



Women, Peace and Security



Wars kill and destroy lives of women, girls, men and boys. There are particularly gendered dimensions to violence that have a disproportionate and different impact on women and men. Gender-based violence (GBV), such as sexual violence and domestic violence tend to increase during and after war. At the same time, post-conflict peace- and state building can be an opportunity to change discriminatory gender roles and advance women women's rights and gender equality.

Women have right to participate on equal terms as men in peace processes. However, statistics show that women are often excluded from formal peace negotiations, which in a longer perspective may have devastating consequences for how to reach a sustainable peace and human security. UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 is a landmark resolution recognizing the importance of a gender perspective on peace and security. Grounded in the legal framework of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, UNSCR1325 and related resolutions serve as important advocacy tool for advancing the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. Since the passage of UNSCR1325 in 2000, a large constituency of civil society organizations and activists has grown across the world advocating for its full implementation. By 2014, 46 UN Member States have developed National Action Plans for implementing 1325, and each year in October the UN Secretary General submits a report to the UN Security Council on progress on made the implementation.

Four Pillars of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda

The WPS agenda is often described in terms of four pillars: participation and representation, prevention, protection, as well as relief and recovery.

Participation: aims to ensure women's equal participation and influence with men and the promotion of gender equality in peace and security decision-making processes at national, local and international levels. It includes the appointment of more women, including negotiators, mediators, peacekeepers, police and humanitarian personnel, as well as support for local women's peace initiatives.

Protection: a political concept that is used and interpreted differently by different actors. Protection ensures that women and girls' rights are protected and promoted in conflict-affected situations or other humanitarian crisis, including protection from GBV in general and sexual violence in particular. The specific protection needs of refugees or internally displaced women and girls that can occurring during the various stages of displacement is particularly emphasized. "Protection" is not the same as "security," although often associated with it. Women and men experience security differently and focus should be on determining what women and girls need in order to safely participate in society.

Prevention: this pillar focuses on 'prevention of conflict and all forms of violence against women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations' and is the one that has received least attention. It includes integrating gender considerations into conflict early warning systems and involving women and their specific needs in conflict prevention and disarmament activities. It also includes measures to prevent GBV by fighting impunity and increasing prosecutions of conflict-related sexual violence. Other GBV prevention strategies focus on challenging discriminatory gender norms, attitudes and behavior and working with men and boys, not only as perpetrators, but also as victims of violence and agents of change.

Relief and recovery: aims to ensure that women and girls' specific relief needs are met, for example, in repatriation and resettlement, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programs (DDR), the design of the refugee camps, support to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and in the delivery of humanitarian assistance. This pillar also promotes the reinforcement of women's capacities to act as agents in relief and recovery processes in conflict and post-conflict.

Implementation and Monitoring

Implementation of UNSCR1325 is tracked through the "UN Strategic Framework on Women, Peace and Security 2011-2020," which includes targets and a set of global indicators adopted by the Security Council that cover each of the four pillars, some of which are presented below:

- ✓ Women's political participation (national level, but also women as voters and candidates) and/or representation of women among mediators, negotiators and technical experts in formal peace negotiations (**participation**).
- ✓ Percentage of referred cases of sexual and gender-based violence that are reported, investigated and sentenced (**protection**).
- ✓ Number and percentage of women in executive positions of relevant regional and sub-regional organizations involved in preventing conflict (**prevention**).
- ✓ Percentage of benefits from Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration programs (DDR) received by women and girls (**relief and recovery**).

A general conclusion is a persistent gap between the normative WPS and actual implementation on the ground. There is currently no mechanism for holding states who do not implement UNSCR1325 accountable.



International Policy Commitments

Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA, 1995): is a political agreement signed by 189 UN Member States committing to promote gender equality. It includes the first international statement of recognition of the gendered impacts of conflict and a first call by Member States for women's full and equal participation in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. While many of its key recommendations are not reflected in UNSCRs, the BPfA places greater emphasis on demilitarization and fostering a culture of peace, explicitly making links between gender equality and peace.

UNSCR1325 (2000) and its subsequent resolutions: since the passage of UNSCR1325 in 2000, nine further resolutions on WPS have been passed. Resolutions 1889, 2122, 2242 and 2493 further strengthen articles of 1325, and resolutions 1820, 1888, 1960, 2106, and 2467 focus primarily on conflict related sexual violence (SViC).

- ✓ Resolution **1820 (2008)** is the first to recognize sexual violence as a tactic of war and **1888 (2009)** sets out practical measures for the implementation of UNSCR1820, including a request to the Secretary General to appoint a special representative.
- ✓ Resolution **1889 (2009)** calls on the Secretary General to develop a set of global indicators for monitoring the implementation of UNSCR1325.
- ✓ Resolution **1960 (2010)** provides measures aimed at ending impunity for perpetrators of sexual violence through sanctions and reporting measures.
- ✓ Resolution **2106 (2013)** adds more operational details to commitments, including deployment of so called "Women Protection Advisors." It is the first UNSCR to recognize that men and boys are also targets of SViC.
- ✓ Resolution **2122 (2013)** affirms among other things the necessity of providing women affected by sexual violence in conflict (SViC) with the "full range of reproductive health services" thus advancing SRHR within WPS agenda.
- ✓ Resolution **2242 (2015)** links WPS to countering terrorism and extremism.
- ✓ Resolution **2467 (2019)** strengthens punishment for SViC, affirms survivor-centered approach and calls for reparations for survivors.
- ✓ Resolution **2493 (2019)** encourages creation of safe operational environment for those working to promote women's rights and calls for full implementation of all previous WPS resolutions.

CEDAW General Recommendation 30 (2013) on 'women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations' was added to the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 2013 and marks an important step forward as it provides a mean of holding Member States accountable for the implementation of CEDAW through reporting to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women every four years.

UN Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) (2014): the ATT is ratified by 50 states. Among other things, it requires that states exporting arms must consider the risk that the weapons will be used to commit acts of GBV or any other acts of violence against women and children. If it is found that there is an 'overriding risk,' then the state is prohibited by international humanitarian law for proceeding with the export, which is a tremendous step forward for the WPS agenda.

Although important in their own right, these different resolutions and treaties have many synergies that should be used to enhance their implementation and impact.



Men, Peace and Security

While support to women and girls in conflict and post-conflict settings is crucial, there is growing recognition of the need to look at the impact of masculine identities on gender inequality, conflict and violence. Evidence suggests that violent notions of masculinity not only perpetuate gender-based violence, but can also fuel armed conflict, while more positive notions of masculinity can be instrumental in promoting peace. Furthermore, while women and girls are the main targets of perpetrators of conflict related sexual violence, men and boys are also exposed to sexual violence in war.