure results for them do not seem to be in use.

3.5.1 Monitoring and Evaluation

NGOs who report using gender-based tools to monitor and evaluate programs apply a variety of the following qualitative and quantitative mechanisms:

- CIDA’s Gender Equality Framework;
- Disaggregated data based on gender;
- Disaggregated data based on participation of women and girls;
- Gender in Emergencies tool kit and other such mechanism that incorporate a gender equality perspective;
- Gender-based indicators in overall evaluation;
- Gender section on staff and partner reporting forms;
- LEAP (Learning Through Evaluation with Accountability and Planning);
- Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment;
- Results-based Management;
- Rights-based Management;
- Women’s Empowerment Frameworks.

3.5.2 Can a Measuring Stick Measure Itself?

When a program is designed to explicitly enhance gender equality and women’s rights, 80% of responding NGOs perform in-house gender-based monitoring and evaluation. Yet, this may be the type of program that is least in need of gender-based monitoring and evaluation. Instead, the more general programs and projects in conflict-affected areas are the ones that require gender-based monitoring and evaluation to determine the positive and negative results on women and girls, and the extent to which increased equality between women and men, girls and boys has been achieved.

3.5.3 Reporting Results: How Do NGOs Know What They are Doing is Working?

While responding NGOs strive to advance gender equality and protect the rights of women and girls through their programs, their capacity to adequately report on progress in these areas requires further work. The survey responses that suggest difficulties in adequately report on gender equality include:

- NGOs do not have specific mechanisms and tools to monitor and evaluate program results for women and girls, or advances or reductions in equality between men and women;
The full range of positive and negative effects on women and girls can only be discerned by using sex-disaggregated data, which are currently not used by responding NGOs;

NGOs do not have clear and measurable indicators to determine the effect of programs on gender equality;

More needs to be done to develop context-driven and culturally sensitive indicators that are not too subjective;

Long-term effects are most significant, but hardest to measure unless NGOs are committed to seek these findings and equip their local partners and communities with the tools to do this.

It is important for NGOs to build their capacity to report on how their programs advance gender equality in terms of increasing women’s participation in electoral processes, improving women’s economic status, and increasing men’s respect for women’s rights, to name but a few objectives.

The challenges to report on both short-term and long-term results on gender equality could be alleviated by ensuring that local communities are equipped with the proper monitoring and evaluation tools and that they receive training on how to use these tools to report on measurable changes in the lives of women and girls. In addition, better networking and sharing of good practices on gender-based reporting guidelines and practices may improve the capacity of NGOs to report on program results that advance gender equality. Survey responses suggest that guidance on capacity-building might be required to report on both intended and unintended consequences of their programs (see Case Study #11).

The consensus among responding NGOs is that it is both difficult and negligent to use pre-packaged monitoring, evaluation and reporting tools to measure progress in advancing gender equality and women’s rights. Almost 60% of responding NGOs say that a universal reporting tool would not work in all situations. In light of this observation, it needs to be made clear that the universality of the rights of women and girls, and the need for gender equality are not context-specific, but that the means of achieving these objectives are indeed context-specific.

Case Study #11
World Vision Canada LEAPs to report on gender equality

Learning through Evaluation with Accountability and Planning (LEAP) is World Vision Canada’s method to report on program results on gender equality and the rights of women and girls. In their response to the tsunami disaster in December 2004, World Vision Canada hired a gender equality consultant to evaluate their performance in advancing gender equality and protecting the rights of women and girls through projects in tsunami-affected areas. Gender equality was a cross-cutting theme in monitoring, evaluation and reporting of this initiative. The LEAP report summarizes specific lessons learned in addressing gender equality immediately following the tsunami, as well as how new windows of opportunity can be opened to promote a gender-equitable future and sustainable development in the region.
Section 4: Conclusion

The report Women, Peace and Security: The Canadian NGO Experience is based on a survey by the Gender and Peacebuilding Working Group (GPWG) of the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee (CPCC). The survey was distributed to Canadian NGOs who operate in the world’s conflict-affected areas and asked about their programming on women, peace and security.

This report demonstrates that all Canadian NGOs who responded to the survey have experience in developing and implementing programs for women and girls in conflict-affected areas. These programs encourage the participation of women and girls in peace-building, implement or support protection of the rights of women and girls, or provide training for local populations on gender equality and women's and girls’ rights.

The majority (85%) of responding NGOs have made an effort to incorporate a gender equality perspective in all their programs, but their capacity to fully realize this objective is lacking. Fully 90% of NGOs have heard of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) on Women, Peace and Security (2000), which addresses the impact of conflict on women and girls and seeks to safeguard their rights and equality before, during and after conflict. But most responding NGOs do not plan or know how to incorporate as an integral part of their work the objectives set out in the resolution.

Some 50% of responding NGOs indicate that staff who work in conflict-affected areas do not require mandatory codes of conduct to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse. Only 25% of NGOs have provided staff who work in conflict-affected areas with gender equality training in the past three years. Half of NGOs report having challenges in finding adequate context-specific methods to discuss gender equality and gender stereotypes in societies.

Survey responses gave rise to the observation that NGOs experience the following, mutually reinforcing, obstacles as limiting their capacity to advance women, peace and security programming:

- Limited human and financial resources;
- Limited organizational learning on gender equality and conflict issues;
- Commitments to gender equality are not considered as high a priority as other programming areas in preventing and responding to conflict.

To advance their programming on women, peace and security and to incorporate fully into their work a gender equality perspective, NGOs could encourage organizational and individual learning on gender equality in conflict-affected areas. This would be an effective and cost-efficient method to prioritize gender equality and affect greater results in supporting equality between women and men, boys and girls in conflict-affected areas. Key steps to accomplish this objective are:

- Provide a code of conduct to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse and to help understand the need for a gender equality perspective in conflict-affected areas;
- Develop policies on gender equality and women’s and girls’ rights in conflict-affected areas and assign responsibilities to staff for gender equality in conflict-affected areas;
- Develop and use program monitoring and evaluation tools that demonstrate intended and unintended results for women and girls;
- Share information and collaborate with NGOs working in conflict-affected areas, including local, national, and international counterparts, to advance common goals in the women, peace and security agenda.
This report intended to provide an overview of current initiatives by Canadian NGOs working in conflict-affected areas and to celebrate their efforts in advancing equality and security of women and girls in those areas. The survey analysis suggests that to underscore these efforts, further research and information-sharing is recommended, especially on good practices that involve young girls, adolescent and young women, and elderly women in conflict-affected areas. Similarly beneficial would be an assessment of the capacity and efficacy of advocacy, research and policy organizations, who work both in Canada and abroad, in addressing gender equality in conflict-affected areas. Furthermore, linking the work of operational, policy, research, and advocacy NGOs in conflict-affected areas with that of local, national, and international women’s networks would support the practical advancement of the women, peace and security agenda.

Lastly, the report’s findings and recommendations present a first step in encouraging all Canadian NGOs working in conflict-affected areas to reflect on the success and potential, or lack thereof, of their efforts in advancing the women, peace and security agenda by simply asking: How can we do better?
Annex 1: About GPWG/CPCC

The Gender and Peacebuilding Working Group (GPWG) is one of five thematic working groups of the CPCC. We aim to achieve progress in translating the general international commitments that have been made on gender equality and peacebuilding into concrete actions in specific situations and to promote the active participation of girls and women in peacebuilding.

Our objectives are to:

- Support research and analysis on Canadian experience working on gender equality, the rights of girls and women, and peacebuilding
- Raise awareness and build support on the contribution women make to building peace and encourage their equitable and effective participation and integration into national, regional and international fora
- Facilitate information sharing and policy dialogue on gender equality and peacebuilding, including the women, peace and security agenda
- Support capacity strengthening of member organizations and individuals
- Advocate for the integration of a gender equality perspective in Canada’s foreign policy agenda, particularly in: human rights and conflict prevention, human security, conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and post-conflict reconstruction and reintegration.

To receive more information about GPWG and/or to become a member, please e-mail: gender@peacebuild.ca

The Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee (CPCC) is a member based network of Canadian based organizations and individuals actively involved in peacebuilding practice and policy development. Our goal is to engender greater coherence and effectiveness in building peace through fostering collaboration and coordination among diverse stakeholders in Canada, and partners overseas.

To receive more information about CPCC and/or to become a member, please e-mail: info@peacebuild.ca.

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Annex 2: About UNSCR 1325


- participation of women in peace processes
- gender equality training in peacekeeping operations
- protection of women and girls and respect for their rights
- gender mainstreaming in the reporting and implementation
- systems of the United Nations relating to conflict, peace and security

A Security Council resolution is a commitment made by the United Nations and Members states to take action on specific issues. States are expected to comply and work towards implementation. Women’s organizations and peace groups around the world are working to hold governments accountable for the commitments they made in Resolution 1325.

Resolution 1325 calls on the United Nations to:

- increase women’s participation at decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes
- appoint more women at senior levels & involve more women in UN field missions as military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian officers
- provide gender equality training guidelines and materials on the protection, rights and needs of women and girls
- carry out a UN study on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in peacebuilding, and the gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution

Resolution 1325 calls on UN Member States, such as Canada to:

- increase women’s representation at all decision-making levels
- fund and provide support for gender-sensitive training
- end impunity and prosecute those responsible for genocide crimes and gender-based violence
- make HIV/AIDS awareness training programmes available to military and civilian police

Resolution 1325 urges parties to armed conflict to:

- respect international law on the rights and protection of women and girls
- take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence
- pay attention to the needs of women and girls in conflict, peace and security
- adopt measures to support local women’s peace initiatives
- involve women in all stages of peace processes
## Annex 3: NGO Survey Distribution List

- Africa-Canadian Quick Eco-Development Agency (ACQUEDA)
- Aga Khan Foundation Canada
- Alternatives
- AUCC/ACC
- Canadian Friends Service Committee
- Canadian Red Cross
- Canadian Society for International Health
- Canadian Steelworkers Union/USW Humanity Fund
- CARE Canada
- CECI
- CHF
- CODE
- CUSO
- Defence for Children International - Canada & Restoring Peace
- Development and Peace
- Development Workshop
- EQUITAS
- Fem International
- Forum of Federations
- Human Rights Internet
- IMPACS
- International Centre for Municipal Development (Federation of Canadian Municipalities)
- Inter Pares
- KAIROS
- MATCH International
- Medecins sans frontiers
- Mennonites Central Committee
- Oxfam Canada
- Oxfam Quebec
- Parliamentary Centre
- Partnership Africa Canada
- Pearson Peacekeeping Centre
- Primates World Relief and Development Fund
- Project Ploughshares
- Rights and Democracy/Droits et Démocratie
- Save the Children
- South Asia Partnership Canada
- SubSahara Group/Centre
- USC Canada
- VSO
- War Child
- Water Can
- Women’s Inter-Church Council of Canada
- World Vision
- WUSC
Annex 4: Suggested Gender Equality and Conflict Readings


GPWG publications
March 2004, Canadian Perspectives on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security: 

October 2004, A Civil Society Perspective on Canada’s Implementation of

http://www.peacebuild.ca/upload/1325r_e.pdf

Gender, Peace and Security Agendas: Where are the girls and young women: http://action.web.ca/home/cpcc/attach/girlsywomensumdoc.pdf

Adolescent girls Fact Sheet:
http://www.peacebuild.ca/upload/AdolescentGirls_eng.pdf

Understanding 1325 Fact sheet:
http://www.peacebuild.ca/upload/fact_sheets_new.pdf

Resolution 1325 for girls and young women:
http://www.peacebuild.ca/upload/fact_sheet.pdf
Annex 5: Survey Questions

The Gender and Peacebuilding Working Group (GPWG) is undertaking a review of Canadian NGO experience in working with the women, peace and security agenda, in areas such as humanitarian assistance and the protection of the rights of girls and women, the participation of women in peace and political processes, and ending impunity for gender based violence in reconstruction efforts. The review builds upon work by GPWG over the past years on Canada’s support for the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

This survey is designed to gather information from Canadian NGO’s currently working to advance gender equality and the rights of girls and women in conflict contexts, provide analysis, and develop practical recommendations for civil society and government for further operational programming.

Your participation in this review is highly valuable and will contribute to a better understanding of how Canadian NGOs are independently and collectively working to advance gender equality and the rights of girls and women affected by conflict. Upon synthesis of findings from the review, we will disseminate analysis and recommendations back to participating NGOs and to the Government of Canada.

Please fill out the attached survey and email or mail it back to us by January 19th. If you prefer to answer the questions in an interview, we would be pleased to set up a telephone appointment. We estimate this will take approximately 30 minutes. You can look forward to our invitation to a half- day briefing session to mark International Women’s Day in March to share and discuss results of this survey.

Please note that all responses will be held in confidence and that no identifying information will be used without prior written consent from the participating organization.

1. Identification

   a) Name of NGO:
   b) Position and name of person responding to survey:
   c) Your e-mail address & phone number:
   d) Had you previously heard of UNSCR 1325? Yes/No

2. Programming with a specific focus on Women, Peace and Security

We are interested in examples of specific programmes, projects or initiatives which support the women, peace and security agenda. Please provide example(s) for areas of programming below, noting that any information or documentation (results/impacts) could be attached as files.

   a) Programming related to women and girls participation in peacebuilding processes, for example in negotiating and implementing peace processes, participation in electoral reforms, and participation in reconciliation efforts?
   b) Programming on the protection of the rights of women and girls?
   c) Training on gender equality and women’s rights for staff, partners and beneficiary/target communities?
   d) Programmes that support greater gender equality in ‘post-conflict’ reconstruction, for example in political, economic, social, security, and justice sectors?
   e) Other? Please explain.

Most importantly, do you see any specific initiative(s) as ‘good practices’?
3. Gender Equality as a Cross-Cutting Theme

a) Is gender equality and/or the advancement of the women, peace and security agenda a cross-cutting theme in all the work of the organization? Yes/No
b) What approaches does your organization use to ensure the advancement of gender equality across the range of its programming in conflict/post-conflict contexts? Please provide examples.

d) In the past 3 years have you offered training for staff working on gender equality issues in conflict zones? How often does your NGO offering such training and to whom?
e) Do you have specific guidelines or tools in place for working on gender issues in conflict zones? If yes, please offer examples:

4. Codes of Conduct and Training

a) Does your NGO have a code of conduct for staff and partners on the prevention of sexual abuse and exploitation by humanitarian aid workers and development workers in conflict or post-conflict zones?
b) If yes, is consent to adhere to the code, and signing of the code compulsory for both staff and partners?
c) Have you carried out training related to the code of conduct and the prevention of sexual abuse and exploitation for staff and partners? Please elaborate (where, length of training).
d) Is the code of conduct consistent with the IASC guiding principles?

5. Organizational Capacity

a) Does your NGO have an organizational policy on women’s rights or gender equality?
Yes/No
b) Does your NGO have staff with specific responsibilities to focus on, and/or seek to ensure, that gender issues are addressed in programming in conflict zones? If so, how many staff with this expertise?
c) Do you have overseas partners who have expertise on these issues?

6. Current Standing

Please rate your organization’s performance on achieving specific results relating to women’s rights and gender equality in conflict zones on a scale of 1 to 6:

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Please explain why you chose this rating. What are the challenges and/or opportunities you face working on these issues?

7. Obstacles

a) Please indicate what areas would assist your NGO to improve and advance its commitment to working on women’s rights and gender equality?
___Access to training
___Information sharing among NGOs
___Increased staffing
___Better tools, guidelines, etc.
___Better networking (other than with NGOs)
___Other: please explain:
8. Evaluation

a) Does your NGO use gender-based evaluative tools for your programming?
   ___ Yes   ___ No

   If yes, please explain or list specific tools you use:

b) Does your NGO have mechanisms in place to monitor the impact(s) of programming on the rights, security, empowerment, and strengthened capacity of women and girls?

9. Moving Forward

   What do you think would best assist the Canadian NGO community to advance its engagement in, and commitment to, the women, peace and security agenda and the advancement of gender equality in conflict zones?

10. Additional Information

   Please provide any further comments, good practices, or information you feel would benefit this survey and subsequent report on Canadian NGO Experience in Women, Peace and Security. Results of the survey will be presented to various government officials, organizations and partners.

   The Gender and Peacebuilding Working Group (GPWG) is a working group of the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee (CPCC). The GPWG’s goals are to achieve progress in translating general commitments that have been made on gender equality and peacebuilding into concrete actions in specific situations, and to promote the active participation and recognition of the contribution of girls and women to human security and peacebuilding. For further information about the GPWG/CPCC please visit www.peacebuild.ca The GPWG would like to thank DFAIT for their support in undertaking this work and general support for the Working Group.