



ReShape Online Papers Series

Ludovica Bruno
University of Catania
Master Degree in Global Politics and Euro-Mediterranean Relations
ludovica11bruno@gmail.com

**Engendered peace building strategy:
Security, development and empowerment**

Paper no. 8/15 - February 2015

© Copyright 2015, Jean Monnet Centre, Department of Political and Social Sciences, University of Catania, via Vittorio Emanuele 49, 95131 Catania, Italy.

ISSN 2281-910X



The ReSHAPE Research Project on "EU and the multilateral policies for disaster prevention, relief and reconstruction" is funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme at the University of Catania - Decision n. 2012-2839 / 001 – 001
Jean Monnet Chair Ad Personam

Abstract

Once international humanitarian interventions have achieved their short-term goals (for example containing direct violence or securing food supplies) they face the greater challenge of meeting long-term goals of conflict resolution, that is to say, reconstruction and recovery from conflict through the establishment of lasting peace. In order to implement long-term security, peace and recovery goals, it is very important to strengthen the local communities' participation. In recent years, international community's attention has moved over the big potential contribution of the female population in addressing such as issue, even though in most of the cases this potential is poorly employed. According to the recent orientation of UN as well as several NGOS and CSOs, a comprehensive human security strategy applied in peace-building process needs to enforce both the role of the mission's female personnel and local female population in order to facilitate the success of the peace process. After addressing security issues, the implementation of education and empowerment practices of the local population are the main tools in pursuing peace-building goals.

Key words

Women, Human Security, Education, Empowerment, Peace-Building Operations, Non-state actors, UN.

Contents

1. WOMEN AND CONFLICT.....	3
2. UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1325.....	5
3. BUILDING TRUST, DIALOGUE, MONITORING, AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION.....	8
4. PROVIDING EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT.....	10
5. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: OPEN WINDOW TO POLITICAL AND LEGAL REFORMS. CASE STUDIES ON UN OPERATION UNDER SCR1325.....	13
6. SOME NUMBERS AND RESULTS: WOMEN INVOLVED IN PEACE-BUILDING.....	22
7. MALE ALLIES FOR GENDER APPROACH.....	24
CONCLUSIONS.....	26
BIBLIOGRAFY.....	29
WEBSITE SOURCES.....	31

1. WOMEN AND CONFLICT

Violence against women and gender discrimination results from complex factors that foster gender inequities, social insecurity, and unequal access to education and to socio-economic spheres. These factors have their roots in societal norms and traditions that portray women as less value than men. They are exacerbated during conflict and post-conflict periods. Women constitute more than half of the world's population, and at the same time (together with children) they constitute the majority of the victims of wars. Usually, in the course of conflict, male population is decimated by violence, and the majority of women and children are left at home, unprotected, vulnerable and poor. During and after armed conflicts, women become victims of sexual violence, sexual exploitation and human trafficking. Several official reports and tireless investigations of human rights and humanitarian advocacy groups have lighted up shocking widespread cases of violence, as women raped and tortured in front of their husbands and children, gang rapes, rape camps, mutilation, murder, sexual slavery and torture, forced prostitution, forced maternity and forced termination of pregnancy, enforced sterilization, inappropriate medical examinations. In addition, due to the conflict dynamics, women can be forced to leave their homes, suffering misery and hungry, or to be forced to recruitment into armed groups. It is important to underline that violence against women is perpetrated both by combatants—i.e., rebels, militias, and government forces— and by non-combatant (civil, domestic abuses and member of peace missions). As Kirby P. remarks (2013), in some cases, sexual violence against women during conflict, in particular, rape, has been recognized as a real 'Weapon of war'. The UN Security Council has condemned sexual violence as 'Widespread and systematic' and as 'A tactic of war' (UN, 2008), acknowledged as a war crime and constituent act of genocide at the highest levels of international law and global governance. This because it is often used systematically, with specific purposes, as to hit the population belonging to a specific ethnic group, or to diffuse terror among the population¹. Moreover, reliable quantitative data are scarcely available in conflict and post-conflict contexts: relatively few population surveys can be considered complete or truly 'National'; most of them are sub-regional, or have been carried out in

¹ In 2002 Elisabeth Rehn and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (now president of Liberia) delivered a major report to the UN that examined the impact of sexual violence against women and girls in war-affected countries. The result of their work are reported in the first chapter of "*Human Security Report 2012*" of Human Security Report Project (HSRP): it argues that <<Strategic rape—the use of rape as a weapon of war—is a pervasive and growing threat, but presents no evidence to support this claim>>.

refugee or internally displaced persons camps. Thus, they cannot be always assumed to be a reliable guide to national rates of sexual violence in war-affected countries. The most influential reporting comes from the investigations of international human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch (HRW) and Amnesty International. Nevertheless, after the conflict, women play a crucial role in reconstruction by recovering the broken connections within their communities, and reshaping legal frameworks, laws and customs. However, even during this period women are often victims of sexual and physical violence, they are denied the basic means for living and the opportunity to participate in decision making processes which directly influence the communities in which they live and the quality of their lives (Odanović, 2010, p.71).

How could new generations living in post conflict countries be able to believe in a better future without violence and war, especially when they came from a broken family, or they are victims of such abuses? How could peace missions successfully fulfil in building peace and stable conditions for recovery, when such a large part of population suffers such violence? These kinds of questions help to understand how much is important to stop violence and discrimination against women; in other words, how much is important developing engendered peace-building strategies in conflict and post-conflict contexts. <<Stopping sexual violence in today's civil wars is perhaps the greatest challenge confronting the UN's protection of civilian agenda>> (HSRP, "*Human Security Report 2012*", p.49). According to the Coalition of Plan Sierra Leone, Concern Worldwide, IBIS and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) that elaborated in 2010 "*Give Us a Chance - National Study on School-Related Gender-Based Violence in Sierra Leone*", gender-based violence is not only both a violation of human rights and a threat for peace, but it is also considered an obstacles for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals as an impediment to sustainable development that has both short and long-term consequences. So, one of the preconditions for the establishment of sustainable peace at the principles of democracy and protection of human rights is to include the gender perspective into the process of post-conflict reconstruction and peacekeeping operations (Odanović, 2010, p.71). Gender² Approach encompasses both female and male dimension: female conditions are inextricably linked with male conditions, and vice versa. This broader view is extremely important for addressing problems of inequalities, relational problems, cultural models and stereotypes. Thus, a successful solution

² '*Gender*' is about socially construed roles of men and women (whereas '*sex*' refers to biological differences between women and men).

for building peace is to achieve gender equality³ first. At the international level this approach is embodied by the '*Gender in Development perspective*' which indeed is based on Gender Approach, because it fosters <<A development process that transforms gender relations in order to enable women to participate on an equal basis with men in determining their common future>> (UNDP and GIDP, "*UNDP Learning and Information Pack. Gender Analysis*" (2001), p.70). United Nation Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 is the legal basis of gender-based peace building strategy: by implementing this resolution (and the following ones created to better develop it) it is possible to create the proper conditions for education and empowerment strategies of the local population. Indeed, first of all, it is crucial to secure the post-conflict areas, to fight against gender-based violence (GBV), to build trust and exchange of information, and then, it is possible to implement education activities that aim to empower local communities. Women's civil society organizations together with female peace-mission personnel can reduce the rates of violence against woman and children; they can establish understanding and dialogue between different cultures, religions, parties in conflict and clans; they can educate and empower population (in particular female population) providing knowledge for recovery in the ordinary life from basic information, for example about healthcare, or about how to take care of children, or about nutrition, to how to engage with international actors, or how to be involved in political affairs. As in the African proverb, "If you educate a man, you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman, you educate a nation". The ultimate goal of a broader comprehensive peace-building strategy is the establishment of lasting peace in post-conflict areas through the active involvement of women. This will lead local population to rebuild their socio-political and economic order according with peace principles.

2. UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1325

At the beginning of the XXI century, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) recognized how seriously adversely affected by armed conflicts are civilians, particularly women and children, and also other vulnerable groups as refugees and internally displaced persons. It recognized also the serious consequent impact that this has on lasting peace and reconciliation.

In October 2000, UNSC adopted the first resolution in history on women's participation in the processes of peace building and peacekeeping. In particular,

³ "Gender equality" relies to equal visibility, empowerment and participation of both sexes in all the spheres of public and private life.

it provided the first legal and political international framework that recognizes the need for equal participation of women in all the processes of peace building and peacekeeping. The “SCR 1325” is legally based on the commitment assumed in previous UN Resolutions, the ones about the protection of children in armed conflict (Resolutions 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999 and the following 1314 (2000) of 11 August 2000), and the ones about protection of civilians during armed conflicts, in particular vulnerable groups such as women, children, refugees and internally displaced persons (Resolution 1265 (1999) of 17 September 1999 and the following 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000). The SCR 1325 is based also on the commitments made during the United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace of 8 March 2000, and the commitment of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (A/52/231)⁴ as well as those contained in the document of “The twenty-third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly” entitled “Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the twenty-first century” (A/S-23/10/Rev.1)⁵. Lastly, it recalls the principles of the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security. The SCR 1325 <<Calls on Member States and all actors in a conflict to protect women’s rights, to take account of their specific needs in conflict and post-conflict situations and to involve them in the entire process of re-establishing peace and stability through their participation in peace-making, peacekeeping and peace-building efforts>> (DPKO, “Ten-year Impact Study on Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security in Peacekeeping”-2010, p.11). Since SCR 1325 was passed, gender sensitivity and gender mainstreaming have become much more relevant in the mandates of UN peacekeeping operations and important steps for its implementation have been made. Time by time, this resolution has become a landmark in promoting women’s rights and gender equality in conflict and post-conflict countries and regions. The main points of the SCR 1325 are:

⁴ The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action were the consensus documents that governments negotiated and agreed to at the Fourth UN World Conference on Women in 1995 in Beijing, China. An entire chapter dedicated on Women and Armed Conflict is contained in the Beijing Platform for Action has.

⁵ In 2000, the twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly (also known as “Beijing Plus Five”) has brought governments together five years after the Beijing conference, to examine “further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action”. After long and arduous negotiations, the General Assembly adopted a Political Declaration and outcome document, which included sections on Women and Armed Conflict.

- *To strengthen participation and representation of women at all levels of decision-making.*
- *To introduce gender perspective and training in UN programming for personnel sent into the field in order to deploy the proper protection of women and children.*
- *To report information from the field because institutions need to have the appropriate data and knowledge to improve the mission.*
- *To full implement the International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law⁶ and agreements concerning women and civilians⁷ by all parties involved to armed conflict.*
- *To pay more attention to specific protection needs of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict areas - particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict, putting an end to impunity.*

As completion of the SCR 1325, the Security Council has produced five resolutions⁸ with the aim of complementing the former one and provide more practical tools for its execution.

Since the SCR 1325 has been approved, important progresses occurred in the area of women, peace and security. However, there are still many problems in implementing effectively this resolution. One of the most important problems is about the large gap existing between the commitments written in the documents about the inclusion of women and gender perspectives, and the practical implementation of such commitments. The international community has clearly recognized the importance of the issue, and it has expressed the common willingness to address it: but effective solutions required strong integrated strategies from different levels of action; consequently, more coordination among

⁶ International Humanitarian Law (IHL) is a set of rules that protects people who are not or are no longer participating in the hostilities during wartime. IHL's central goal is to limit and to prevent human suffering in times of armed conflict. The rules must be respected not only by governments and their armed forces, but also by armed opposition groups and any other parties involved in conflict. The principal instruments of humanitarian law are the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their two Additional Protocols of 1977. IHL has always accorded women general protection equal to that of men, and at the same time IHL treaties recognize the need to give women additional special protection according to their specific needs.

⁷ It refers to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, to the Refugee Convention of 1951, to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979, to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and all their Additional Protocols (UNSCR 1325 point 9).

⁸ Resolution 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010) and 2122 (2013).

all the actors involved is necessary. Still women's potential and actual role in relation to peace building is often insufficiently understood or overlooked. Although there is a plethora of activity by women that contributes to peace, there are scarce reliable, systematic and usable information on the range of activities that women undertake at local, national and regional levels towards building peace within their communities. There is also the need to increase the real number of women involved in decision-making at all levels on conflict prevention, management and resolution. In this regard, it is fundamental to educate and train local young and adult women in order to prepare them to be actively involved in political and economic life.

3. BUILDING TRUST, DIALOGUE, MONITORING, AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

Conflict and human security are strictly linked one to another. Sexual violence in war is a serious development and an economic concern as well as is a very important human rights concern for affected families, communities and nations. Considering that unaddressed injustices and institutionalized inequalities in post-conflict countries are potentially triggers of already fragile security situations, UNSCR 1325 promotes the full implementation of a gender perspective on Security Sector Reform⁹.

As reported in the DPKO, *"Ten-year Impact Study"*, 2010, (p.73): <<Female staff members of the peacekeeping operations are more sensitive to the needs and problems that women in local communities are facing, therefore the women and the girls who had been exposed to sexual and physical violence are more likely to report these cases to the female personnel of the mission>>. In particular, in cultures in which the physical contact between men and women is forbidden, the involvement of female staff is crucial for providing assistance, healthcare and exchange of information. In many societies under review SGBVs (included domestic violence) are considered taboo, a culture of silence sadly prevails, and it represents a further limited recourse to any form of justice. For example in Sierra Leone and Southern Sudan it was reported that in most of the cases the fear of stigmatisation prevents victims of sexual violence from reporting it. In

⁹ Security Sector Reform (SSR) strategy includes: more women working in the security sector as a police staff, or as a decision-maker; the abolishment of discriminatory rules for women and the promotion of egalitarian rules and practices for the inclusion of women in the sector; the inclusion of the specific protection women rights and conditions through specific strategies which focus on women needs.

addition, the absence of female police officers in the majority of police stations, plus abusive behaviour of male police officers, constitutes additional reasons for not reporting. Female mission members often show greater level of understanding of local cultural and religious peculiarities and they are more successful in establishing dialogue, which encourages trust and cooperation between the local population, peacekeeping and peace-building mission staff (Odanović, 2010, p.74). In addition, by working with female staff, the sensitivity and readiness of the male staff members to deal with SGBV is increasing so far. Indeed, working side by side, a sort of 'Spill-over-effect' occurred among male and female staff members concerning skills, sensitivities, and experiences, improving the general results of their tasks in this concern. This is extremely important considering the serious problem of sexual abuses perpetrated by male staff member of peace operations. As Skjelsbaek Inger from the Norwegian Peace-Building Resource Centre - NOREF reveals in "Sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict settings" (2013), by examining cases of the international criminal prosecution of perpetrators of crimes of sexual violence, the overwhelming majority are men in uniform <<This means that it is a particular military responsibility to prevent sexual violence from happening. This responsibility rests on leaders in military structures who need to both train their men in gender-sensitive behaviour and react when they become aware that their soldiers are engaged in violent sexual behaviour>>. The increase of the number of female members in the operations fosters more discipline and control among the male staff members, avoiding these further cases of violence. Thus, on one hand, more women within the security sector of the peace mission can lead to an intensification of efforts in engendering the security sector within the mission's organization as well as within the local security sector. On the other hand, female staff contributes to build trust and dialogue among local women as well also among men, through informational campaigns and initiatives.

In order to fulfil peace-building goals, information that indicates growing tensions and potential for conflict outbreak, or indicate particular needs of local population, are simply fundamental. In the case of Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV) the collection of reliable quantitative and qualitative data about the local socio-political and economic situations is necessary to develop evidence-based measures and policies; however, such kind of information and data are scarcely available in these environments. Usually, the most influential reporting comes from the investigations of international human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch (HRW) and Amnesty International but also from smaller

organizations as local NGOs and Women CSOs¹⁰. These actors provide timely information on violations of all forms of human rights — including wartime rape and other forms of sexual violence¹¹. They become an open window supporting the collection of data, monitoring activities and sharing information with UN. Being closer to local women can help not only to integrate new data, but also to understand the impact of women's involvement in peace building. <<Systematic monitoring by leadership is crucial to achieving desired results. But informal monitoring will also be done: by the media, by NGOs and by local officials and leaders, including women leaders. A question mission leaders might well ask themselves is: Will official monitoring produce the kind of results that will be praised by unofficial monitors?>> (DPKO, "*Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective In Multidimensional Peace Operation*", 2000, p.29).

4. PROVIDING EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT

The consequences of the conflict increase economic and social vulnerability of women and children, who are threatened not only by hungry and misery, but also by exploitation perpetrated by organized criminal groups that can force them to prostitution rackets or trafficking drugs and humans. Thus, the DPKO in "*Gender Resource Package for Peacekeeping Operations*", (2004) affirms: <<The number of households headed by women and children typically increases during conflict>>, for instance <<girls heading households face increased marginalization owing to their low status as female adolescents and their lack of protection>>. In Sudan UNIMIS recently promoted "16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence" as a part of educational and empowerment campaign at national level called "*Promote Peace at Home, Stop Gender-Based Violence and Child Marriage*"; it consists in a set of <<Events carried out around the country to strengthen local work, develop and share new strategies, as well as demonstrate solidarity of women in Sudan and around the world. Promoting education and ending violence against women is an indispensable part of this equation>> (Johnson, 2013). From an economic perspective, female population is a potential source of economic development. In many societies the role of women is culturally related only with family and house care, whereas the men are the ones who work. But after conflict, male population is usually decreased in number as a consequence of armed fights; so many families remain without their men. Consequently, women are obliged to take in charge also the economic duty of

¹⁰ Civil Society Organizations

¹¹ Chapter II Human Security Report, p. 22

the family's management, but in many cases they are not prepared for that. This is partly due to the lack of education and experience, but also due to the fact that they often operate in female hostile environment, which prevents them to take part of the economic life. Education and training can make local women aware of their situations and possibilities, can break old taboos, patriarchal traditions that discriminates women and allows violence against women. This is something that, who wants to hold the power taking advantage from misery and post-conflict situation, has well understood: it is the case of Boko Haram¹², a terrorist and Islamist movement which counts between 500 and 9000 people, based in North Nigeria that acts also in Niger, Cameroon and Chad, linked to Al-Qaeda and ISIS. The name "Boko Haram" means "Western education is forbidden"¹³, it is a quite clear presentation of their ideal but at the same time it shows also what they consider as a threat: education is the enemy which makes people capable to react. The kidnapping of 276 schoolgirls in Chibok in 2014 has shown to the world how much they care to prevent people to have access to education. In such unstable countries as Nigeria, local governments are unable to secure population from the action of extremist groups as Boko Haram. The only way to drive the change is to empower the whole population: men, women and young people through a proper education. Training women to use resources and teaching them a profession such as farming or craftsmanship may support the economic conditions of families and in large scale, the national economy. In this regard, WANEP in Liberia has driven an interesting project called 'Rural Women Peace Initiative Project', funded by the American Jewish World Service (AJWS) in 2005. The project consisted in supporting community members to undertake local initiatives for peace, focusing in particular on education. The project included three main packages: <<An educational package that provides financial support to 30 young women and men within the targeted communities to have access to formal education; a community empowerment package that provides financial support to community groups to undertake special projects such as agricultural and community policing activities; an economic empowerment package that aims at providing direct financial support to community women to enable them set up their own local community cooperatives for micro-credit>> (WANEP "Annual Report 2010", p.39). Because women from international community are more suitable to enter in contact with local women, they can

¹² www.theguardian.com/world/boko-haram

¹³ Officially called Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal-Jihad: "People Committed to the Prophet's Teachings for Propagation and Jihad".

easily train them to healthcare basics, nutrition, childcare and domestic economy. This may help local women to face every-day challenges in time of crisis. They can provide basic education to eradicate illiteracy, which is very spread across female population. In this sense, it is important to ensure that girls are recruited into new classrooms equally with boys. In poor areas it may be necessary to provide adequate security and offer incentives to families and communities for girls' attendance. But also adult literacy is extremely important to empowerment process and recovery, so campaigns for adult education that targets women as well as men should be supported. According to Camille Pampell Conaway (2006, p. 12), regarding the international donor funds and technical support, it has been shown that income in the hands of women benefits families and communities significantly more than income in the hands of men. Therefore increases in female income improve child survival rates 20 times more than increases in male income. Likewise, female borrowing has a greater positive impact on school enrolment, child nutrition, and demand for healthcare than male borrowing. The right management of such an influx of donor funds can move the peace process forward by addressing historical inequalities and root causes of conflict. They begin to participate in the economic and political life of the community, become increasingly aware of their rights, and are more involved in decision making in the home. But international community presence (both made by UN member staff and IOs and NGOs) can also provide further education that goes beyond simple alphabetization, to prepare local women to become actively involved in economical and political life. For example, since 2008, women's organizations Sudanese Empowerment in Peace (SuWEP) have undertaken seven capacity building trainings to educate women who seek to enter politics, focused on campaigning, institutional management, transitional justice, reconciliation and leadership. All trainings aimed to ensure that qualified and educated (future) women leaders can benefit from the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) quota for women in decision-making positions (GAPW, NGOWG, WILPF "*Promoting Women's Participation in Conflict And Post-Conflict societies*", 2010, p.50). In this way local women will be able time by time to support economically their families, having a place in the society, and in large scale, to support one day the national economy. <<Peacekeeping operations are also an important economic force in many host countries. This gives them the power to exercise a positive impact on women's employment opportunities and income-generating potential by providing a source of employment for the local population>> (Ibid. p.8).

5. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: OPEN WINDOW TO POLITICAL AND LEGAL REFORMS. CASE STUDIES ON UN OPERATION UNDER SCR1325

POLITICAL REFORMS

The end of conflict marks the end of the previous socio-economic and political order, creating the space for a new one. Therefore, post-conflict period is very delicate and crucial: from one hand there is the possibility to put good basis for a peaceful reconstruction and establishment of a safe new order, but on the other hand, the opposite situation may occur as well, that is to say, the re-start of the fire or the establishment of a violent and/or unstable authoritarian regime. In the aftermath of the conflict is possible to reshape the political, economic and legal system, opening the way to the entrance of new actors and new interests:

<<Given the window of opportunity, the transitional period serves as an important entry point for women>> (Pampell, 2006, p.10).

In most cases, discriminations against women originate from the national law. During the peace process and transition period, there is the opportunity to revise or rewrite laws to guarantee women's equality, particularly in domestic violence, marriage and divorce, citizenship, property and inheritance fields¹⁴. As a sort of escalation, the implementation of protection, assistance, dialogue, collecting data, education and empowerment practices have the purpose to prepare the achievement of this last stage: to enable local women to participate in all the sectors of public life acting by their own behalf. As Odanović G. writes, <<By encouraging women's activities in the process of peace-building, the conditions are created for subsequent integration of the gender equality principles into the constitutional and legal framework, which would create an opportunity for women to equally participate in shaping the life of community to which they belong>> (2010, p.74).

¹⁴ As it was during the 70s and the 80s in many countries in Latin America, in particular central Latin America and the Southern Cone, that emerged from the shadow of authoritarian regimes, achieving the freedom from military dictatorships. During the transition period feminist movements fought intensively for the review of the legal system in order to abolish the discriminatory laws and to promote more egalitarian legal tools. (Chant S. with Craske N., "*Gender in Latin America*"-2003)

A recent study conducted by the Institute for Inclusive Security¹⁵ indicates that a higher number of women in decision-making positions in post-conflict governments¹⁶, allows them to increase the legitimacy of nascent institutions, decrease government corruption, broaden the political agenda, demand accountability, maintain transparency in activities at national and local levels, promote consultative policymaking and collaborate across ideological lines and social sectors. The report shows also that a higher presence of female politicians enlarges the political debate to address a wider range of constituent interests, social concerns, and local issues. Therefore, SCR 1325 calls on Member States to increase the representation of women at all decision-making levels. By creating a safe environment for local women¹⁷ and by empowering them (through education and information), women CSOs together with some NGOs and UN member staff can help and support local women to create a public space for their needs where they can find assistance and protection. In the following section, the source of the examples of countries where UNSCR1325 has been applied through peace building strategies is the Final Report of DPKO, *“Ten-year Impact Study on Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security in Peacekeeping”* (2010). Thanks to this data source, it is possible to see the impacts and results of the international interventions involved in peace making.

ELECTIONS PLANNING

UN mission with the cooperation of IOs, NGOs and CSOs carry out lobbying activities for more participation of women in the political process, both as candidates and voters. This kind of strategies includes stakeholders' sensitive on

¹⁵ The Institute for Inclusive Security promotes women leadership as an essential tool to prevent violence, stop war, and restore communities after deadly conflicts. It supports policymakers by providing expert advice grounded in research that demonstrates women's contributions to peace-building. It strengthens women leaders through targeted training and mentoring, helping them to build coalitions, and connecting them to policymakers (Webpage: www.inclusivesecurity.org)

¹⁶ <<The most-discussed and most-effective, yet often controversial, mechanism to promote women's leadership is through quotas that reserve seats for women. These include quotas at the national or sub-national level mandated by constitutions, legislated by parliaments, or adopted by political parties. In nearly all cases, they are designed as temporary mechanisms to promote women's participation>> (Pampell Conaway C., *“The Role of Women in Stabilization and Reconstruction”*-2006. P.10).

¹⁷ <<After the implementation of the SCR 1325, the number of women voting in elections in the target countries has increased, as has the number of women elected. The improvement of security around elections, due to the efforts of UNPOL and national police, has enabled more women to vote>> (DPKO, *“Ten-year Impact Study on Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325”*, 2010, p.19).

the benefits of gender sensitive electoral laws; advocacy for gender balance on electoral boards; introduction of civic education teams; support of electoral information campaigns based on gender sensitivity; monitoring the full women's participation as election administrators, poll workers, election observers, and members of a national election body; promotion of specific tools such as quotas, reserved seats, women's advisory committees; voter education and information; strengthening the capacity of elected women. In particular, quotas that reserve seats for women (30% minimum representation of women in decision-making bodies) were introduced in the Beijing Platform for Action. These tools have been utilized extensively in post conflict settings to overcome traditional and cultural barriers and promote women's participation in government (at local through national levels). Although quotas cannot guarantee either a gender perspective in the political process or women in the most important decision making roles, they can assist in building a critical mass of women in governance (GAPW, NGOWG, WILPF, "*Promoting Women's Participation in Conflict And Post-Conflict societies*", 2010, p.38). It is a matter of fact that women's success in politics has been greater in those countries where quotas or reserved seats for women have been included in the constitution, electoral law and/or the governing rules of political parties. This helps significantly in removing traditional barriers, breaking stereotypes and enhancing leadership of women. However, in order to ensure a sufficient number of female candidates to fill the seats, a careful planning is necessary together with the full respect of the quotas. The case of Burundi is a good example¹⁸: in 2003 the '*National Policy on Gender*' was adopted. Moreover, after the introduction of a 30% quota in the Constitution in 2005, the representation of women in parliament almost doubled, from 18.5% in the previous parliament to 30.5%. The proportion of women in the senate has increased also from 35% in 2005 to 46% in 2010 and in government from 32% to 42%. These constitutional arrangements and government's commitment resulted in significant progress in women's participation in the public political space.

TRAINING WOMEN TO PLAY POLITICAL ROLES

Such a strategy is becoming common in peace-building. It can be considered as sort of response to some complaints of officials regarding the lack of preparation for leadership or for political positions of some women. This accusation may be partially true in countries where severe discrimination of women has prevented

¹⁸ United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) started in June 2004 until December 2006 under the SCR 1323.

them to be properly prepared. <<The capacity of elected women generally remains under-developed, including their understanding of the functioning of parliament and of government, the role of the constitution and legislation, the effective use of gender frameworks (including SCR 1325, CEDAW and BFPA) and the need for alliances with CSOs. In most countries respondents reported that elected women lack skills in leadership, negotiation and public Speaking>> (DPKO, “*Ten-year Impact Study*”, 2010, p.20). In this kind of contexts international interventions can support training through innovative country exchange programs focused on political campaigning, education, training on legislative process, fundraising, democratic and effective governance procedures, and so on. In Sudan, UNMIS¹⁹ has provided logistical support and advice on gender issues to the State High Committee on Elections. While in South Sudan the UNMISS Gender Unit simplified the voter education materials to improve women’s understanding of the electoral process. As a result of the 25% electoral quota for women introduced in the National Election Act (2008), in 2010 women constituted yet the 28% of the National Legislative Assembly: 118 women as member of parliament compared to 87 during the period 2005– 2009. <<According to the Government’s own statistics, in Northern Bahr el Ghazal State, there are more women than men in the State Assembly, an example that should provide as an example for the rest of the country>> (Johnson, 2013).

HELP THE FORMATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES

As noted by a female politician in Brazil: <<What has happened inside political parties is similar to what happens inside the home...We argue for equality, but we end up doing the practical tasks and men dictate the rules and make the decisions>> (cf. “*Who Answers to Women? Gender & Accountability: Progress of the World’s Women*”, 2008/2009, UNIFEM). It is important not only to increment the number of women within political parties, but also to improve their power relation and decision-making capabilities. In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)²⁰ in 2004 born the collaboration between MONUC/MONUSCO, United Nations Country Team (UNCT) and the women’s movement that targeted political parties and voters for making the electoral process more sensitive to

¹⁹ UNMIS United Nations Mission deployed under SCR1325 in the Sudan, from March 2005 to July 2011, replaced by UNMISS South Sudan that is still on going.

²⁰ UN Operation MONUC from November 1999 to June 2012 continued after few years under a new frame: MONUSCO United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, from July 2010 to present.

gender issues. According to this target, the elections of 2006 (which were the first in the 46 years since independence) were overseen by an Independent Electoral Commission made by the 30% of women staff. Women were successfully mobilized as voters (60% of registered voters and 51% of votes cast) and as candidates (12% of presidential candidates and 10% of those running for governor). Women make up 8% of the parliament, 5% of the senate and 12% of the government. This was possible thanks to the fact that MONUC police had ensured women safety to participate in the elections. Although the presence of UN mission has ensured more equal participation of women in the political life, their involvement in the political life is still precarious. Despite in DRC the Electoral Law calls on political parties to give parity to men and women candidates, it is not compulsory; women candidates are still few, moreover they are not placed in winning positions on party lists. In DRC, for example, the ministry responsible for gender affairs (as well as the family and children) receives just 0.02% of the national budget.

DEVELOP MEDIA

This target is achieved through the contribution in funding newspapers, magazines, and radio programs in order to educate citizens about their rights and responsibilities, to highlight women's contributions to society, to emphasize human rights and present role models for women. Another strategy consists in facilitating the creation of women's ownership of media and in supporting the establishment of women's radio networks, TV, and mobile media. Finally, to train women leaders in media strategies and to connect local women's groups to international women's media networks.

SUPPORT LOCAL GOVERNANCE

A precondition for promoting the participation of women leaders at the local level is to have well prepared and educated women and men as well. Thus, training courses on municipal legislation, budgeting and taxation, service delivery systems, poverty alleviation methods, community and environmental management, and communication skills should be provided. Such training courses should be organized and carried out by peace mission together with NGOs and IOs staff member in cooperation with the national government. For

example, WANEP in Cote d'Ivoire²¹ developed an initiative named '*Civil Society Engaged for Democracy and Good Governance*', funded by United Nations Democracy Funds (UNDEF), which aims on one hand to reinforce democracy and good governance through the involvement of civil society in governance, and on the other hand, to enhance cooperation between parliamentarians, other local elected leaders and the people they represent: <<Following the launch of the project, WANEP-CI met with the administrative authorities, political parties, local leaders particularly city mayors and opinion leaders from civil society to lobby for their endorsement of the ideals and implementation process of the project. During the various meetings, WANEP-CI was able to identify members of the Monitoring Committee for Democracy and Good Governance to be in charge of monitoring government institutions and departments in enhancing citizen participation>> (WANEP '*Annual report 2010*', p.30). In all the regions of Cote d'Ivoire a series of capacity building trainings for members of the established Committee were organized, included Gender Mainstreaming Training. In particular, WANEP-CI focused on the electoral process in 2010, working closely with the Independent Electoral Commission, with the support from the United States Institute for Peace (USIP) and in collaboration with other CSOs. As a part of these initiatives, WANEP-CI set up trainings and workshops to involve one hundred Ivorian women in election observation, for their effective and active participation in the Presidential and Parliamentary elections.

LEGAL REFORMS

The judicial recognition of violence against women can hopefully reduce its practice through its denounce, its legal treatment, and its punishment. There are still many countries that operate under archaic laws that discriminate women and restrict their access to justice. In the aftermath of armed conflict female population faces enormous barriers to accessing justice. More judicial and legal tools need to be provided, in order to prevent and punish violence against women: <<The participation of women in official positions within international tribunals - as judges, investigators, lawyers, and staff - and the inclusion of gender expertise has led to significant advances for women in international law>> (Pampell, 2006, p. 11). Women's participation in the judicial process as planners and designers of gender justice mechanisms is crucial to monitor and hold the State accountable for inclusive justice reforms. Through the

²¹ United Nations Operation under SCR1325 in Côte d'Ivoire (MINUCI) from 2003 to 2004; Second UN Operation is UNOCI, from April 2004 until present.

establishment of bodies such as the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the Special Court for Sierra Leone, the International jurisprudence has prosecuted rape and sexual violence as crimes against humanity, moving an important step forward progress in attaining justice for women. To address SGBV is fundamental to strengthen the participation of women at all levels of the legal system in particular because female victims may feel more comfortable and safer when dealing with female police, investigators, lawyers and judges (GAPW, NGOWG, WILPF, “*Promoting Women’s Participation in Conflict And Post-Conflict societies*”, 2010, p.77). In this regard, the peace missions that have assisted countries in reforming the legal system have provided particular technical support in:

THE REVISION OF DISCRIMINATORY LAWS AND THE DRAFTING AND/OR AMENDMENT OF LEGISLATION.

Across the countries reviewed <<Peacekeeping missions have had a positive impact on the revision of legislation discriminatory to women and the adoption of gender-sensitive legislative frameworks such as provisions for gender equality in national constitutions and CEDAW>> (DPKO, “*Ten-year Impact Study*”, 2010, p.30). Although significant progresses have been achieved in enacting legislations to protect the rights of women and girls, the effective implementation of these laws faces huge challenges. As the analysis of the target cases are showing below, the process of reform of the legal system in favour to the conditions of women in most of the target countries is still desperate. In Sierra Leone²², between 2007 and 2009 a big step forward in the legal protection of women and girls has done thanks to the adoption of four new laws addressing domestic violence, women’s inheritance of their husband’s property, women’s marriage rights under customary and civil law (and attempting to end early and forced marriages) and children’s rights. Then, since 2010 UN started to support the revision of the Local Courts Act. Thanks to these reforms, the number of women in the legal sector in Sierra Leone has substantially increased in the recent years; women now make up 38% of judges, 60% of the police prosecution team; 30% of senior lawyers (including the Chief Justice) and 14% of all active lawyers.

²² UNAMSIL, October 1999- December 2005, and succeeded by UNIOSIL United Nations Integrated Office for Sierra Leone.

THE ASSESSMENT AND RECRUITMENT OF PERSONNEL IN JUSTICE SECTOR INCLUDING PROVISIONS TO BRING MORE WOMEN INTO THE JUDICIARY.

This point of the judicial reform strategy remains particularly weak. Even if some progresses have been achieved in increasing the number of women in the legal sector, women's participation in the judiciary remains low in most of the countries reviewed. Among the main problems are the lack of resources (financial and transport barriers), poor skills in the system, limited legal understanding among the population (culturally imposed restrictions and lack of awareness of both legal rights and of the judicial system), limited access to formal justice (especially in rural areas, and particularly for women, for example in DRC, Cote d'Ivoire, Sudan) and failure to involve traditional justice in legal reforms. For example in the Democratic Republic of Congo, from 2005 to 2010 the MONUSCO Gender Unit has promoted a set of workshops for magistrates, lawyers and judicial auxiliaries on gender sensitivity regarding the existing legislation and the need for its reform. Then, the mission provided assistance for census, assessment and recruitment of the judiciary. But the positive impacts are still weak if we consider that in 2005, there was only one woman in the Supreme Court out of 20 members and one woman out of 26 at the National Bar Association²³, while 5 years later (2010) it is reported to be no representation of women in the higher levels of the judiciary. Anyway, DRC government agreed that one quarter of 2000 magistrates to be recruited in 2010 would be women; this has indeed been accomplished, with 500 women recruited by the Ministry of Justice in June 2010. In Haiti, MINUSTAH²⁴ provides support for the strengthening of judicial institutions, legal reform and the establishment of free legal aid to vulnerable populations, including women. The mission has carried out educational and training programmes for lawyers, prosecutors and judges, to better respond to SGBV. These programmes have been conducted together with the national police Women's Coordination Unit and Child Protection Brigade. <<In Haiti as of October 2010, 8% of the 650 judges were women; of 18 courts, only two have female deans and the public prosecutors are all male. The first competitive examination for trainee judges this year had 21 women among the 150 candidates; of the 40 short listed only 4 were women>> (DPKO, "Ten-year Impact Study", 2010, p.29).

²³ National Bar Association (NBA) was founded in 1925, and it is the nation's oldest and largest association of African American lawyers and judges.

²⁴ MINUSTAH United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti deployed under SCR1325, from June 2004 to present.

SPECIFIC TRAINING ON GENDER MAINSTREAM, HUMAN RIGHTS AND SGBV, FOR THE NATIONAL POLICE, CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION, JUDICIAL AND CORRECTIONAL PERSONNEL.

GBV, discrimination and violation of human rights belong to a group of crimes that needs special measures in order to be addressed. For this reason the personnel who is in charge to prevent, combat and deal with such kind of violations need to be specifically prepared and trained. In this regard, UN missions have set up special units within the police and judicial forces to help the management (investigation, prosecution, and punishment) of cases of GBV, gender discrimination and violation of human rights. These special units can also carry out training courses for judicial and police actors on the prevention and the response to these kinds of crimes. In Cote d'Ivoire, ONUCI is working to reform the correctional institutional system. It is a long and hard way toward the full accomplishment of this particular reform in Cote d'Ivoire, considering that: the structures overcrowded, without the proper hygienic conditions, there is no segregation, so men and women share the same spaces, and this last factor puts women prisoners at very high risk. In addition, in the few structures where men and women are separated, men because of the lack of female personnel often guard women. UNOCI's Rule of Law Section is working on the development of training modules on SGBV to be included in the initial training for the penitentiary staff, police officers and magistrates. Anyway, besides training strategies, more financial and logistic resources are necessary to improve the conditions of the correctional system in the country. In Liberia²⁵, <<SGBV [and in particular] rape (including gang rape) is the number one crime reported to the police. Victims as young as 10 years old, and increasingly juvenile perpetrators are reported>> (Ibid., p.32). UNMIL has supported gender training in the national security forces by assisting the national police to develop a gender policy, which includes a 20% target for women and special measures to improve their recruitment and retention, training materials and a gender unit within the service. <<The proportion of police officers in the Liberia national police has risen from 11% in 2006 to 15% in 2010 and a target of 20% has been set>> (Ibid., p.25). To reach this target it has been offered a fast-track training for girls who dropped out of school during the conflict in order to meet the educational requirements for

²⁵ UNMIL United Nations Mission in Liberia under SCR1325, from September 2002 until present.

entering in the police academy. In particular, UNIMIL assisted national police forces in establishing special units for prevention of and response to SGBV.

6. SOME NUMBERS AND RESULTS: WOMEN INVOLVED IN PEACE-BUILDING

In general, in post-conflict areas the activity of UN missions has been perceived positively by local communities, especially by women, who reported that their security and their access to infrastructures, healthcare, justice, education, political and economic activities has improved since the missions took place. In particular, the involvement of women as peace mission members results to ensure the implementation of the SCR 1325. They are considered a particular asset in addressing SGBV because they pursue greater recognition of gender equality, help the focusing of political and legislative reforms on gender mainstream, support diverse programmes and activities against GBV, improve the security of women in settings where they are operating, facilitate the exchange of information (especially security information) with local populations, and make male peace-makers more responsible and reflective. In line with these statements some efforts have been undertaken by some peace-building missions to increment the number of women participating in it. For example, in 2005 in Burundi the mission leadership supported by the Gender Unit adopted a proactive policy for filling vacancies in all sections at all levels with female candidates. This led to a 51% of women accounted in the ONUB's staff, even if in mid- 2010 the number has decreased at the 38% (which is still a relatively high level). Another example is the mission in Haiti, through which an action plan to increase gender balance from 2008 to 2009 has been put in place. During that period <<The civilian female representation increased from 32% to 34% for international staff, 26% to 28% for UNVs, and 12% to 18% for national staff>> (DPKO, "*Ten-year Impact Study*", 2010,p.38). Anyway, despite these encouraging cases, considering that DPKO has established that the gender balance in the mission should attempt to be 50-50, the number of women who participate in these operations is still proportionally low compared to men. Women who want to participate in peace-building operations face numerous obstacles in the recruitment stage, as well as during their work in the mission. As a result, women's presence in the peacekeeping operations is still minimal, particularly at the leadership positions and among the operational staff (Odanović, 2010, p.74). According to DPKO data updated to 2010 women constitute approximately 30% of civilian staff at headquarters, 30% of

international civilian staff, 20% of national staff in peacekeeping missions, less than 3% of military personnel and 8% of UN police personnel. These numbers are far below the UNPOL 2014 target of 20%. Regarding police and military units, the main obstacles to make up more uniformed women into peace missions practices, especially operational forces are:

- *The low number of women in the national forces (police and military troops) of contributing countries that consequently determines the low number of women in peacekeeping operations.*
- *The lack of awareness and information concerning the option to serve on peacekeeping among female population.*
- *The difficulties to pass the entry tests for the majority of female applicants, such as physical, driving, shooting or language test (cf. "Review of Strategies for Enhancing Gender Balance Among Uniformed Personnel in Peacekeeping Missions", New York, 28–29 March 2006, Final Report).*
- *The general lower level of education among women in most host countries (e.g. in Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, and Sierra Leone) prevents the recruitment.*

The problems for increasing women's participation in leadership positions (Head or Deputy Head of Mission) within peace missions operations, are in some way similar to the problems faced for the operational forces, but with a higher level of resistance. Starting with the selection process for these positions, which is often politically conditioned, the candidates are in most cases the Ambassadors or Permanent Representatives to the UN. Then, the candidates are often required to have several years of military experience, which clearly prevents many women from being selected. Furthermore <<The circles in which they make the decisions on appointment of Heads of Missions (Deputy Heads) are made out of men which have spent a number of years within the UN and which are part of a "boy's club", which has its prejudice against women's involvement in leading positions in the peacekeeping operations and which believes that they do not have sufficient political and diplomatic skills to successfully lead the peacekeeping operations>> (Odanović, 2010, p.76). Sure enough that involving women in peace processes starts with providing women access to formal peace structures. Thus, the access for women to participation and recruitment for the operational level as well as the leadership positions must be reshaped in order to allow women to participate equally with men. This means in particular to reform

the recruitment's requirements in order to provide equal access for both women and men, to provide specific training and tools for women to acquire the requested skills, to address the male scepticism and resistance to the acceptance of women's involvement in peace missions. Moreover, as the SCR 1325 also recognized, women who are the ones most affected in conflict must be included even more so at the peace table. This because women affected by war must contribute in choosing what types of programmes and measures need to be put in place in the aftermath of conflict and as part of the peace deal. Women are not only victims of violence, as are usually portrayed, instead they can also be part of the solution to violence. The Sudanese case is an important example in this regard: while many of the men involved in the negotiations were in exile, women from the camps took actively part to the peace negotiations in Darfur. <<Their presence brought a much more community-oriented solution, and ensured that the reality on the ground was taken into account>> (UN Association for Canada - *The Report on the UNA-Canada 50 the Anniversary of UN Peacekeeping International Panel Series 2006 – 2007 "Peacekeeping to Peacebuilding: Lessons from the Past Building for the Future"*, p. 119). It is a matter of fact that it is so much difficult <<To make any substantive change when women are brought in after the elements of the agreement have already been decided upon>> (Ibid, p.119). Thus, one of the most relevant advantages of bringing women at the peace table is that, once the negotiations are over <<They share the same knowledge as men, and can consequently be considered as equal partners in the implementation of peace agreements>> (Ibid, p. 119)

7. MALE ALLIES FOR GENDER APPROACH

Concerning the latter point, that is to say, the need to address male scepticism and resistance to women's participation, interesting initiatives have been undertaken by some organizations that support local peace initiatives for increasing male support for women's peace work.

<<Gender roles including masculinity issues are important to address when analyzing barriers and methods of improving women's participation in peacemaking. Many men often view women's empowerment as a 'zero-sum game', feeling some ambiguity about how the advancement of women will either affect or assist them. Hence it is important to highlight the benefits to society as a whole, and for men specifically>> (GAPW, NGOWG, WILPF "*Promoting Women's Participation in Conflict And Post-Conflict societies*", 2010, p.30, 31). For example, International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) Women

Peacemakers Program (WPP)²⁶ has carried out a specific programme which aimed to create a pool of male ‘allies’ for gender-sensitive peace-building through specific training for men on gender-sensitive, on the Active Non-Violence (ANV), and on the analysis of masculinity’s concepts as they relate to violence and peace. This programme called ‘Gender-Sensitive Active Non-Violence Training: Exploring Masculinities, Violence and Peace Building’ ran from 2009 to 2010, and it involved 19 men from 17 countries. An interesting result revealed that <<Many men understood gender issues at a theoretical level but found it hard to bridge the gap between theory and practice, specifically in terms of how to work with or relate to women’s groups>>. (Ibid., p.30, 31). Since a staff member of WANEP took part in this first Training of Trainers Women Peacemakers Program (WPP) held in the Netherlands, also WANEP commenced the development of a training program on Masculinities, Violence and Peace. Under its WIPNET Program, WANEP aimed to enable male allies to work together with their women counterparts in addressing the issues of masculinities in the field of peace-building and active non-violence. As part of the follow-up plan, WANEP replicated the training for men in Ghana drawn from CSOs and the academia (WANEP “*Annual Report 2010*”, p.18).

Such examples suggest that training and education about gender mainstream provide a proper knowledge about the issue and a complete awareness of its implications that may be the key for overcoming many of weaknesses mentioned before. At the international, national and community decision-making levels male leadership that is aware and shows openly its commitment in addressing and condemning SGBV and violent sexual behaviour is therefore the best ally for demonstrating that this form of violence is not only a female concern. At the operational level, male staff members that respect women and human rights and that cooperate and react for addressing SGBV are the best allies as well to guarantee the practical implementation of such a strategies and measures.

²⁶ IFOR’s Women Peacemakers Program (IFOR/WPP) is international and interfaith peace movement born 90-year which supports nonviolent solutions and activities as a way of life and as a means of personal, social, economic and political transformations. From 1997 until nowadays, it has actively worked for the integration of gender perspective in peace-building and the empowerment of women peace activists. Indeed, supported by a feminist perspective on peace and security, the WPP advocates for the integration of a holistic gender perspective into peace-building, stressing the importance of women’s empowerment and male involvement.

CONCLUSIONS

<<One day three people were hiking up a mountain stream when they noticed a baby bobbing along in the water. The first hiker waded in and pulled the baby out, but then noticed there was another baby, and another. The hiker quickly became a one-person rescue operation, pulling the infants to safety on the riverbank. The second hiker waded in and began giving swimming lessons - empowering the near victims. The third ran away up stream. The others called: "Come back and help!" The response was: "I am going to get to the bottom of this. I am going to find out who is throwing them in and why". Rescue, empowerment and knowledge are all needed to advance gender equality. May each of us contribute in the way best suited to our skills, our talents and our resources>> (DPKO, "*Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective In Multidimensional Peace Operation*", p.29)

This work shows how much conflicts affect the condition of women, and at the same time, how much the involvement of women in post-conflict situations, positively affects and contributes to the recovery, reconstruction, and building peace. Human security approach, gender approach, human rights approach, as well as peace and development approaches, support this view. Although each of the previous approaches comes from a different field of study, they share the same common point: the female population suffers the greatest harm during and after conflict in term of sexual gender-based violence (brutal tortures, gang rape, sexual slavery, psychological violence etc.), economic vulnerability, health vulnerability, social and political discrimination. There are several factors that explain the previous statement: the local pre-existing socio-cultural and legal structures that value and protect women less than men; the widespread violence of armed groups which use the women's body as a battlefield to hit their enemy and to terrorise the population; the misery created by the conflict that destroys the public and private infrastructures such as healthcare centres, schools, streets, crops and factories, affecting in particular the most vulnerable social categories, including girls and mothers; the lack of a strong government able to fight the crime and secure its citizens, especially the female population. Due to the fact that women make up most of the whole population of a country, especially after conflict, to secure women means to protect the majority of the population, though: Disarmament and Demobilization Processes to limit the circulation of weapons; the creation of tools to stem the crime (such as legal tools for prosecuting perpetrators and punishing them in accordance with a just law) in

particular SGBV crimes (from domestic violence to sexual exploitation and trafficking), in order to protect women and their children. Thanks to an amplified attention of new international and local stakeholders as well as international networks and organizations, GBV, and in particular SGBV crimes, in post-conflict contexts, are more documented, analysed and addressed than ever before. Such development allows the discovery of new patterns in the incidence of these particular forms of violence. The commitment of IOs, national governments, the NGOs, researchers, and others actors in addressing this issue constitutes a promising chance to improve the situation at ground level for all victims and survivors of this kind of violence. Nevertheless, the impact of sexual violence in times of conflict and post-conflict is multifaceted, thus, differences between each single social, economic, political and cultural context must be taken into account. There is no sole remedy that would fit all situations: on the contrary, policies, interventions, and programmes to address SGBV and gender based social, political and economic inequalities and injustices post conflict must be adequate to each specific context. The best way to do so is to encourage the local population to become a active partner in the solution of those problems through learning and empowerment processes. Therefore, to empower, train and educate women is to provide a huge resource for recovery and reconstruction, helping an entire nation to overcome the post conflict difficulties. This is not only a matter of numbers (because female population is more numerous than the male population), but because a trained and educated woman is able to participate actively and independently in the economic and political life, contributing to the development of her country in the long term. These are major features of the recent peace-building multilateral and multidimensional strategies that aim to create the basis for lasting peace. In addition, women present particular skills, attitude and sensitivities that constitute precious resources in addressing SGBV and in implementing peace-building strategies. Women are an important resource, and consequently, overlooking their capacities and commitment to peace-building is an indication of bad planning. This refers both to women coming from the international community who may participate in peace missions (as members of the military sector, experts, planners and so on), and women from local communities directly involved in post-conflict dynamics. Nevertheless, in the past, the role of women in peace-building, recovery and development has been always marginalized, as it happened in many other fields as for example politics or diplomacy, wasting talents and skills that may be useful in creating peace, justice and equality. Over time, the international community has become

aware of these trends, and has slowly started to recognize the importance of the female contribution in peace-building: this is why recently, a specific legal basis that support the implementation of gender mainstream and special women's protection in conflict and post-conflict environments has been created: the most important is UNSCR 1325 (2000), followed by UNSCR 1820 (to 2008), UNSCR 1888 (2008), UNSCR 1889 (2009), UNSCR 1960 (2010), UNSCR 2122 (2013). Since the introduction of the first one of these UN resolutions, the SCR 1325 in 2000, a set of peace missions that focus on gender mainstream and try to implement the active involvement of women in peace-building has been deployed around the world. This work has been reported some specific examples of UN peace-building missions which clearly refer to the SCR 1325 in their mandate: Burundi (ONUB), Cote d'Ivoire (MINUCI and ONOCI), Liberia (UNMIL), Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL and UNIOSIL), Sudan (UNIMIS and UNIMISS), The Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC and MONUSCO), and in Haiti (MIPONUH and MINUSTAH), to show that the implementation of SCR 1325 is hard to achieve, but where it has been implemented effectively, it has led to very positive results. For example, the implementation of educational programmes for women has enabled them to participate for the first time in political and economic life, working and raising their voices for their rights and needs. This is particularly crucial in post conflict areas where the previous social, political and economic systems have been destroyed by the war. In the aftermath of the conflict there is an open window of new opportunities to reshape and re-build a new and better order, in which women can finally find a space. On the other hand, the main obstacles to implementing gender mainstream in peace-building are: the lack of resources for supporting specific programmes, training courses, logistics and personnel; the lack of trained members of staff and experts, both from the international and local communities; male opposition and scepticism that leads to obstructionism and/or very limited efforts in fostering gender mainstream at operational, field and local levels, as well as in decision-making and at a political level; inadequate information about women's potential and rights. There is no doubt that these recent new strategies focused on the role of women in peace-building, have big potential for successfully fulfilling the mission's mandate, but their practical implementation requires big coordinated efforts and enormous commitment by a broad range of actors in the long term. The introduction of Gender mainstream in peace-building (as in many other fields) brings significant changes, not only in the targets, the strategies and in the practical way the peace missions are carried out, but also it results in significant changes in the minds of

the people involved: it destroys old taboos and patriarchal social structures and conceptions which value women less and assume they are less capable than men and which believe that women should be confined to the home. These big and deep changes require a strong willpower by those involved, especially women, who are often prevented or marginalized in participating. To achieve both concrete gender equality targets and peace, continuous adjustments are necessary over time, such as more extensive training and education, greater human and economic resources, and a full and active involvement and commitment of women as well as of men. It is a matter of fact the women and men share the same world with the same problems, thus, there is no possible successful solution to any problem if there is no cooperation between them. They represent two sides of the same coin: each one with its own features, skills, abilities, and resources that, if combined, could become a promising strategy in fighting violence and building peace across the world.

BIBLIOGRAFY

Boutros-Ghali, UN Secretary-General, *“Report of the UN Secretary-General: Agenda for Peace”* - United Nations - June 1992.

Brahimi L., chairman of UN Commission, *“Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations”* (Brahimi Report) - United Nations - 17 August 2000.

Centre for Research on Peace and Development (CRPD), *“Human Security: A critical review of the literature”*, Working Paper No. 11, Belgium, January 2012.

Chant S. with Craske N., *“Gender in Latin America”* – Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, New Jersey (USA) - 2003.

Coalition of: Plan Sierra Leone, Concern Worldwide, IBIS and Catholic Relief Services (CRS), *“Give Us a Chance - National Study on School-Related Gender-Based Violence in Sierra Leone”* - (2010).

Commission on Human Security (CHS) - *“Human security now”* - New York – 2003.

Global Action to Prevent War (GAPW), NGO Working Group on Women Peace and Security (NGOWG), Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) - Report written by Suthanthiraraj K. and Ayo C., *“Promoting Women’s*

Participation in Conflict And Post-Conflict societies. How Women Worldwide are Making and Building Peace – (August 2010). Web Page: www.globalactionpw.org

Human Security Report Project (HSRP), “*Human Security Report 2012*” - affiliated with Simon Fraser University (SFU), Vancouver, Canada, (the HSRP was formerly located at the University of British Columbia and known as the Human Security Centre) – 2012.

Johnson F. Hilde (special representative of the UN Secretary-General in South Sudan), “*Empower the Women of the World's Youngest Nation - South Sudan*” – The World Post online blog: www.huffingtonpost.com/hilde-johnson/south-sudan-women_b_2828514.html - Posted 03/07/2013.

Kirby P. - “*How is rape a weapon of war? Feminist International Relations, modes of critical explanation and the study of wartime sexual violence*” - European Journal of International Relations, & Dec 2013, Published by SAGE (www.sagepublications.com) Online version of the article: www.ejt.sagepub.com/content/19/4/797

Knez S., “*Human rights in conflicts – how to better synergize the efforts of official actors and of civil society*” - SHUR final conference on “Human Rights in conflict – the role of civil society” - Rome, 4-6 June 2009 - Panel on Conflict transformation and civil society engagement.

Odanović G. “*Participation of Women in UN Peacekeeping Operations*” - Western Balkan Security Observer (WBSC) – scientific article N°16 – (2010).

Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), “*High-Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) on National Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) in Latin America and the Caribbean*” - Report of the High-Level Policy Dialogue - Santiago, Chile, 19 -21 November 2007.

Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), “*High-Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) on National Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) in Africa*” - Report of the High-Level Policy Dialogue - Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 6-8 February 2008.

Pampell Conaway C., *“The Role of Women in Stabilization and Reconstruction”*
SERIES NO. 3, US, August 2006.

Peacekeeping Operations United Nations (DPKO) - *“Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective In Multidimensional Peace Operation”*, New York: United Nations, July 2000.

Peacekeeping Operations United Nations (DPKO) - Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit Department - *“Gender Resource Package for Peacekeeping Operations”* - New York: United Nations, July 2004.

Skjelsbaek Inger, *“Sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict settings”*, Norwegian Peace-Building Resource Centre NOREF, March 2013, www.peacebuilding.no

UN Association for Canada - *The Report on the UNA-Canada 50 the Anniversary of UN Peacekeeping International Panel Series 2006 – 2007 “Peacekeeping to Peace-building: Lessons from the Past Building for the Future”*.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Gender and Development Programme (GIDP), *“UNDP Learning and Information Pack. Gender Analysis”* written by Keays T., McEvoy M., and Murison S., with help of Jennings M. and Karim F. - New York 10017, January 2001. Online source: <http://www4.worldbank.org/afr/ssatp/Resources/HTML/GenderRG/Source%20%20documents/Tool%20Kits%20&%20Guides/Gender%20Mainstreaming/TLGEN1%20UNDP%20Gender%20Mainstreaming%20Learning%20Manual%20and%20Toolkit/TLGEN1.6%20UNDP%20GenderAnalysis%20toolkit.pdf>

United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) - *“Ten-year Impact Study on Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security in Peacekeeping”* - (2010) Final Report - Peacekeeping Best Practices Section Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training Department of Peacekeeping Operations United Nations Secretariat One UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017, USA.

West Africa Network for Peace-Building (WANEP) - *“Annual Report”* 2010.

WEBSITE SOURCES

Peace Women Project Website - [“ www.PeaceWomen.org”](http://www.PeaceWomen.org) - Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) - United Nations Office, New York, NY 10017, USA.

United Nation Website – www.un.org

United Nations peace-building support office – Webpage:
www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/pbso/pbun-shtml

United Nations Peacekeeping Website – www.un.org/en/peacekeeping

Woman Watch Web Page: www.un.org/