

WOMEN'S WORLD



Isis-Women's International Cross-Cultural Exchange
(Re)creating Peace Internationally

20 years of UNSCR 1325 in South Sudan, Uganda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo and Nepal.

From Promises on Paper to Changing Women's Lives

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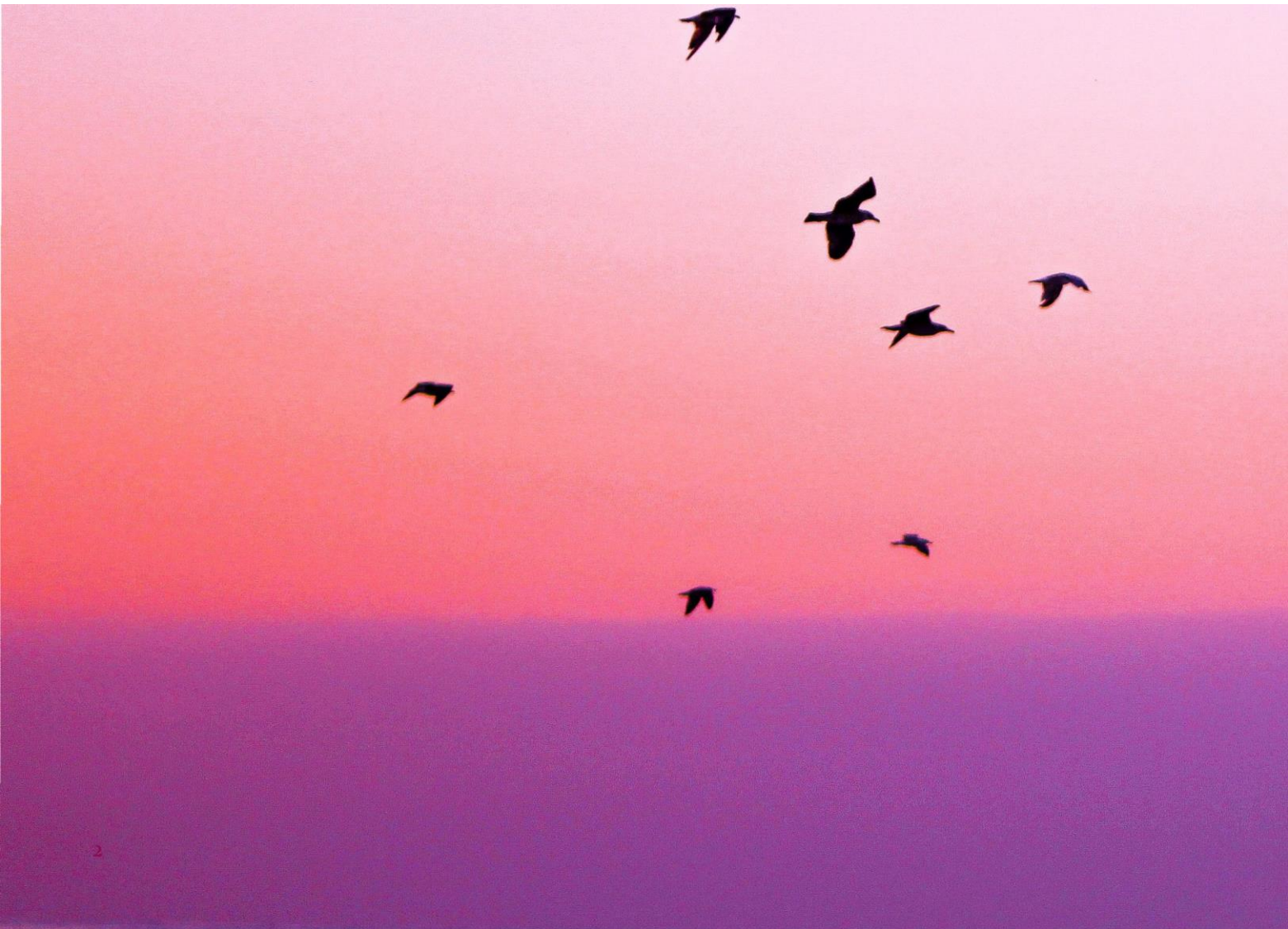
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Letter to the Readers

Welcome to the 49th edition of the Women's World magazine. Since 1983, Isis-WICCE has used this publication to connect readers with the ideas, actions and realities of women human rights defenders and activists around the world. In each issue, we intend to expose you to the world that we seek to transform, by equipping and standing with women leaders to recreate peace across Asia, Africa and globally.

This Women's World follows Isis-WICCE's 2017 International Exchange Programme Institute that brought together 15 women from Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Nepal and Uganda to reflect, strategise and take collective action on present-day peace and security concerns of women and girls. This cohort is especially important to us as it targeted young women leaders, the future of our movement, our continents and our vision of women recreating peace.

The magazine therefore focuses on the women, peace and security issues discussed during the institute, as informed by the UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) 1325 and 2250, Sustainable Development Goals (5, 16) and related national frameworks (including national action plans). It takes a closer look at the state of conflict and post-conflict in the 5 countries, progress in implementing UNSCR 1325 which centres women's concerns as well as women's responses to peace and security gaps and challenges.

We hope that by reading this you will have a richer understanding not only of women's experiences of conflict and insecurity but also of their agency in recreating peace as defined by women and girls in these countries.

This issue is also particularly meaningful as it will be the last Women's World magazine with Isis-WICCE as the publisher. Following months of internal reflection, conversations and feedback from partners as well as those less acquainted with Isis-WICCE, we have made a decision to change the name of the organisation.

Isis-WICCE will now go by the name Women's International Peace Centre (WIPC). We are pleased with this positive change as the new name continues to reflect our important focus on women and peace without the negative association the name of the goddess Isis has attracted in recent years. We look forward to continuing this journey with you and to many more editions of Women's World, published by WIPC.

Happy reading!

Helen Kezie-Nwoha,
Executive Director
Isis-WICCE

Table of Contents

Acronyms	5
Introduction	6
South Sudan	9
A Long History of Civil War and its Impact on Sudanese Women	10
Limited Gains for Women and Peace	11
A Ceaseless War on Women	12
Which Way Forward?	13
Democratic Republic of Congo	15
Protecting Congolese Women from Violence; Commitments Made and Broken	16
Women Activists Filling the Gaps	18
Burundi	20
Progress through Women's Participation	21
Progress Eroded	21
Women for Peace in the Current Crisis	23
Nepal	24
A People's War, and a Women's War	25
The Most Promising National Action Plan	25
Lessons for a New National Action Plan	27
Uganda	29
No Justice, No Peace	30
Women Taking the Risk for Peace	32
Implementing 1325 in a Fragile Democracy	33

List of Acronyms

CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement (South Sudan)
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Accord (Nepal)
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
GoDRC	Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IGAD	International Governmental Authority on Development
MONUSCO	United Nations' Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC
MoPR	Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation
NAP	National Action Plan on 1325
NURP	Northern Uganda Reconstruction Program
NUSAF	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund
PoC	Protection of Civilian camps or sites
PRDP	Peace Recovery and Development Plan
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SPLA	South Sudan People's Liberation Army SPLM
	South Sudan People's Liberation Movement
TGoNU	Transitional Government of National Unity
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees UNMISS
	United Nation Mission in the Republic of South Sudan
UNPBF	United Nations Peacebuilding Fund
UNSCR 1325	United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325
UNWomen	The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WPS Agenda	The International Agenda for Women, Peace and Security UNSCR1325, 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106 and 2122 Resolutions

Introduction

Following intense advocacy by the international women's movement, led by the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (now UNWomen), Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, then Minister of Women's Affairs for Namibia (then chair of the Security Council) and Bangladeshi Ambassador to the UN Anwarul Chowdhury (then President of the Security Council) UN Security Council Resolution number 1325 was passed in October 2000.


UNSCR1325 represented the first time in 54 years of existence that the Security Council acknowledged the disproportionate and specific impact that armed conflict has on women and recognized the undervalued contribution women make to conflict prevention, resolution, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding.

The women who championed this groundbreaking resolution were responding to increasing civilian casualties of war (and thus an increasing impact on women, not just as victims of violence, but as caregivers in times of peace and conflict); a result of new weapons and changing conflict patterns. As gender roles and battlegrounds have shifted globally, there has also been an increase in the participation of women as armed actors in conflict.



UNSCR 1325 is a landmark achievement in international women's rights and an important tool for advocacy but its accountability gaps are significant.





The Balkan conflict of the 1990s was the first case in which the world saw systematised use of rape as a weapon of war. Through their gendered roles, women are responsible for the stability of the household. They are the genetic and maternal carriers of community; carers and providers, they represent the vitality of a nation. Sexual violence is a strategy of modern warfare precisely because of its ability to dismantle the ties that hold communities together as women are ostracized for having been raped. It is also seen as a tool of ethnic cleansing when victims are forced to carry the offspring of the enemy. This is one way in which the patriarchal gender dynamics behind gender inequality, such as the idea that men and not women are able to pass on their ethnic lineage, also fueling and perpetuating conflict and violence.

Women's access to health service provision remains a challenge, with 99% of maternal deaths occurring in the developing world and at a rate 2.5 times higher in conflict and post-conflict countries.

These multiple layers mean that women's role in peacebuilding must equally be amplified. Reserving seats at the peace negotiation table for warring parties rewards the very actors who wage war and ignores half of the population who are disproportionately affected by conflict.

Studies show that women's security is the most reliable indicator of a country's stability. When women are included in peace processes, there is a 20% increase in the probability of a peace agreement lasting at least 2 years, and a 35% increase in the probability of an agreement lasting at least 15 years¹.

Gender equality is not something governments should aspire to out of lip service, it is itself a source of sustainable peace and development. UNSCR1325 and later resolutions 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106 and 2122, as well as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 5 and 16, stand

¹ Laurel Stone (2015). Study of 156 peace agreements, controlling for other variables, "Quantitative Analysis of Women's participation in Peace Processes" in Reimagining Peacemaking: Women's Roles in Peace Processes, Annex II

in recognition of the gendered impact of conflict, and women's essential role in the peacebuilding, The seven resolutions together constitute the International Agenda for Women, Peace and Security (WPS Agenda).

UNSCR1325 and related international instruments are important tools for women's advocacy to better lives across the globe. These instruments have brought global attention to the impact of peace and conflict on women and girls,



and give women activists a concrete tool with which they can hold governments to account. As of September 2017, 69 UN member states had launched their own National Action Plans on 1325², the first step in domesticating and implementing the resolution nationally.

Still, in the 17 years since the passage of 1325, women continue to make up the majority of victims of violence. In the first decade since the passage of 1325, women's participation in formal peace processes actually declined, with fewer than 3% of signatories to peace agreements and less than 10% of negotiators being women³. There remains an alarming chasm between the promises professed in the women, peace and security agenda and the lived reality of women most affected by war.

As we will see in this issue, exemplified by the cases of DRC and South Sudan, sexual violence in conflict has not reduced since the passage of 1325, and has instead become increasingly systemic. Women's access to health service provision remains a challenge, with 99% of maternal deaths occurring in the developing world and at a rate 2.5 times higher in conflict and post-conflict countries⁴. The number of women displaced by conflict worldwide also remains

incredibly high and these women are, without exception, more vulnerable to sexual violence and have a more difficult time accessing vital health and education services.

UNSCR 1325 is a landmark achievement in international women's rights and an important tool for advocacy but its accountability gaps are significant. The resolutions lack of enforcement mechanisms means that while governments like Uganda publicly profess commitments to empowering women, they have not in practice and with financial backing shown sufficient political will to address women's issues

It is women who remain when men go to war, left to care for children, the elderly and the injured. It is they who become impoverished and must seek out other resources with which to feed and care for the family and it is displaced women who become more vulnerable to sexual violence.

in the realm of peace and security. Limited resource allocation towards the goals espoused in 1325 means that women continue to be excluded from decision-making and peacebuilding processes. They remain at great risk of sexual and gender-based violence, particularly in conflict and post-conflict situations and lack access to justice, mental and sexual health services in their countries. Efforts to buttress these gaps through subsequent resolutions and instruments like the SDGs have not changed the structural causes that deny women's full equality, and render them the biggest victims in a world bent on war. Even in a country like Nepal, where the state and the international community have come together in an unprecedented show of political will to deliver the most comprehensive National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325, this has not resulted in significant change in the lives of the women it purports to help. Examining the cases of South Sudan, Burundi, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo and Nepal, reveals the extent of these gaps and attempts women activists have made to address them, as well as recommendations for achieving the goals of the WPS Agenda.

² Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

³ UNWomen 2010

⁴ World Health Organization, Trends in maternal mortality: 1990 to 2015: Estimates by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and the United Nations Population Division, 2015

South Sudan

The 2011 promise of the world's youngest independent nation very quickly gave way to extended violent conflict characterised by high levels of sexual violence, and in 2017, a looming famine the likes of which the world has not seen in 3 decades. The people of South Sudan have been mired in a cycle of conflict that goes as far back as 1956. Sudan's independence from the British was almost immediately followed by civil war, as South Sudanese forces mobilised against a continuation of their marginalisation under the majority Arab, Muslim North.



A Long History of Civil War and its Impact on South Sudanese Women

While women's participation in the first civil war is not adequately documented, we know that they contributed to the effort by sheltering soldiers and victims of war and publicly protesting the government of Sudan. The first civil war ended in 1972 with a peace agreement that granted the South some autonomy as a self-governing region, only for war to break out again in 1983 with the formation of the South Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) under the leadership of John Garang. There were women on each side of the negotiating table during the Addis Ababa peace talks in 1972, representing the interests of the government and opposition respectively, rather than the interests of the women of Sudan. International sponsors of the peace talks did not allot specific funds for women's participation, nor influence the warring parties to meaningfully involve women and their specific concerns⁵.

It is not until the second Sudanese civil war that the country began to see an influx of unregulated small arms and light weapons, which replaced spears and became integral to the culture of South Sudan. Understandings of conflict also shifted with attacks on civilians (and therefore women and children), mutilations and sexual violence becoming more commonplace.

Between 1983 and 2005 1.9 million civilians were killed in the conflict, and more than 4million South Sudanese were forced to flee their homes. In addition to becoming targets of violence, women bore the brunt of the economic impact of the war. It is women who remain when men go to war, left to care for children, the elderly and the injured. It is they who become impoverished and must seek out other resources with which to feed and care for the family and it is displaced women who become more vulnerable to sexual violence. Advocacy by women's organisations including Sudanese Women's Voice for Peace, New Sudan

Women's Federation and New Sudan Women's Association drew the world's attention to the terrible impact of the war on women and children. Dr. John Garang formally recruited women into the resistance movement and a Women's Battalion (Katiba Banat) of the SPLA was formed in 1984. Their contribution led to the creation of the position of Director for Women's Affairs, later known as the Commission for Women, Youth and Social Welfare.

5 Republic of South Sudan National Action Plan 2015 - 2020 for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and related resolutions



Civil War came to an end in 2005 with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). Two different women's coalitions from Uganda were granted official observer status in the peace talks in Juba, but only at the end of the process and without a consultative role. No women were included as mediators or signatories to the CPA, and just 9% of witnesses to the signing were women⁶. In 2006, the Uganda Women's Peace Coalition formed a Women's Peace Caravan carrying a women's peace torch from Kampala to the site of the peace talks, in Juba, to protest the underrepresentation of women in the peace negotiations.

Limited Gains for Women and Peace

Following the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, much of the country continued to be afflicted by insecurity as a legacy of decades of war and an abundance of small arms and light weapons remained. Economic stagnation due to a lack of infrastructure and chronic capacity deficits at all levels of government and private sector meant that for too many, "peace" remained nominal. Still, between 2005 and 2015 is where the majority of South Sudan's gains around the WPS Agenda were registered. Following a referendum South Sudan gained its independence from the North in 2011 and ratified the transitional Constitution that promotes women's participation and gender equality. The new government signed both the Convention of Elimination of

all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and ratified and domesticated the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (the Maputo Protocol) in 2014. It also adopted the African Union's Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development strategy, which affirms the need to mainstream gender in nation-building.

The prevalence of rape as a tactic implies that it has become an acceptable practice by SPLA soldiers and affiliated armed militias.

In 2015 South Sudan developed and validated their National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325, "a framework to guide national decisions on defense, diplomatic, humanitarian and development activities to ensure that the provisions of the United Nations resolutions on women, peace and security are incorporated into the work of the South Sudanese Government, with the aim of reducing the impact of conflict on women and girls and increasing women's representation and participation in decision-making"⁷. Outside of the capital city Juba however, violent cycles of ethnic massacres and revenge killings meant that the illusion of peace was coming to an end.



⁶ UNWomen 2012: Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations: Connections between Presence and Influence

⁷ Republic of South Sudan National Action Plan 2015 - 2020 for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and related resolutions

Once again without official recognition or invitation, South Sudanese women refused to be left out of the peace process. In 2013 Women activists formed the South Sudan Women Operational Group in order to demand the inclusion and involvement of women in the ongoing Addis Ababa peace talks. A diverse group of women activists, grassroots leaders, parliamentarians, and civil society presented their request for participation in the peace process to the President and the parliament, only to be ignored. Undeterred, the women met the chief negotiator to call for a gender responsive peace agreement ending sexual and gender based violence, and a gender responsive New Deal in which women would form 25% of the negotiation team and be fully included in peace building initiatives. While the women were invited to witness the signing of the agreement, their demands were largely disregarded and the peace brokered by the agreement did not last long.

A Ceaseless War on Women

Efforts to regain a semblance of peace since 2015 have largely stalled with leaders Salva Kiir and Riek Machar backed by their respective supporters and retaliatory violence on both sides making power-sharing a difficult sell. Just two weeks after the signing of the NAP, war again broke out in South Sudan, with women again bearing a disproportionate burden. As described by a UN report, since 2013 the overwhelming majority of civilian casualties are the result of deliberate attacks on civilians, not the result of combat operations.

Two million people have fled their homes, 950,000 are displaced within South Sudan, 80,000 are seeking shelter at United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) bases, 290,000 have sought refuge in neighbouring countries, and an unknown number are displaced in remote areas with little or no access to humanitarian assistance, clean water or food. According to the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) 86% of South Sudanese refugees in Uganda are women and children⁸.

Sexual violence has become a defining feature of South Sudan's civil war over the past two years⁹. The absence of security and the ubiquity of armed men have worsened its prevalence as women increasingly report cases of sexual assault, gang rape, sexual mutilation and sexual slavery by government, opposition forces and fellow civilians.

Ethnically motivated sexual violence against women has become rife and is being used as a revenge tactic with armed groups of men carrying out premeditated gang rape 10,000 IDP women and girls face higher risks of sexual violence and lack access to health services. Since 2013 70% of women living in Protection of Civilian (PoC) camps in Juba had been raped, the vast majority by police or soldiers, and 80 % had been forced to watch someone else being assaulted¹⁰. The government of South Sudan still does not have the capacity to document, investigate or prosecute crimes of sexual violence, many of which were carried out by their own forces. South Sudan also lacks a functioning judicial system, without the human and material resources within the police and judiciary to punish offenders. There is no record of the police ever arresting anyone for murder in Juba¹¹. Customary courts, in which women lack representation or decision-making power often hamper efforts to prevent or punish sexual violence.

The South Sudan we want, seeks to ensure that the implementation of the peace agreement includes and works for women.

Both government forces and non-state groups are accused of targeting civilian populations on the basis of their ethnicity with massacres and sexual violence on what has been described as an "epic" and "unprecedented" scale. The prevalence of rape as a tactic implies that it has become an acceptable practice by SPLA soldiers and affiliated armed militias. Systematic destruction of towns and villages across southern and central Unity state in 2014 and 2015 by government forces and militia suggest, according to a UN report, a deliberate strategy to starve, terrorise and punish civilians, leading to famine conditions in parts of the country. Yet government continues to deny that sexual violence is occurring.

"There is no rape at all. For me, it is UNMISS who are causing this. For [we] as Dinka [the ethnic group that largely supports the government], the problem of rape is cursed. When you do it you will not be tolerated in the community. But this language of the media almost creates a lot of problems. They exaggerate. There is no need for the UN to come out and protect the women coming here from the PoC. Protect them from what?" Elias Biech, deputy mayor of Malakal city¹²

⁸ UNHCR, Number of refugees fleeing South Sudan tops 1.5 million, 10 February 2017, <http://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/2017/2/589dba9f4/number-refugees-fleeing-south-sudan-tops-15-million.html>

⁹ 2016 UN Human Rights Office report on South Sudan

¹⁰ Statement by Yasmin Sooka, Chair of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan at the 26th Special Session of the UN Human Rights Council, 14 December 2016, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21028&LangID=E>

¹¹ Assessment mission by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to improve human rights, accountability, reconciliation and capacity in South Sudan

¹² <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/jan/16/makeshift-justice-ill-protected-women-south-sudan-un-camp-malakal->



The failure of UNMISS peacekeepers to protect even those women living in PoC camps from sexual violence remains one of the deepest disappointments of the international community's commitment to women's peace and security. That UNMISS needs the permission of the government of South Sudan, whose forces are among the perpetrators of sexual violence, to patrol and prevent said violence calls into question the effectiveness of its mandate. Egregious impunity in South Sudan is not only a major hindrance to the implementation of 1325 with regards to preventing physical and sexual gender based violence, it is also one of the main drivers of the conflict, as cycles of revenge beget more violence.

To make matters worse South Sudan is on the cusp of a looming humanitarian crisis, with more than 5.5 million people at risk of famine in 2017. South Sudan continues to have some of the bleakest development indicators globally, with the highest maternal mortality rate in the world, almost twice that of the next country on the list. Poverty, the preponderance of child marriage, limited access to family planning services and the high rates of HIV/AIDs and sexual violence means that South Sudan has fallen far short of the commitments espoused in 1325.

Which Way Forward?

The length and complexity of the conflict in South Sudan makes lasting peace seem impossible and indeed sustainable peace is impossible if women's representation at the negotiating table is not enabled to be more inclusive, and of meaningful influence to the outcomes. An international community that rewards warring factions with a stake in the negotiation process, and cannot hold itself accountable for failing to protect South Sudan's women from horrific sexual violence, cannot hold any of the parties to the conflict accountable either. Implementing and enforcing the commitments of 1325 is not to be done in addition to seeking peace, it is the roadmap to peace.

South Sudan's Women groups, encompassing a broad-based representation of women must be empowered to participate in renewed peace processes from the outset and throughout all stages of negotiations. In order to participate in peace talks, all actors, mediators, the International Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD - the East African regional trade bloc), Friends of IGAD¹³, and all other parties to the conflict must guarantee that women's participation in talks is equal and meaningful, and ensure that barriers to participation are eliminated.



More female peacekeepers should be recruited to UNMISS and peacekeepers of all genders should be trained and supported in measures to prevent and respond to SGBV.

Women's groups are in the best position to begin the tough work of dismantling the gendered hierarchies in all forms of leadership in South Sudan, the inequality that underpins society, in order to address the root causes of the continued conflict. The South Sudan Women's Peace Network, representing a broad coalition in 2016 adopted a 7-point agenda. 'The South Sudan we want', seeks to ensure that the implementation of the peace agreement includes and works for women. The Taskforce on the Engagement of Women in Sudan and South Sudan has advocated tirelessly for women's inclusion in peace processes in both countries. Other organisations including Cordaid, EVE Organization, Isis-WICCE and Inclusive Security have worked to support South Sudanese women to articulate their interests and bear influence on reconciliation processes, and in peace and nation building.

The 1325 National Action Plan should be allocated financial resources and enforcement mechanisms to ensure implementation. The Transitional Government of National Unity (TGoNU) of the Republic of South Sudan must be held to account to its citizens' wishes as expressed by the Transitional Constitution, including fulfilling the quota for women's representation in political processes and security forces. The government and international community must empower women to fill those roles, including setting specific targets for the improved recruitment, retention and promotion of women in armed forces and in the leadership of security institutions.

Every soldier deployed must be vetted, trained and held accountable for their actions, and government in turn must be held to account for this.

A real investment must be made in order to strengthen national justice systems to investigate and prosecute Sexual and Gender-based violence (SGBV) and war crimes, instituting specific measures to ensure the active participation of women and civil society organizations in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of transitional justice mechanisms; creating legal empowerment initiatives that build women's confidence and access to legal systems, and enabling women to be active participants in navigating them. The government and international community should invest in those grassroots peacebuilding efforts that are the most relevant for communities affected by war, and which will most effectively empower women.

When famine gripped the country in 1998, it was local women who organized themselves to set up a feeding center, mobilizing their own resources to feed the hungry, before the humanitarian community arrived¹⁴. Women affected by humanitarian crises, including refugees, IDPs and stateless

women, must be supported to participate meaningfully and equally in community decision-making, leadership roles and the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of humanitarian interventions and obstacles to their full participation must be addressed.

A more robust and coordinated response from the UN, international and national partners should be employed to fight against SGBV and conflict-related sexual violence, including holding peacekeeping forces accountable for perpetrating sexual violence. The UN system must devote more resources to the protection of women IDPs and refugees, with the support of international partners. More female peacekeepers should be recruited to UNMISS and peacekeepers of all genders should be trained and supported in measures to prevent and respond to SGBV. Peacekeeping missions should work closely with women's groups to better protect women from violence. more support is needed for local women's rights organisations and advocates: not only in their efforts to help women and girls recover from the trauma and deprivations caused by conflict, but also in making sure that –from discussions within communities to national peace talks– women have an influential voice. UNMISS and any other peacekeeping force must work with traditional and religious leaders, including those responsible for customary justice systems, on SGBV and traditional practices that are harmful to women. Men must be involved in the response to SGBV.

Girls are often fed last in situations of food insecurity. Prioritizing women in food distribution has been shown to lower the prevalence of hunger. The international community should adopt service delivery measures that specifically target women and take into account the often disproportionate burden that women carry because of their roles as caregivers.

In the long term economic recovery programmes and macroeconomic policies that are gender-responsive and improve on women's economic security will be more successful in reversing decades of stagnated development.

None of these are new recommendations, they are the demands of the women of South Sudan as empowered by the commitments the Government of South Sudan and the international community have made in the WPS Agenda and the NAP. In order to best serve South Sudan's women 1325 must be given targets and indicators which are resourced, enforced, monitored, and evaluated¹⁵.

14 <https://www.inclusivesecurity.org/publication/engendering-responses-to-complex-emergencies-lessons-from-south-sudan/>

15 A Global Study on the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)

DR Congo

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is another nation which has been mired in conflict since independence. While the civil wars of 1996 - 2003, which resulted in over 5 million lives lost and one of the highest rates of sexual violence in the world, have ended, the country remains embroiled in violent political and economic crisis, as a result of a near-total absence of state authority.

Armed groups, from government forces to rebel militias continue to terrorise large parts of the country, particularly Eastern and Central Congo, funded in part by illegal mining. The current president's reluctance to relinquish power has led to fresh outbreaks of violence in the previously peaceful Kasai region, with more than 1.5 million Congolese forced to flee the violence in the past year alone¹⁶.

President Joseph Kabila's refusal to step down at the end of his mandate last year after 16 years in power has led to increased tensions and waves of protests across the country. Peace talks led by the Catholic Church, traditionally a strong political force in DRC have broken down and the president looks set to extend his mandate to 2019 and beyond. The killing of a local chief in Kasai province in 2016 has led to the creation of new rebel groups who have not shied away from visiting mass violence upon the local population.

Decades of protracted conflict have left Congolese society deeply marked. Corruption is widespread with local and national governments unaccountable to citizens. State institutions often play a predatory role with every aspect of bureaucratic life facilitated by corruption. This lawlessness affects many aspects of women's lives, from their access to basic services like health and education, to their ability to access justice.

It is estimated that up to 400,000 women were raped at the height of the civil war. The frequency of sexual violence in the DRC post-UNSCR-1325 was higher than the pre-UNSCR-1325 rate in the Rwandan conflict



DRC has one of the highest rates of sexual violence against women worldwide. At the height of the conflict it was labelled "the rape capital of the world", with UNWomen estimating that 1 million Congolese women have been raped. While these numbers may have gone down in recent years, with the government touting a much-disputed figure of a 50% reduction in sexual crimes the reality on the ground is much different and with renewed conflict, reports are that rape is once again on the rise¹⁷.

United Nations' Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) is the world's largest and most expensive peacekeeping mission, now almost 30 years in existence. As a UN body it is accountable to the commitments espoused in UNSCR 1325 and the WPS Agenda, yet it too is defined by a failure to bring accountability to Congo's women, with

its own peacekeepers accused of sexual crimes including rape and child prostitution. Despite several scandals exposing these gross abuses, it appears little has changed with five peacekeepers accused of acts of sexual abuse and exploitation in the first three months of 2017.

It is upon this background that the WPS agenda must be implemented in Congo. Disproportionately impacted by decades of war, sustainable peace in Congo is impossible until women are equally involved in peace processes, protected from sexual violence and the gross impunity around sexual violence comes to an end.

Protecting Congolese Women from Violence; Commitments Made and Broken

Following a series of civil wars which were largely fought on women's bodies, rape as a weapon of war may have reduced in parts of DRC where open conflict has ended, but the scars of war remain. It is estimated that up to 400,000 women were raped at the height of the civil war. The frequency of sexual violence in the DRC post-UNSCR-1325 was higher than the pre-UNSCR-1325 rate in the Rwandan conflict, in which between 250-500,000 women suffered sexual violence¹⁸, implying that the resolution was not effective in preventing an epidemic of sexual violence visited upon Congolese women.

Sexual violence against women in the DRC is still pervasive today, and according to women activists on the ground, may have risen in recent years as society reels from the impact of decades of conflict. Women remain vulnerable to violence and exploitation because of their reduced economic and cultural position. As described by Dr Denis Mukwege, the surgeon whose hospital has treated some 46,000 Congolese women for injuries resulting from rape, "What women endure in our societies in times of peace is a latent form of what they then suffer in times of conflict"¹⁹.

Thanks to the WPS Agenda and advocacy around it, MONUSCO has facilitated a number of campaigns against sexual violence in DRC. MONUSCO deployed Joint Protection Teams (JPTs) in war zones to assess and prevent occurrences of sexual violence and reports that these JPTs have been successful in reducing attacks on women. Overall, however, UNSCR1325-inspired initiatives in the DRC have not made an impact on rates of sexual violence in any significant way²⁰.

17 UNFPA figures indicate incidents of gender-based violence have decreased from 19,937 in 2013 to 19,192 in 2015 – a 4% drop. The number of rape victims coming to the Heal Africa hospital went up in the same period by 28%, and 2016 was on track for an 84% increase from 2013. Renewed violence in Kasai mean 2017 is on track for high numbers of rapes reported and unreported

18 http://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/Users/David/Downloads/text%20of%20QA%20for%20website.docx#_ftn12

19 <http://edition.cnn.com/2017/10/19/africa/denis-mukwege-congo-doctor-rape/index.html>

20 http://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/Users/David/Downloads/text%20of%20QA%20for%20website.docx#_ftn8

The government too, has committed to implementing 1325 and addressing the extreme scale and violence to which Congolese women are subjected. In 2014 the president appointed Jeanine Mabunda Special Adviser on Sexual Violence after intense international advocacy against the violence being visited upon Congolese women. Her high-profile appointment gave many hope that the Congolese government had renewed political will towards its commitments to women, peace and security that would end the epidemic of violence.



A special police unit for the protection of women and children supported by the UN is doing good work and was responsible for the arrest of an MP leading the militia that terrorised Kavumu village in South Kivu. Terror was spread through repeated cases of raping and gang-raping of 67 girls, of which some were as young as 18 months old.

In 2005 the Congolese government, through the Ministry for Women's Rights (Ministère de la Condition Féminine, later known as the Ministry of Gender, Family and Childhood), embarked on training programmes for civil servants in preparation for developing a NAP to deliver on those commitments. Pushing their government to live up to its promises, Women's NGOs developed a draft action plan of their own. It was not until 2010 that the government developed and adopted the NAP in a process led by the Ministry of Gender, Family and Childhood, and supported by UN Women. The NAP²¹ comprises three levels for the Resolution's implementation: a national steering committee, a provincial steering committee and a local steering committee. Implementation of the NAP however, only began in 2013, through the awareness-raising workshops organised by the national steering committee with the

support of the Swedish Embassy.

The Government of DRC (GoDRC) has created the National Council for Women, a Congolese state body responsible for monitoring the implementation of conventions and treaties ratified by DRC, and the National Office for the implementation of Resolution 1325 in 2009. It has developed legal codes and procedures to regulate the National Steering Committee for 1325; and approved budgets for implementation of the NAP and a national strategic document on mainstreaming gender in development programmes and policies has been updated. So far 2 out of DRC's 11 provinces (Katanga and South Kivu) have established a provincial steering committee. South Kivu steering committee has organised one workshop on disseminating the NAP with the support of the Swedish Development Cooperation (SDC). Congo has also achieved some success in training of military and police on sexual violence; and promoting women in the army and police.

Impacted by a lack of political will, technical know-how and financing, the implementation of the NAP has been slow. The Ministry of Gender lacks support, financial and otherwise, especially in its local arms. Civil servants lack the tools and necessary assistance to work effectively and use bribery and even extortion of victims to supplement their salaries, if they are paid one at all. A special police unit for the protection of women and children supported by the UN is doing good work and was responsible for the arrest of an MP leading the militia that terrorised Kavumu village in South Kivu. Terror was spread through repeated cases of raping and gang-raping of 67 girls, of which some were as young as 18 months old. However, its resources are extremely limited, and the work of the task force is impacted by endemic corruption in the wider police and army, about which little has been done. Investigations into the attacks have taken 4 years with some arrests made but many of the perpetrators are yet to see convictions. Some are reported to have bought their way out of jail for \$400. While investigations stalled for more than a year due to lack of funding and political will, one UN agency's response to the crisis was a "sensitisation campaign" including billboards denouncing child rape. In May 2017, thousands of violent criminals, including those arrested for the Kavumu crimes escaped a prison in Bukavu, South Kivu. Even though in some cases the court has awarded reparations for victims, no survivor of sexual violence in DRC has ever been paid and there has been little to no government assistance for victims.

"We think that the politics of destroying children is something decided on by the leaders of the country... Because we see government people coming to investigate and you expect a certain kind of help from the government. But nothing happens," stated a mother of one of the

21 (http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/drc_nap_2010.pdf)

victims²²

Ms Mabunda's office has been accused of doing nothing to address the epidemic of crimes against humanity being committed against Congo's girls and women. The Office of the Special Advisor on Sexual Violence has a budget of \$1million which has so far been used to hire a Washington PR office to improve the image of GoDRC among other things, and is fundraising for \$200,000 "to create a memorial garden to the country's rape survivors"²³

NAPs were conceived of as a way to strengthen accountability and implementation of the WPS resolutions but a trust accountability gap remains even in countries that have developed NAPs. Monitoring and evaluation reports of implementation are not generally accessible publicly, neither are peer evaluations of the same. Greater transparency on implementation of the NAPs, would allow actors to hold the government and international community to its commitment to the WPS Agenda. Despite a solid implementation mechanism and clear goals articulated in the NAP, without sufficient funding and political will to ensure consistent implementation, the strong National Action Plan in is unlikely that significant achievements will be realised in the implementation of 1325 in DRC.

At the regional level, DRC has adopted a sub-regional action plan for the implementation of 1325 under a sub-regional steering committee alongside Rwanda and Burundi with technical and financial support from Femmes Africa Solidarités. However, once again, the implementation of these instruments leave much to be desired. In 2017, both Burundi and DRC slide towards more conflict as a result of leaders flouting their constitutional order to hang on to power. Women have not been adequately represented, nor their needs taken into account in peace talks in DRC or Burundi including the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework agreement for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the region, signed in Addis Ababa in 2013²⁴.

As articulated in the Monrovia Call for Action on UNSCR 1325 the absence of an international accountability mechanism charged with monitoring the implementation of 1325 continues to present obstacles to the effective application of the resolution. As is the case with monitoring implementation of CEDAW, states should regularly report on their implementation of the WPS Agenda.

Women Activists Filling the Gaps

Women's organisations in Congo continue to carry out work in implementing 1325 with little support from GoDRC and waning support from the international community. Between 2013 and 2014 international aid towards gender equality and women's empowerment in DRC fell by \$40m²⁵. As described by one Congolese woman activist:

"after more than 17 years of involvement by the United Nations and three years after the UN's Global Summit on Ending Sexual Violence in Conflict, progress on the ground is minimal. The summit cost \$5.2m (\$6.9m) to host while we carry out our work with nothing" Justine Masika Bihamba, founder of Synergie des Femmes²⁶

In 2017 Synergie des Femmes coordinated 62 women leaders from each province to set up the Congolese Women's Forum for peace and equal political representation. As a result of their advocacy 6 women from the forum and 80 local women were represented in peace talks in the Ituri region, making up 20% of the peace table.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) DRC has trained its members through capacity building workshops, sharing UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan experiences with other countries, and contributing to the setup of WILPF Groups in Cameroon and Uganda.

Julienne Lusenge, Director of the Congolese Women's Fund and President of Congolese women's rights organization Solidarité Féminine pour la Paix et le Développement Intégral (SOFEPADI), stood before the Security Council as it marked the 15th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 in 2015 and said that "almost nothing has changed in critical situations for women in the Democratic Republic of the Congo," since the resolution came into being.

Women-led organisations such as Lusenge's SOFEPADI work tirelessly and without the sustained support called for in UNSCR 1325 to provide survivors of sexual violence holistic care, medical, psychological, financial, and legal support, as well as promoting the participation of women in decision making structures.

22 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/03/kavumu-village-39-young-girls-rape-justice-denied-congo>
 23 <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2016/dec/07/democratic-republic-congo-the-million-dollar question: how to stop rape-sexual-violence>
 24 <http://jemmeaufone.net/en/news/item/106-update-on-the-state-of-the-implementation-of-resolution-1325-in-the-drc>
 25 OECD statistics
 26 <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/oct/09/the-rape-capital-of-the-world-two-women-in-democratic-republic-congo-dont-see-it-that-way>



Burundi

Burundi is another example of a postcolonial country in near-constant conflict since its independence from Belgium in 1962. Peace agreements signed in 2006 and 2010 do not negate the fact that ethnic tensions laid during the colonial era have erupted in open violence characterized by ethnic massacres in 1965, 1969, 1972, 1988, and 1993. Today the country threatens to return to open conflict as a result of President Nkurunziza's decision to run for a third term against the national constitution. More than 400,000 Burundians have fled the country following the most recent outbreak of violence.

This is despite the fact that Burundi's government has previously been lauded for its 30% representation of women as elected officials, a proportion higher than that in many industrialized nations. Much of the country's gender-sensitive laws and legal frameworks are a result of advocacy by Burundian women, who insisted on their participation in the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement of 2000, as empowered by UNSCR 1325. Through expanding women's presence and participation in peacebuilding Burundi has a chance at creating lasting peace.



Progress through Women's Participation

Over 300,000 lives were lost in conflict in Burundi between 1993 and 2005, and many more were displaced from their homes. Burundian women responded to the conflict by connecting communities across ethnic lines, both in the country and in exile, and insisting upon dialogue as an alternative to warfare. Women formed two umbrella organizations – Collectif des Associations et ONGs Feminines du Burundi (CAFOB) and Dushirehamwe in order to advocate more effectively at the grassroots, national and regional level.

The women's movement continued to advocate fiercely for women's representation and when the new Constitution was unveiled in 2005 it included the 30% quota.

When negotiations to end the civil war began in Arusha in 2000, there were no women represented at the peace talks. Women's groups mobilized to demand representation, and were initially rejected by the negotiating parties. As a result of persistent pressure, and backed by the principles of the WPS Agenda, negotiators allowed 7 women permanent observer status at the peace talks which, despite their limited role, allowed the women's movement to lobby more effectively.

A month before the signing of the agreement, women organised the All-Party Burundi Women's Peace Conference. Aiming to represent all of Burundi's women, from political parties, women's organizations, refugee groups and IDP camps, the conference ended with a declaration by the women urging the negotiating parties to adopt a gender perspective in all issues, and guarantee women 30% representation in the executive, legislative and judiciary branches of government, and in all bodies created by the peace agreement. Their relentless advocacy paid off when many of the women's recommendations were adopted and incorporated into the peace agreement, including a call for the elimination of all laws that discriminated against women, an end to impunity for gender-based violence, recognition of the right of women to own property and land, and equal access to education for girls.

The warring parties first argued against the 30% quota stating that there were not enough qualified women to fill the quota. When the transitional government was constituted to draft the new constitution, women were granted 4 out of 26 ministerial positions (15.3%), 17 out of 186 seats in the National Assembly (9.1 %), and 10 out

of 54 seats in the newly established Senate (18.5 %)²⁷. The women's movement continued to advocate fiercely for women's representation and when the new Constitution was unveiled in 2005 it included the 30% quota.

As a result of women's participation in the peace talks there were significant advancements in women's political role in Burundi. In addition to its high proportion of women in official positions, Burundi is recognized for having robust participation of women in civil society. Local women's organisations pushed their government to fulfill commitments made to implement 1325 and develop their National Action Plan. They also used the WPS Agenda to push for women's participation in local and national elections.



Progress Eroded

The 2010 elections revealed a Burundi that was still struggling to leave the spectre of civil war behind. Following an election characterised by the detention and killing of opposition leaders, and restrictions on freedom of the press, the government of Burundi launched their National Action Plan to implement 1325 in December 2011 and a Steering Committee was created to implement the NAP.

Analysis of the NAP has shown it to be extensive and defined for a post-conflict country. It includes priority areas for action, a very detailed timeline and an expected cost table. As a result of these commitments by the Government, Burundi has achieved a number of actions related to the WPS Agenda; free primary education, medical care for pregnant women and children under the age of 5 and microcredit support fund for rural and peri-urban women in 8 of Burundi's 18 provinces. To combat the disproportionate impact of GBV on women both in conflict and post-conflict settings, Burundi has established

²⁷ http://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/partpol_postconburundinepal_falch_2010_0.pdf



Attitudes towards women's participation at the local level continue to limit women's effectiveness. Men dominate roles related to governance, including those related to conflict resolution such as the *bashingantahe*

a comprehensive GBV center and in 2016 announced a new GBV law. Burundi has also adopted a National Strategy to combat GBV and formulated a National Strategy for Gender Integration in the National Defense Force (2013–2016) to address representation of women in the armed forces.

A number of factors limit the effectiveness of institutional gender mechanisms. Changes in the ministry's leadership, have affected the continuity of gender policy and action. Institutions that were developed to support these policies, like the Gender Sector Group are not prioritised or funded and fail to meet regularly. Most significantly, Burundi's progress is threatened by the possibility of renewed and protracted conflict. As a result, there is evidence that momentum towards the realisation of the WPS Agenda in Burundi is being eroded. Following tensions exposed by the 2010 election cycle, political parties, including the opposition and those in exile, met in 2012 in Caux, Switzerland, however there were no women representatives at these talks.

The entire budget for the Ministry of Gender, which would be the body held responsible for implementing the WPS Agenda, is only 0.7% of the national budget, and it was not successful in advocating for the enactment of the draft Law

on Inheritance, Matrimonial Regimes and Gifts as called for in the NAP. The NAP expired in 2016 and there appears to be no plans to develop a new plan. The recently developed National Public Administration Reform Program (NPARP) which aims to modernize the sector does not mention gender mainstreaming nor women's participation in public administration. A National Gender Policy 2012-2025 has been developed, but mechanisms to implement the policy have not yet been put in place.

Promising legislation will remain just that, promising as long as political will falters and gaps in implementation exist. These gaps are particularly stark in the area of GBV, where the laws are there but women continue to lack access to justice as a result of patriarchal attitudes towards women, and their limited participation in decision-making, particularly at the local level.

The quota guarantees presence but not effectiveness of women in government bodies. Where there is no quota, only 20.6 percent of local councilors and 6.3 percent of colline chiefs are women²⁸. Attitudes towards women's participation at the local level continue to limit women's effectiveness. Men dominate roles related to governance, including those related to conflict resolution such as the

28 <https://banyanglobal.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/USAID-Burundi-Gender-Analysis-Final-Report-2017.pdf>

bashingantahe²⁹. The limited numbers of women in these bodies, which are often called upon to resolve domestic disputes and respond to GBV are a result, not only of the absence of legal provisions guaranteeing representation at this level, but also from low literacy rates and cultural attitudes. Women traditionally are not expected to speak in public, and those who do are often stigmatized, though attitudes are changing in urban areas. The 2010 Burundi Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) found that 72.9% of adult women and 44 percent of men feel that a husband has the right to hit his wife. On the other hand, a 2015 Afrobarometer study found 81 percent of respondents in Burundi are in favor of men and women having the same rights and opportunities to be elected. As a result of sustained advocacy, attitudes are changing slowly, and women are being integrated into local decisionmaking institutions like the bashingantahe.

As a post-conflict nation, Burundi faces added barriers to addressing rape and sexual violence. A deterioration of morals during conflict, limited capacity of the justice sector and resulting impunity in addressing rape continue to be significant barriers in achieving the pillars of 1325 that promote prevention of sexual violence and protection of women.

Where government institutions falter, Burundi's women's organisations step into the gap. Civil society organizations push the government to deliver on commitments to mainstreaming gender in women, peace and security policies. A number of organisations are part of a coalition monitoring the resolution's implementation and even more, while not specifically addressing UNSCR 1325, work around issues in the resolution, for example offering psychosocial support for survivors of SGBV. The Association of Burundi women lawyers supports women's access to justice in family law, land and criminal law.

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Women for Peace in the Current Crisis

Each election cycle since the Arusha Accord has exposed fault lines that threaten to return Burundi to open conflict. Repression of oppositional political actors has created a climate of mistrust with many being forced to return to exile. In 2015 this came to a head when Nkurunziza defied the Constitution to stand for a third presidential term.

Thousands have been arrested and killed for participating in peaceful demonstrations and a failed coup d'état has led to a further clampdown on oppositional views. While the ruling party continues to resist peace talks, the crisis in Burundi becomes more complex

When the Burundian joint steering committee of the Peace Building Fund was formed, women were not

Crucial for addressing the nation's return to conflict is responding to the toxic masculinity and patriarchal structures that buttress conflict.

represented. International Alert and its partner, the coalition Dushirehamwe, lobbied the UN Peacebuilding Commission to recognize women's contribution and essential role in peacebuilding. Dushirehamwe now represents women's organisations on the UN Peacebuilding Fund's (UNPBF) steering committee and works with the security sector to mainstream gender.

Since January 2015, supported by the UN Peacebuilding Fund, with funding from the UN Peacebuilding Fund, the



Women Network for Peace and Dialogue has worked with government, CSOs, and communities to prevent violence and conflict. The network calls on mediators, who are often women, to encourage dialogue as an alternative to violence, and counter rumours with verifiable information, a valuable role since the government shut down independent media outlets in May 2015.

The Women's network calls for "a balanced participation of men and women in decision-making and peace consolidation dialogue" and in September 2017 launched a common agenda. Crucial for addressing the nation's return to conflict is responding to the toxic masculinity and patriarchal structures that buttress conflict.

²⁹ Customary decision-making structures.

Nepal

Nepal's National Action Plan for UNSCR1325 and 1820 was launched in 2010 to much fanfare. Nepal was the first South Asian country to launch its NAP, "developed out of one of the most, if not the most, consultative process including 52 district level consultations, 10 regional consultations, and separate special consultations with women and girls directly affected by conflict³⁰". Over 3000 participants contributed to the process, developing over 1500 action points under the five pillars of the NAP. Following a 10-year conflict in which a 40% female Maoist Guerilla force fought to overthrow a centuries-old monarchy, the international community and Nepali government joined hands in a show of political will for the WPS Agenda. It appeared that the ideals behind recognising and protecting women's unique role in peacebuilding would have no better chance to succeed than in Nepal. There has been no evaluation of Nepal's NAP since it expired in 2016 but development actors agree that its implementation has been a hard lesson in the challenges of implementing even the strongest NAP to create meaningful change in the lives of conflict-affected women.

30 http://peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/nepal_specificity_pournik_2014.pdf



A People's War, and a Women's War

Women and girls were deeply affected by the 10 year "People's War" between the Nepali government and Maoist forces. Estimated figures show more than 200 000 people were displaced, 14 000 were killed, and 1400 disappeared. 4000 women became widows in this war of which torture, kidnap, rape and forcible recruitment were features. The Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) was signed in 2006, ending a centuries-old monarchy to become a federal republic.

Still women refused to allow themselves to be marginalised and when the time came to draft the interim constitution, women's organisations organised a sit-in demanding representation.

Based on the ideals upon which the Maoists had waged their war, this was an opportunity for Nepal to address deeply-embedded inequalities across gender, ethnicity, language and caste and foster equality and inclusion. However a familiar post-conflict dynamic emerged following the war in which men attempted to reassert their authority by marginalising the very women who had played an essential role during the war. As a result there were no women including in the peace process and the CPA only has one reference to the rights of women and makes no reference to 1325. Still women refused to allow themselves to be marginalised and when the time came to draft the interim constitution, women's organisations organised a sit-in demanding representation. Through this process they ensured that 4 women were among the 16 member committee who drafted the constitution, which included the clause guaranteeing women an eighth representation in the Constituent Assembly.

The impressive rhetoric of the post-conflict process, as exemplified by the NAP, has yet to translate into changes in the lives of women and marginalized groups. Those waiting for justice; the families of the disappeared, survivors of sexual violence, the displaced, have yet to see it. Those women who joined Maoist forces defied Nepal's social taboos³¹ and following the war continue to be stigmatized and find it difficult to reintegrate at home. Underrepresented in the leadership during the war, excluded from the peace process, Nepal's NAP was an opportunity to address these underserved women.

The Most Promising National Action Plan

The Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MoPR), was established in Nepal in 2007 following the CPA and new government. Both local and international women's NGOs mobilized to advocate for a NAP under the MoPR, rather than the Ministry for Women, Children and Social Welfare, believing strongly that the NAP is not just women's agenda. Through the MoPR, the NAP would draw on a wide range of stakeholders from various ministries. As the UN approached the 10 year anniversary of UNSCR1325 there was momentum from both within and without the Nepali government to develop a NAP. Through a 10-month, highly consultative process which included meetings in 52 districts to ensure buy-in, UNSCR1325's most comprehensive NAP was developed and launched in New York at the 55th session of the Commission on the Status of Women in 2011.

"The Global Study on 1325 recommends essential elements for a good NAP and the Nepal NAP contained all of them: comprehensive goals, strategic objectives, specific actions, indicators, clear lines of responsibilities and time frame³² " states an academic analysis of the NAP. The Nepal Peace Trust Fund allocated NPR 844.5 million (around US\$ 7.9 million) of its donor-funded budget to fund ten NAP projects under 10 separate ministries. A significant proportion of funding went to security and defense sector, training police on UNSCR 1325 as well as some infrastructure projects, like building a women's barracks and childcare facilities for the military.



The Nepali Army has developed several training manuals on gender and the number of women serving continues to increase annually. Nepal is a contributor to UN Peacekeeping Missions, with a minimum of 3% women serving.

³¹ <http://operation1325.se/en/projekt/a-good-example-nepal>

³² <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/77015/1/blogs.lse.ac.uk-1325%20is%20that%20a%20taxi%20number%20Implementation%20of%20the%20National%20Action%20Plan%20on%201325%20and%201820%20in%20Nepal%20Pun.pdf>

Development partners also provided technical support to the NAP projects, most of which were short-term, 2 - 3 year projects in a few districts. Projects focused on developing training manuals and capacity-building of staff and stakeholders as well as awareness-raising on UNSCRs 1325 and 1820. As a result the successes of Nepal's first NAP have largely been in raising awareness of the WPS Agenda in Nepal's government officials and security services, as well as an increase in women's participation. The Nepali Army has developed several training manuals on gender and the number of women serving continues to increase annually. Nepal is a contributor to UN Peacekeeping Missions, with a minimum of 3% women serving. However this is still far below the constitutional mandate of 33%. The Nepal Police has developed a Gender Policy and a Code of Conduct Against Gender Based Violence.

of women in decision-making in Nepal, including but not limited to national commitments to the WPS Agenda.

Despite seeming to have every element required for a successful NAP, the list of challenges remain longer than its achievements. GBV remains high in Nepal, and historically unequal relations between men and women are slow to change. Traditions that are harmful to women, including the dowry system are still commonly practiced, preventing many women from accessing health and education services and living lives of dignity. Women who faced sexual violence during the conflict have yet to receive justice because of laws and policies that impede victim's access to legal recourse. Those women who were forced into prostitution are not even considered to be victims by the wider Nepali society. Even though the NAP recognises that Nepali women



Traditions that are harmful to women, including the dowry system are still commonly practiced, preventing many women from accessing health and education services and living lives of dignity.

Following the new Constitution of 2015, which guarantees the rights of Nepali women as full and equal citizens, Nepal still has over 110 discriminatory laws currently in place. In 2013 the Election Commission issued a Gender and Inclusion Policy to increase women's participation in politics. The Ministry of Local Development and Federal Affairs has a provision that 10% of budget should go towards promoting women's empowerment. A number of factors have contributed to this atmosphere of greater inclusion

suffered from sexual violence during the conflict, the statutory limit on reporting a rape to the police (35 days), the narrow definition of rape in the Civil Code (limited to vaginal penetration), the absence of official statistics on rape and sexual violence, the fact that many of the perpetrators of sexual violence have been granted amnesty and are part of the new government, and the significant stigma around sexual violence victims are significant obstacles to justice and compensation for victims.

Nepal also remains one of the few countries in which citizenship is passed on through the male parent only. Unwed women, some of whose partners died or disappeared during the conflict are unable to confer their citizenship to their children.

The Ministry of Local Development and Federal Affairs has a provision that 10% of budget should go towards promoting women's empowerment.

Addressing and preventing violence against women, one of the key pillars of UNSCR1325 involves addressing the root causes of gender inequality, which cannot be done in projects funded by development partners who require defined results within a short time. The "projectisation" of the NAP was one of the key challenges to its effective implementation.

The WPS Agenda and the development of the NAP was constructed at the international level and adopted by the Nepali government as a development project. Despite being developed as part of a consultative process, implementation of the NAP was understood as a development project, with fixed budgets and defined indicators for actions intended to produce specific outputs in a limited number of districts. As an issue conceived at the international level, it had to be translated and internalized by policy actors, so much of the budget of the first NAP was spent on trainings and developing manuals and much of it was spent in the security sector. The NAP became a policy document for government, to be applied only in government programs.

While a year was spent developing the NAP, it appears implementation was poorly conceived, further compounding its limitations. Funding was spent training beneficiaries without a budget being set aside for beneficiaries to carry out related or follow-up activities. Despite being called for in the NAP, no Information Centre to keep record of all NAP projects was set up, resulting in duplications of programmes. Even though money was allocated for monitoring, only two monitoring reports were prepared because planners failed to account for other resources, time and human, to carry out the work. Even though the NAP included monitoring guidelines, no field visit was ever carried out. No money was allocated for a final evaluation. According to one researcher this shows that the NAP was an outcome and an end goal in itself:

"The reliance on experts' knowledge and co-option of the WPS agenda by the development organisations was

the main reason for the failure of the first NAP in Nepal³³" states Punam Yadav in her research paper 1325 – is that a taxi number? Implementation of the National Action Plan on 1325 and 1820 in Nepal

In 2015 an earthquake in Nepal killed over 9000 people and displaced millions. Government and donor priorities shifted to humanitarian and post-disaster response. No effort was made to link the issues of the WPS Agenda and the earthquake response. The recognition and support of women in issues of peace and security requires lengthy investment as well as political will in order to create real change in the lives of women and girls. The NAP was entirely reliant on foreign aid and external support. As the priorities of the international community inevitably shift, full implementation of the NAP in Nepal became less likely.

Lessons for a New National Action Plan




While there has been no evaluation of the first NAP and neither the government of Nepal nor their development partners have shown willingness to fund one, there are still lessons to be gleaned from the disappointing implementation of the most celebrated NAP. Development of the second NAP has progressed slowly as funding commitments from the international community have been slow to come. The government of Nepal has shown commitment by calling for the development of a second NAP, but for it to be effective there needs to be a long term financial commitment with the Government bearing responsibility for its implementation. Unfortunately the current development funding climate means that Nepal is subject to the changing priorities of external aid. Sustainable Development Goals have become the new priority for both the government and international community. In part a victim of its own hype, Nepal is no longer a priority country for the UK Department for International Development (DFID) under the WPS Agenda and so will no longer give funding towards the second NAP.

33 <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/77015/1/blogs.lse.ac.uk-1325%20is%20that%20a%20taxi%20number%20Implementation%20of%20the%20National%20Action%20Plan%20on%201325%20and%201820%20in%20Nepal%20Pun.pdf>

Recognising the centrality of this issue, one of the first activities the GoN has embarked upon in developing the second NAP was to hold a workshop on Costing and Budgeting the NAP. Supported by the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders, alongside the MoPR, 1325 Action Group and UN Women it aims to find “dedicated and predictable funding” for the implementation of the NAP.

It is largely due to the strong commitment of leaders of the Nepali Women's Movement, and their capacity to mobilize women across ethnic and social lines that the country has made progress empowering women. The 33% quota and the passage of laws allowing women property rights are a direct result of advocacy by women's organisations. Today Nepal's top 3 political positions are held by women;




The WPS Agenda must be mainstreamed in sectors like humanitarian response and post-conflict reconstruction in order to ensure its impact.

Among the objectives of the second NAP is “to guarantee the direct and meaningful participation of conflict-affected women in the formulation and implementation of relief, recovery and rehabilitation programs”. The WPS Agenda must be mainstreamed in sectors like humanitarian response and post-conflict reconstruction in order to ensure its impact. Recovery and peacebuilding must include improving access to justice for survivors of sexual violence in order to effect change in the lives of women and conflict-affected families.

A more difficult lesson to be learned from Nepal's first and much-lauded NAP is that even the best-developed National Action Plans are not effective compensation for the lack of accountability mechanisms embedded into UNSCR 1325 and the WPS Agenda. They are therefore not the best vehicle for creating meaningful change for the millions of women impacted by conflict. Many factors influence the domestication of international law, particularly in the areas of women and gender, which are traditionally marginalized or “ghettoized” in the international order. These include the degree of democracy, political will, and the strength of civil society.

President Bidhya Devi Bhandari, Chief Justice Sushila Karki and Speaker of Parliament Onsari Gharti Magar. Women's organisations on the ground have proven to be the most consistent delivery of transformative outcomes for women, and when empowered they can be effective in holding governments to account, yet support for women's organisations continues to wane.

The 33% quota and the passage of laws allowing women property rights are a direct result of advocacy by women's organisations.

A woman with long, dark braids is seen from the side, looking out over a sunset landscape. She is wearing a light-colored sleeveless top. The background is a warm, orange-hued sky with silhouettes of trees and a body of water. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

Uganda

A postcolonial period of near-constant conflict came to an end in 2006 following the Juba Peace talks between the Government of Uganda and rebel group the Lord's Resistance Army who had been terrorising Northern Uganda for close to two decades. In 2008 the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development launched the National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and 1820 and the Goma Declaration³⁴. With a government in power that appeared to be committed to empowering women and supporting their participation in governance, it seemed there would be progress in the implementation of the WPS Agenda in Uganda. While Uganda is no longer in open conflict, the regime which brought stability to the country in 1986 has proven repressive in its bid to remain in power. A politics characterised by patronage has undermined the gains made in women's representation, rendering many of the women politicians who benefited from affirmative action ineffective. In Uganda we again see limited change in the lives of women most affected by conflict, despite commitments made to 1325.

³⁴ In 2008 Member states of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region committed themselves to eradicating all forms of Gender Based Violence and to take steps for empowerment and equal representation of women and girls

No Justice, No Peace

Ugandan women have always been active participants in their own destinies, throughout regimes which have not hesitated to visit mass violence upon its citizenry. When the National Resistance Army (NRA) sought to liberate the country from the grip of successive tyrannical governments, women formed a part of their ranks, as fighters, couriers and diplomatic envoys. In recognition of the role that women had played, and seeking to mobilize a broad base of support, the NRM (formerly NRA) government appointed a number of women to political positions and enshrined their right

While the NRM government has made the restoration of peace the cornerstone of its continued claim to power, grievances sowed during three decades of violent regime change continue to rear their head. Historic inequalities created by the colonisers between Uganda's bantu ethnic groups in Central and Western parts of the country, versus those in the Nilotic north have exploded into armed conflict at numerous opportunities in Uganda's history. A politics based on patronage, in which leaders got their mandate from their particular ethnic group resulted in large groups of people feeling disenfranchised and left outside of the nation-building project. As a result, between 1966 and

... the fact that only a small percentage of women politicians have stepped beyond the affirmative action seats to compete directly with men, and even fewer have succeeded, points to the fact that the affirmative action policy does not necessitate progress towards more effective representation of women.



to participate in the new Constitution. As a result Ugandan women are guaranteed 30% representation at all levels of government thanks to an affirmative action policy that sets aside special seats for women and other underrepresented groups. However the fact that only a small percentage of women politicians have stepped beyond the affirmative action seats to compete directly with men, and even fewer have succeeded, points to the fact that the affirmative action policy does not necessitate progress towards more effective representation of women.

1986 Uganda suffered a succession of military coups and violent overthrows of power in which particular ethnic groups were targeted and millions were killed, tortured or disappeared. The arrival of a new regime in power was followed by mass reprisals against particular ethnic groups, deeply embedding these divisions and feelings of injustice into the fabric of Ugandan society. Obote's regimes were characterised by disenfranchisement and killings of Baganda populations, Amin is known for visiting great violence on all sectors of the population, but Langi and Acholi peoples were particularly targeted. In turn, once

Amin was overthrown there were Acholi reprisals against the West Nile population from which Amin hailed. During the Bush war in which Museveni's NRA fought the Obote government, millions of civilians in what was known as the "Luweero Triangle" in Central Uganda were massacred by government forces under suspicion of supporting the rebel army.

Officially, mass human rights abuses by government forces may have ended once the NRM government took power but feelings of marginalisation remained. Given that atrocities in the Luweero Triangle during the liberation war were committed under an Acholi president Major General Tito Okello who the NRA overthrew, many Acholi feared retribution and further marginalisation following the loss of their traditional dominance of the army. Those who chose to take up arms and resist the new government, like the Uganda People's Democratic Army and the Holy Spirit Alliance were responded to with military force. Some have argued that as punishment for rebellion, government reconstruction efforts following the war were unevenly applied, leading to economic collapse in Northern parts of the country.

As usual, women bore significant impact of these trying times.

Forced to live in IDP camps, subject to dramatically reduced financial circumstances, women in the North were vulnerable to sexual violence and exploitation, hunger and disease.

The most significant of the rebel groups that fought the NRM government is the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), which fought a 25-year war characterised by terrible human rights violations against the civilian population in Northern Uganda. The LRA was led by now-infamous Joseph Kony who sought to overthrow Museveni's government and rule Uganda according to the tenets of the 10 commandments and Acholi traditions. At its height its ranks reached up to

1000 members many of whom were child soldiers. Up to 12,000 were killed and more than 2 million displaced by the war, in particular children, 25,000 of whom were abducted

over the course of the war as sex slaves and soldiers, forced to perform terrible acts of violence against their own people, including rape and mutilation. Government forces were not innocent of their own atrocities against the population. The Ugandan government forced an already-impooverished population to live in IDP camps which were then targeted by the LRA and stands accused of committing its own abuses against civilians. A Human Rights Watch report³⁵ alleges the following:

"While justifying the displacements on grounds of security, the government has forcibly displaced people without a lawful basis under international law and then has failed to provide the promised security. Many of those displaced, including almost the entire population of the three Acholi districts live in squalid conditions in displaced persons camps that are susceptible to LRA attacks. The Ugandan army has failed to protect these camps, compounding the harm inflicted by the original forced displacement.

People in the camps are forced by extreme necessity to travel outside to farm, hunt and gather firewood or water, where army soldiers have raped women and girls and beaten and detained men and boys. And those displaced persons who must leave the camp confines may be greeted on their return by undisciplined soldiers who beat them for coming back past curfew hour or other minor infractions.

The government has failed to meaningfully prosecute military personnel responsible for abuses or otherwise discipline its forces in the north. These forces have committed deliberate killings, routine beatings, rapes and prolonged arbitrary detentions of civilians to such an extent that there is extreme resentment against their presence. Most complaints of army abuse result in no action"

As the war escalated, it was evident that civilians were caught between a rock and a hard place. In the camps, one in five infants died from curable diseases as a result of poor sanitation and lack of access to health services. 10 times more people died due to conditions in IDP camps than were killed by LRA forces during the course of the war .

36

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35 Human Rights Watch, Uprooted and Forgotten: Impunity and Human Rights Abuses in Northern Uganda, September 20 2005

36 World Health Organisation statistics

Women Taking the Risk for Peace

Frustrated by military solutions that inflicted their own harm on the local population, the women of Uganda sought alternatives. National women's organisations demanded that the government engage in peace talks with the LRA. Their advocacy brought the forgotten war to the attention of the international community; at the 2002 anniversary of UNSCR 1325 Angelina Atyam spoke bravely of her daughter that was among 14,000 children kidnapped by the LRA demanding that the international community do more. Incidences like the Aboke abductions caught the attention of international media increasing pressure on the government to commit to talks.



While peace talks broke down a number of times over the course of the war, they resumed in part as a result of personal efforts by Bigombe, who at one point left her World Bank job in Washington and used personal funds to travel to Uganda and Sudan, meeting with the Sudanese president who was providing arms and sanctuary to Kony's forces.

In 2009 the LRA signed a truce agreeing to leave Ugandan territory thanks to talks mediated by South Sudanese leader Riek Machar. The much-weakened LRA continues to terrorise communities in Central African Republic (CAR) and DRC. Dominic Ongwen, a former child soldier who rose to the LRA high command is currently on trial at the International Criminal Court for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed between 2002 and 2005. All of the other LRA leaders charged by the ICC, apart from Kony himself, are now dead. Despite regional and international military and diplomatic efforts, Joseph Kony has never been captured and held accountable for his crimes. The Ugandan government has not been made to answer for war crimes committed during the fight against the LRA insurgency, including their own admitted use of child soldiers. As recently as 2017 Ugandan soldiers stood accused of committing acts of sexual violence against children in CAR during the hunt for Joseph Kony. Rather than taking responsibility as an institution and making efforts to reform, UPDF continues to insist that soldiers who have committed crimes should be tried as individuals.

While the war has ended it is unclear if the people of

Bigombe lived in the IDP camps, listening to women's stories. She knew that for peace to be sustainable Acholi grievances had to be addressed. Bigombe was also the first to meet with Kony and engage with him personally, leading to the recommendation in 1994 that the government embark upon peace talks with the LRA.

Essential in getting parties to agree to peace talks was the then Minister of State for Pacification of North and North Eastern, Betty Bigombe. As a woman with no military experience, Bigombe's appointment was viewed with suspicion. The NRM government viewed her objective as to force Kony and his army to surrender, but Bigombe went above and beyond to understand the experiences of those affected, particularly of women living in the camps as she sought peaceful solutions to end the war. Bigombe lived in the IDP camps, listening to women's stories. She knew that for peace to be sustainable Acholi grievances had to be addressed. Bigombe was also the first to meet with Kony and engage with him personally, leading to the recommendation in 1994 that the government embark upon peace talks with the LRA.

Northern Uganda will ever see justice for the horrors and hardships they endured. Key to reconstruction and rehabilitation are grassroots organisations and women leaders like Rosalba Oywa who pioneered community-based reconciliation efforts in the North. National women's coalitions like the Uganda Women's Coalition for Peace (UWCP) have worked to ensure women's participation in peace and reconstruction processes and see that women's needs are mainstreamed. When the 2006 peace talks between the LRA and the Ugandan government were taking place, UWCP organised a march from Kampala to Juba to demand for women's participation. Their "Women's Peace Caravan" has been instrumental in advocating for women's participation in peace processes in the region, including peace talks in South Sudan³⁷.

³⁷ <http://www.wikigender.org/wiki/womens-participation-in-transitional-justice-in-northern-uganda/>

Implementing 1325 in a Fragile Democracy

Between 1992 and 2008 the Ugandan government attempted to implement a number of peace and recovery programs for Northern Uganda, all of which are largely considered to have failed as a result of patronage and corruption. The Northern Uganda Reconstruction Programme (NURP-1) was implemented from 1992 - 1998 and was seen as a top-down approach in which central government failed to connect development to peace-building and did not include psycho-social support for war affected communities. NURP-II in 1999 was intended to be a demand-responsive approach. It was characterized by the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF), funded by the World Bank which provided grants directly to community groups whose project proposals were approved. However it was very slow to get off the ground (funding was not disbursed until 2004) and quickly became an international embarrassment when the World Bank withdrew the funding amid charges of corruption. NUSAF I resulted in over 100 court cases in which public officials were accused of misuse of funds. In 2007 the Government launched the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) to help greater Northern Uganda transition from war to peace. Once again this program was largely seen to benefit national elites who became "conflict entrepreneurs" as described by one academic study, using the funds to appropriate projects and contracts and purchase large tracts of land that belonged to people displaced by the war.



Coalitions of Uganda women's organisations like the Women's Taskforce for a gender-responsive PRDP and the Uganda CSO 1325 Coalition showed that programmes like the PRDP by being gender-blind, did little to alleviate the suffering of the most vulnerable.

The Public Accounts committee of Uganda's Parliament found in 2013 that several senior government officials were involved in the loss of more than half of donor funds contributed to Uganda's Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) 1, about \$14 million that was meant to alleviate large scale poverty of refugees of the Kony war.

Coalitions of Uganda women's organisations like the Women's Taskforce for a gender-responsive PRDP and the Uganda CSO 1325 Coalition showed that programmes like the PRDP by being gender-blind, did little to alleviate the suffering of the most vulnerable. Some organisations like the Uganda Women's Network developed projects like the Gender Capital Project which aimed to empower women in war-affected districts to monitor implementation of the Peace Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) and hold their leaders accountable

Efforts to empower women politically have resulted in an increase in the numbers of women political leaders, and Uganda has seen a number of high profile appointments for women.

Uganda's NAP aims to implement 1325 and the resolutions of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda as well as the Goma declaration on Eradicating Sexual Violence and Ending Impunity in the Great Lakes Region and was launched in 2008. While the plan focuses on the issue of sexual violence as a result of its prevalence in conflict in the region, it includes all 4 pillars of the WPS Agenda (prevention, protection, participation and relief and recovery). On paper the government pays appropriate lip service to the unique situation of women, but statistics show a bleaker picture of Ugandan women's lives.

Efforts to empower women politically have resulted in an increase in the numbers of women political leaders, and Uganda has seen a number of high profile appointments for women, including a former woman Vice President and the current Speaker of Parliament. However this has not necessarily resulted in improvements in the lives of women. The 30% designation for women in political leadership provided for by the Constitution ensures women's participation but not their effectiveness. At the local level, low levels of education and civic awareness mean that many of the women elected in local councils do not have the capacity to advocate for women's issues, or even to do more than vote along with the men or along party lines. At the national level there is a general lack of accountability of leaders to their constituents which is reflected in all aspects of governance. A system of patronage in which the NRM party bestows state benefits means that women members of parliament are more accountable to their party than to their constituents, particularly with regards to women's

issues which continue to be marginalised at the policy level. Uganda's declining development indicators as the NRM government enters its 3rd decade in power are evidence of this.

Thanks to sustained advocacy by women's organisations Uganda has passed a law banning Female Genital Mutilation and the Domestic Violence Act in 2010, providing legal protection to women affected by GBV. However, statistics show that violence against women and children is actually on the rise³⁸, despite national conversations about SGBV and efforts by civil society and lawmakers alike to address the issue. Sexual abuse of minors is the number one crime in Uganda according to police statistics, pointing to a massive failure of the state to protect the most vulnerable from abuse. This high rate of violence against women and girls is among the reasons that one in four teenage Ugandan girls ends up pregnant before they hit age 20³⁹. Policy change has not resulted in substantive improvement in the incidence of GBV because prevailing cultural attitudes mean that women are still substantially disenfranchised in Uganda, economically and in terms of decision-making powers at all levels. However, these laws are not consistently enforced. Impunity for sexual crimes remains pervasive with significant under-reporting of sexual violence and authorities who are unwilling or unable to investigate and prosecute these cases. The political will to translate national level laws into reality at the community level is simply not there; women continue to be underrepresented in the police force, and Family Protection Units of the police force are, like all public services in the country, underresourced. Families dealing with SGBV often choose to take their grievances to customary institutions who tend to send women back into violent situations, or in the case of rape of a minor, choose to negotiate a cash settlement with the abuser, or worse marry their daughter off to them.

Women's access to health services is another victim of the system of patronage that defines Ugandan post-conflict politics. In a bid to expand support for the NRM government, Museveni embarked upon a process of decentralization, with the number of districts increasing from 33 in 1986 to 117 in 2017. The stated purpose of this is to improve government efficiency by increasing local autonomy and bring services closer to rural populations. Yet it is argued that the effect has been the opposite, as districts are created without funding to upgrade hospitals or even build offices. Each new district created comes with a human resource burden as local government offices must be filled, and salaried officers remunerated, from cleaners to MPs, who in

the 10th Parliament are entitled to up to 27 million shillings a month (US\$8,000) including allowances for clothing, a car grant and sitting allowances, some of which go untaxed⁴⁰. Service delivery in Uganda remains a challenge across the country; Budaka, which became a district in 2005 has safe water coverage below 8%, electricity coverage of 40%, and a road network below 10%⁴¹. New districts are even further burdened by administrative challenges like lack of infrastructure and limited resource collection leading to dependence on donors and central government. All of this bodes extremely poorly for the average Ugandan woman, who has to walk more than 5 km to access her nearest health care centre. While maternal mortality statistics have shown some improvement since the last UDHS survey, for this trend to continue the government must improve its efforts to bring health services closer to the most vulnerable women.

As a postconflict nation, Uganda has made progress towards achieving its NAP, which put focus on addressing sexual violence against women. However, this progress is slow and continues to be slowed by prevailing political trends including a politics of patronage. In an effort to maintain its grip on power after 30 years in governance, the NRM party has placed increasing emphasis on militarization of the police and other state actors, limiting the freedoms of opposition, civil society, the press and ordinary Ugandans to assemble and organise through acts like the Public Order and Management Act. The most significant indicator of a return to conflict is a deterioration of women's personal safety and security. Increased militarization of politics and elections continues to discourage women from participating in politics, leading to limited and weak representation of women's issues like those espoused in 1325 and professed by the government in their National Action Plan. Until this is addressed, Uganda will continue to have trouble meeting its commitments to the international agenda like the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Women, Peace and Security agenda. While Uganda has come some way from decades of conflict and violent regime change, it will not see the last of those days until it addresses women's role in bringing about sustainable peace.

38 <http://mobile.monitor.co.ug/News/Crime-against-women--children-on-rise---report/2466686-3833756-format-xhtml-139r0cuz/index.html>

39 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2016

40 <http://csbag.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/CSBAG-BUDGET-NEWS.220.pdf>

41 <http://www.ccedu.org/news-events/latest-news/416-press-release-concerning-elections-in-new-districts.html>

