



# GENDER, CONFLICT, AND PEACEBUILDING

STATE OF THE FIELD AND LESSONS LEARNED  
FROM USIP GRANTMAKING

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## ABOUT THE REPORT

This report is a result of an initiative to reflect on developments, contributions, and prospects in specific areas where USIP grantmaking has been concentrated. The Praxis Institute for Social Justice was commissioned to review the state of the field, identify lessons learned, and contemplate future directions of work in the area of gender, conflict, and peacebuilding. A review of relevant USIP grantmaking—spanning more than 100 projects with gender dimensions—was compiled to complement the report.

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# CONTENTS



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|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Introduction ...                          | <b>5</b>  |
| Institutionalizing Gender Sensitivity ... | <b>6</b>  |
| From Women to Gender? ...                 | <b>12</b> |
| Gender and Conflict ...                   | <b>14</b> |
| Gender and Postconflict Transitions ...   | <b>24</b> |
| Recommendations ...                       | <b>30</b> |
| Appendix: Related USIP Grantmaking ...    | <b>35</b> |

[ Gender identities are crucial to conflict dynamics. Both men and women are involved in inflicting violence and are its victims, defying a simplistic classification of roles. ]



## Summary

- The field of gender, conflict, and peacebuilding has emerged over recent decades; become institutionalized through policymaking, legal practice, and the development of practitioner models; and been enhanced through academic research.
- Significant gaps remain in the understanding and awareness of the gendered dimensions of conflict and its legacies.
- The field must overcome a tendency to reduce gender sensitivity to a focus on women.
- Gender identities and norms—as well as the systems, institutions, traditions of practice, and patterns of attitudes that support them—are crucial to conflict dynamics and responses. Both men and women are involved in inflicting violence and are its victims, defying a simplistic classification of roles.
- Sexual violence is a widespread though not universal phenomenon during conflict. It is employed selectively, for strategic reasons, and targets men as well as women.
- During transitions from conflict, gender concerns are rarely taken into account adequately. Gender-based violence, especially against women, often persists. Also, most transitional justice processes have failed to afford a safe space for victims to talk about the violence they experienced and to redress the harms they have suffered.
- USIP grantmaking has supported notable work on gender identities, sexual violence, and women's rights and empowerment, as well as organizations that focus on women's issues. Relatively few of the funded projects, however, have focused primarily on gender.
- The field must embrace a broader concept of gender, examine in-depth the gendered aspects of security and peacebuilding, more fully appreciate the nature of conflict through a gender lens, and develop better ways to undertake gender-sensitive post-conflict measures.



## Introduction

As a starting point, in United Nations usage, gender refers to the socially constructed roles played by women and men that are ascribed to them on the basis of their sex. Gender analysis is done in order to examine similarities and differences in roles and responsibilities between women and men without direct reference to biology, but rather to the behaviour patterns expected from women and men and their cultural reinforcement. These roles are usually specific to a given area and time, that is, since gender roles are contingent on the social and economic context, they can vary according to the specific context and can change over time.<sup>1</sup>

The twentieth century was characterized by numerous armed conflicts, authoritarian regimes, and genocidal episodes, as well as by a significant increase in attention to women's rights and protagonism in the context of political violence. These developments prompted research and policy initiatives on conflict prevention, resolution, and reconstruction activities, which have more recently begun to incorporate the insights of gender studies to better understand and respond to the impact conflict has on men and women. This fusion has produced a new field of inquiry—gender, conflict, and peacebuilding.

Over recent decades, important progress has been made in this field, yet much remains to be understood about the gendered dimensions of conflict and its legacies. With an eye toward addressing these knowledge gaps and heightening awareness in both academic and practitioner work, the Grant Program of the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) commissioned the Praxis Institute for Social Justice to review the state of the field, reflect on the lessons learned, and contemplate future directions. To this end, we reviewed the relevant history and literature. In addition, we convened a two-day workshop with USIP grantees working on the cutting edge of gender, conflict, and peacebuilding. The workshop, which brought together researchers and practitioners, was a constructive way to gather insights from a wide range of prominent specialists, in particular to establish outstanding issues and policy needs and to generate new areas of inquiry. This report, in turn, offers an assessment of what has been achieved to date in this growing field and identifies opportunities for advancing the research and policy agenda.

We begin with a brief overview of the rise of women's rights within the international human rights framework, the various documents and agencies charged with upholding and furthering gender equality, and the evolution of practitioner models and approaches. A major issue in this context is the persistent gap between legislating gender sensitivity and implementing that vision in practice.

We then discuss the key themes that emerged in the academic and practitioner literatures, as well as in the workshop.

The first theme highlights a fundamental concern of implementation, namely, defining what constitutes appropriate gender sensitivity. This definition has several notable elements, including the degree of emphasis on women, ambivalence about the role of men as subjects of attention as well as participants in advancing this agenda, and uncertainties that arise when dealing with local traditions and cultures.

A subsequent set of themes spans a multitude of relationships between gender and circumstances before, during, and after conflict. We initially examine processes of militarization and demilitarization, demonstrating that gender is a significant dimension of how security and peacekeeping are oriented and conducted. In this context, we also introduce a number of compelling issues that challenge the tidy distinctions often made between political and criminal violence, the public and private spheres, and conflict and postconflict settings. Next, we focus further on gender identities, arguing that sustaining certain concepts of masculinity and femininity are integral—perhaps as much as guns and bullets—to militarism and conflict.

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*Gender is a significant dimension of how security and peacekeeping are oriented and conducted.*

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We follow up by contrasting conventional images of gender to the actual wartime experiences of women, especially as combatants. This discussion reveals that gender stereotypes do not afford adequate representations of the nature of agency and behavior, yet still have potent and even perverse effects that reinforce inequities of power. In particular, the treatment of women as sexual commodities leads us to reflect on the broader phenomenon of sexual violence and its links to the social construction of gender and other patterns of practice surrounding conflict. Here, we show that the typical depictions—of women as victims, with rape an exclusive, predominant, and defining violation—overlook the varieties of violence that both women and men experience and the complex manner in which they are addressed at an individual and societal level.

The last theme concerns transitions from conflict and the extent to which transitional justice mechanisms and institutional reforms incorporate a gendered perspective. A key insight is that the dividends of peace are not shared equally, in part because gender regimes forged or exacerbated in conflict settings can persist after hostilities abate. In fact, violence against women and girls frequently increases—what is referred to elsewhere as the “domestication of violence.”<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the design and implementation of specific postconflict policies can exclude women from accessing benefits, reflecting and reinforcing their marginalization in society.

Finally, we conclude by isolating the areas where collective efforts are most needed in the field to ensure a greater measure of gender equality and social justice and by offering recommendations in those regards.

The appendix discusses the patterns of relevant USIP grantmaking and spotlights support for notable work on gender identities, sexual violence, and women’s rights and empowerment, as well as organizations that focus on women’s issues. It also reflects on the contributions of this funding with reference to the insights in the main body of the report, noting in particular that relatively few of the funded projects have made gender a central focus, which, in part, reflects the structure and limitations of USIP’s grant competitions.

### **Institutionalizing Gender Sensitivity**

The formal protection of women and girls during armed conflict is a relatively recent development, paralleling the emergence of women’s rights over the second half of the twentieth century. Before World War I, mention of women in war treaties and international conventions primarily addressed protecting their honor. These same documents included vague references to “soldiers’ discipline,” without framing violence against women, particularly sexual violence, as a crime punishable by law.<sup>3</sup> Following World War II, faint efforts were taken to punish perpetrators of sexual violence. Mass episodes of rape—such as Japanese “comfort women,” the Nanking massacre, and widespread Allied army abuse of local women in occupied countries—were not redressed in proportion to the overwhelming evidence of violations committed. Allied postwar tribunals were designed to try perpetrators of wartime atrocities; with the victorious Allies in control, however, only the defeated Axis troops were brought to account. The Tokyo tribunal for the Far East made an explicit reference to rape in its rulings against perpetrators and included rape in certain convictions.<sup>4</sup> Control Council Ten, which regulated the trials in Nuremberg, also listed rape as a crime against humanity, although none of the subsequent trials resulted in prosecutions for rape. Despite these limitations, the tribunals did help construct certain parameters for prosecuting crimes against humanity involving sexual violence.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, the security of civilians, especially women, was clearly considered of secondary importance.<sup>6</sup>

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A critical step in advancing the security of women was the 1949 Geneva Conventions. The Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War was the “first modern-day international instrument to establish protections against rape for women.”<sup>7</sup> Article 27 of the Fourth Convention stipulates that “women shall be especially protected against any attack on their honor, in particular against rape, enforced prostitution or any form of indecent assault.” Protocols I and II of the convention, added in 1977, echo this call for special respect of women and the protection of their personal dignity against humiliating and degrading treatment, such as rape.<sup>8</sup>

Yet none of these measures succeeded in breaking the long-standing association between rape and honor.<sup>9</sup> One of the main problems with this approach is that rape “as a mere injury to honor or reputation” does not imply the same level of bodily and psychological harm as “injuries to the person,” nor does it merit the same retributive consequences.<sup>10</sup> The first Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Radhika Coomaraswamy (1994–2003), has asserted that associating rape with honor often confers shame on the victim rather than the perpetrator:

By using the honor paradigm, linked as it is to concepts of chastity, purity and virginity, stereotypical concepts of femininity have been formally enshrined in humanitarian law. Thus, criminal sexual assault, in both national and international law, is linked to the morality of the victim. When rape is perceived as a crime against honor or morality, shame commonly ensues for the victim, who is often viewed by the community as “dirty” or “spoiled.” Consequently, many women will neither report nor discuss the violence that has been perpetrated against them. The nature of rape and the silence that tends to surround it makes it a particularly difficult human rights violation to investigate.<sup>11</sup>

Therefore, although the Geneva Conventions were an important development in advancing women’s rights, the task of redefining legal and societal attitudes toward sexual violence had barely begun.

### *The UN System*

Among the outgrowths of World War II that had important implications for gender issues were the United Nations (UN) and the nascent international human rights regime. In 1946, just a year after it was established, the UN created the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) as a functional arm of the Economic and Social Council to promote gender equality and the advancement of women. The same year, the Section on the Status of Women—today, the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)—was also established to serve as secretariat to the commission. In the decades that followed, these two bodies helped break ground for many important international instruments that would uphold women’s rights.

Originally, the CSW focused on incorporating women into international conventions and rectifying inequality and discrimination in legislation. Subsequently, its attention shifted to eliminating forms of discrimination that still existed in practice.<sup>12</sup> In 1963, the CSW drafted the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (adopted four years later) to reinforce the advances in women’s rights achieved since the launch of the commission. To make these provisions legally binding, the declaration was designated the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and went into effect in 1981. For the first time, governments were legally required to “take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.”<sup>13</sup>

These achievements were extended by other efforts at the international level to organize, define objectives, advocate for the interests of women and girls, pursue policy changes and programmatic activities, and tackle accountability for criminal violations.

In particular, the four world conferences on women were vital steps in advancing gender equality. The first, held in Mexico City in 1975—designated International Women’s Year—called for full gender equality, the elimination of gender discrimination and greater participation of women in development and world peace.<sup>14</sup> It also led to the establishment of two additional UN bodies: the Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW). UNIFEM was created to “help improve the living standards of women in developing countries and to address their concerns,” and UN-INSTRAW to promote the advancement of women through research and training.<sup>15</sup> The resounding success of the conference and the growing influence of women’s movements around the world prompted the UN to promote equality, development, and peace by declaring 1976 to 1985 the UN Decade for Women.

The second and third conferences, convened during the 1980s, continued to gain ground for women. By focusing on less-explored themes related to women’s well-being, such as employment, health, education, and property rights, these conferences helped expand the research and policy agenda.

The fourth conference, held in Beijing in 1995, revisited the issue of gender and conflict and resulted in a large-scale endorsement of gender mainstreaming. The Beijing Platform for Action, adopted during the conference, identified “the effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women” as one of the critical areas of concern and encouraged the development of a greater gender perspective in international criminal law.<sup>16</sup> Numerous governments agreed to promote gender-sensitive policies and programs, thereby encouraging the UN to implement steps to mainstream gender within the institution.<sup>17</sup>

Meanwhile, the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights had underscored the illegality of sexual violence during armed conflict. Soon afterward, in March 1994, the UN established a Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, mandated to examine the causes and consequences of gender-based violence. In addition, the UN’s ad hoc International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda (ICTY and ICTR)—two countries where sexual violence during armed conflict in the early 1990s was so pervasive it captured international attention on an unprecedented scale—achieved major gains in codifying sexual and reproductive violence and in defining potential measures for protection. The jurisprudence resulting from these two tribunals classified systematic rape and other sex crimes as war crimes, crimes against humanity, and forms of genocide. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, adopted in 1998 subsequent to the establishment of the ICTR and ICTY, not only included rape as a crime against humanity, it also managed to break with the honor paradigm of the Geneva Conventions: “Rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity” were no longer considered merely moral offenses, but rather crimes against humanity.<sup>18</sup> Judge Navanethem Pillay, the ICTR’s only female judge, wrote in one of the court’s rulings, “from time immemorial, rape has been regarded as the spoils of war. . . . now it will be considered a war crime. We want to send out a strong signal that rape is no longer a trophy of war.”<sup>19</sup> In addition, the rulings for the trial of Duško Tadić established that sexual violence could be prosecuted through existing international law even in the absence of domestic legislation directly addressing rape.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, the presence of women in high-level positions within these tribunals helped increase

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their presence in other important institutional bodies, allowing them to have a greater impact on issues related to armed conflict.<sup>21</sup>

On a complementary front, the UN Security Council progressively reconceptualized its definition of *security*. For many years, security was largely viewed as a military issue. During the 1970s and 1980s, little regard was given to humanitarian issues in conflict settings.<sup>22</sup> During the 1990s, by contrast, a broader definition of human security was incorporated.<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately, as often the case with categories deemed gender neutral, the definition did not include forms of security most important to women and girls.

This oversight was partially addressed in 2000 by UN Resolution 1325, marking the first time the Security Council expressly mentioned in a resolution the impact of war on women and women's contributions to conflict resolution and sustainable peace. The resolution echoes the Beijing Conference's call for gender mainstreaming, specifically in relation to "peacekeeping missions and all other aspects relating to women and girls."<sup>24</sup> To publicize the resolution and make it accessible to women all over the world, UNIFEM has translated the text into more than seventy languages.

In 2008, Security Council Resolution 1820 went further and recognized rape as a weapon of war and a threat to international security. The resolution noted that "women and girls are particularly targeted by the use of sexual violence, including as a tactic of war to humiliate, dominate, instill fear in, disperse and/or forcibly relocate civilian members of a community or ethnic group."<sup>25</sup> Meanwhile, the UN Secretary General has also issued various reports and opened debates on issues related to women, peace, and security.<sup>26</sup>

In sum, after a long process the international legal scaffolding related to gender is largely in place. The 1980s and 1990s in particular exhibited important changes in how the UN and other international institutions viewed violence against women. Once considered a private issue to be resolved within the confines of the home, gender-based violence increasingly became public as an issue to be placed "at the forefront of an international agenda."<sup>27</sup> The gap between legislation and enforcement, however, continues and warrants further research into ensuring more effective implementation and evaluation of efforts.

### *Gender Policies and Practitioner Models*

These institutional measures and policies signal a common objective: to address the distinctive concerns and injustices that girls and women face in both war and peace. Despite the ostensible clarity of this goal, identifying the means to that end has presented additional challenges. How could women be incorporated most effectively into existing international systems? What kinds of policies or models of intervention would ensure a genuine, comprehensive, and thorough response to women's concerns? What should be included among women's issues during conflict and postconflict periods? Are there ways to ensure that the global agenda reflects the local and regional priorities of socially, culturally, and historically situated women?

That the majority of conflicts in recent decades were in developing countries has greatly influenced approaches to these questions. Already faced with economic difficulty as part of the Global South, developing countries plagued by conflict often depend on the funding and assistance provided by International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and humanitarian organizations. The gender policies and practitioner models promoted by the aid and development fields influence how gender operates during peace and conflict, as well as amid transitional justice and reconstruction processes.

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One of the first attempts to modify these policies and models was the Women in Development (WID) approach introduced in the 1970s, which reached its apex during the UN Decade for Women.<sup>28</sup> Later referred to facetiously as “add women and stir,” WID was increasingly criticized for its emphasis on women, rather than on gender relations, and for failing to address systemic gender inequality. WID did not “consider the underlying and often discriminatory gender structures upon which these very projects are often built.”<sup>29</sup> As a result, development became a “fixed menu, with women allocated the role of cook.” Although women’s issues had gained ground, the ground was sown with gendered assumptions.<sup>30</sup>

In response, the Gender and Development (GAD) approach was adopted, focusing more on the gender relations among and the social roles of men and women.<sup>31</sup> Unlike WID, the GAD approach implied “more than . . . getting equal slices of the development pie,” by helping women gain power and control within decision-making processes.<sup>32</sup> The idea of mainstreaming gender was forged within this movement. Gaining momentum around the time of the Beijing Conference in 1995, gender mainstreaming quickly became the preferred approach to incorporating women into discussions concerning development and resulting activities, including those involving conflict and postconflict settings. Mainstreaming gender called for an all-encompassing change in the mentality reflected in legislation and institutions.<sup>33</sup> In 1997, the UN Economic and Social Council issued the following definition:

Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.<sup>34</sup>

The concept has been adopted by most of the large and influential international agencies. The gender policy of the World Health Organization, for instance, asserts that the “integration of gender considerations must become a standard practice in all policies and programmes.”<sup>35</sup> This wording is reiterated in the policies of the UN Development Program (UNDP), UNESCO, FAO, the World Bank, and ILO, and widely adopted in the European Union.<sup>36</sup>

Despite the widespread acceptance, criticism about the effectiveness of the approach has been frequent. Gender mainstreaming is ultimately abstract and hence tends to be interpreted differently both across and within governmental and nongovernmental organizations, humanitarian agencies, and international institutions. In many cases, gender policies lack thorough or sincere implementation and accountability.

According to Hannah Warren, one of the principal sources of these issues is “the multiplicity of meanings and goals that this concept [of gender mainstreaming] encapsulates,” which has given rise to seemingly limitless approaches to implementation.<sup>37</sup> She further observes that the gender analysis frameworks in practice since the mid-1980s “have evolved in tandem with the evolution of ‘gender’ in development and are thus ‘based on very different understandings of the nature of power and inequality.’ As a consequence they differ (in some cases significantly) regarding their assumptions of what needs to be analysed and addressed.”<sup>38</sup>

Gender experts and practitioners therefore face a vast array of options when implementing a gendered perspective, making efforts somewhat haphazard.<sup>39</sup> This smorgasbord of possibilities—in terms of both definitions and approaches—obscures what a gender agenda entails. The upshot is that “what development organizations mean by ‘a focus on gender’ or ‘a gendered approach’ and what it means to their work is often undefined or even contested.”<sup>40</sup>

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Another contributing factor is the array of mandates, ideologies, and goals of institutions and organizations, which affect their overall orientations. A good example of these disparities is “the resource and economic focus of the World Bank, compared to the rights and equality agendas of NGOs such as ActionAid and Oxfam.”<sup>41</sup> Logically, those sorts of differences can have direct and significant implications for the nature of gender policies. As a study by the organization Gender Action points out, although “it is mandatory for World Bank staff to analyze the environmental impact of every operation,” the same does not pertain to gender.<sup>42</sup> Meanwhile, the UNDP remains unable to mandate gender mainstreaming, which would be irreconcilable with its emphasis on self-determination and the unwillingness of some member countries to adopt gender policies.<sup>43</sup>

Such variation in gender policies is found not only among institutions, but also within them. In fact, a USIP-commissioned report cited the U.S. government for a lack of cohesion on this front, to the detriment of furthering gender awareness and equality:

Despite rapid progress within the U.S. government to recognize the importance of women’s inclusion in stabilization and reconstruction operations, no overarching strategy, mandate, or program exists to ensure implementation. Initiatives, funding, and projects remain ad hoc; research and best practices have not been consolidated; and much depends upon the individual knowledge, commitment, and insight of relevant staff at headquarters and in the field.<sup>44</sup>

The report emphasizes the ongoing need to educate staff, strengthen support dedicated to women’s issues (such as by ensuring sufficient funding), and provide systematic training for field personnel.<sup>45</sup> Likewise, gender mainstreaming seems to face major obstacles to institutionalization within the World Bank. The study by Gender Action found that Bank staff could be divided into two groups: the gender experts “who work full time promoting gender integration into Bank activities,” and all others, “most of whom have neither heard of the Strategy nor looked at Bank gender web pages providing tools for engendering investments and other activities.”<sup>46</sup> One can also juxtapose the groundbreaking decisions of the ICTY and ICTR with the UN’s initial silence regarding abuses by peacekeepers against local women during missions. Noëlle Quénivet asserts that it was journalists, rather than UN officials, who first uncovered the violations. Even when confronted by the abuses, the agency’s first reaction was the institutional equivalent of a “boys will be boys” shrug of inevitability.<sup>47</sup> This pervasive silence prompted two leading feminists scholars to assert that international humanitarian law conceives “rules dealing with women. . . as less important than others. . . drafted in different language than the provisions protecting combatants and civilians.”<sup>48</sup>

The failure to consistently implement gender policies is especially disappointing when one contrasts the simultaneous gains for other notable interests and constituencies. For instance, the Gender Action study reports that in the World Bank, the number of gender experts rose from one in the early 1980s to approximately 115 circa 2003, whereas the number of environmental experts rose from one to roughly 700 or 800 over the same period.<sup>49</sup> Similarly, Natalie Hudson found that among UN system staff, children’s issues have stronger mandates than gender. As one UNIFEM official told her in 2006,

On children and armed conflict, not only have you got six resolutions, six, but each one of them strengthening parts of the original one. There is a working group. There is a champion within the Security Council, which is France. There is a [Security Council] working group which is seized of this matter at all times and has to make sure that all resolutions pay attention. There is a Special Rapporteur [Representative] to the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict. . . . And she is allowed to name names. She is allowed to say the LRA are persecuting children, bombing schools and



hospitals. Now, we're not allowed to do that. [Resolution] 1325 does not empower us or anybody in the UN to say the following armed parties or governments are abusing women's rights, are condoning sexual violence as a military practice, as weapon of war. We're not allowed to say that. If we could, could you imagine the newspaper reports, the outrage from governments, the shame, the embarrassment? Some states and parties would move to stop these practices, but we're not allowed to do that.<sup>50</sup>

A plausible interpretation of these intra-institutional comparisons is that something particular to the gender domain, which distinguishes it from other causes, presents a hindrance to furthering gender policies.

In sum, evidence is compelling that new policies and practitioner models are required for advancing a gender-sensitive agenda. Although mainstreaming has succeeded in certain spheres, it has not generated the desired degree of institutional or attitudinal changes. Even within institutions that pay attention to gender, the gap between a general policy of mainstreaming and its implementation can be significant, undermining efforts to maintain a consistent focus across activities. The evident lack of effective commitment has led some critics to wonder whether gender mainstreaming is now a “token exercise.”<sup>51</sup> For example, Hilary Charlesworth has argued that the “force of the term . . . may now be so dissipated that a new term is required.”<sup>52</sup> It remains true—as Warren wrote in 2007, well after the gender mainstreaming boom—that the “need for appropriate methodologies was, and still is, felt by many to be the missing factor in translating the desire among those committed to ‘incorporating women/gender into development’ into practice.”<sup>53</sup> What new approaches could achieve the ambitions of gender mainstreaming? At a minimum, greater conceptual clarity is needed to move beyond current piecemeal approaches to ensuring gender awareness, so that gender sensitivity becomes a widely acknowledged and enforced norm.

## From Women to Gender?

One of the hotly contested issues in the field has been how much policies and interventions should center on women. As Margaret Andersen explained on receiving the Sociologists for Women in Society Lecture Award in 2004,

When I went to the University of Delaware in 1974, women's studies was becoming a more established program of study, although most campuses, including mine, were facing enormous political struggles to have women's studies recognized as a legitimate part of the curriculum. Those were heady days. Many reacted to the study of women with ridicule, so those of us teaching at the time had to defend the academic quality of our courses by insisting that studying women was real academic knowledge.

The debate is exemplified by the ambiguous use of the word *gender* in policies, literature, and discourse.<sup>54</sup> Sometimes, the reference is to the generally accepted definition of gender as the “relations between men and women,” invoking the social and cultural contouring of those relations and gendered identities. With troubling frequency, however, *gender* is used interchangeably with *women*, conflating the two and leaving *men* as the unmarked, default category—the generic *human* against which others are compared and potentially deviate.<sup>55</sup>

Reflecting on this tension, Sylvia Chant and Matthew Gutmann note the resentment of women toward acknowledging and involving men in mainstreaming policies. They argue that “not all women want to include men in gender and development and some are even ‘hostile.’”<sup>56</sup> Chant and Gutmann attribute this resistance to concerns about losing ground in the gender equality movement:

[There are] very real fears that making way for men may eclipse women's primacy in a field which they themselves staked out against major odds and which has been marked by struggle ever since. ‘Letting men in’ (in anything other than a secondary capacity at

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least), could be regarded as ‘letting go’ of a terrain in which women have won a legitimate claim to their own, albeit limited, resources.<sup>57</sup>

The perceived stakes include general progress as well as concrete footholds in specific domains of policy and practice, such as international agencies.

Meanwhile, certain men lament—and at times ridicule—the challenges they have faced when working on gender issues, which is generally “assumed to be a woman’s job.”<sup>58</sup> Feleke Tadele’s experiences as a male development worker in Ethiopia, documented in a 1999 Oxfam publication, illustrate these frustrations:

Many women take it as a joke when they see me in meetings and discussion forums. Even if a man is sympathetic to the cause of gender equity, and has knowledge of the practical and theoretical issues, he may encounter prejudice from those who feel that . . . only women can sense the real issues and can plan necessary changes properly.<sup>59</sup>

From this perspective, tipping the scale in favor of women, let alone pressing for exclusivity, may not be the wisest path to sustainable gender equality. As Tadele insists in the same report, gender-sensitive men seek equality for both genders,<sup>60</sup> and, in turn, all genders lose if men are marginal to the very programs that seek to transform gender relations.<sup>61</sup>

Narrow conceptions of what constitutes gender sensitivity may also prove detrimental to women in many parts of the world, particularly if those conceptions are based on Western feminist theories.<sup>62</sup> For instance, rigid notions of what women need to be equal may obscure spaces where women have traditionally found comfort. Drawing on her work with Oxfam in Bosnia, Usha Kar offers a thoughtful reflection on this tension. During the civil war in the Balkans, Oxfam began sponsoring a knitting project in response to local women’s requests for a project to promote their sense of productiveness and well being. Yet many on the Oxfam staff were uncomfortable with a project focused on knitting, an activity they associated with women’s traditional—read “inferior” or “backward”—role. Should Oxfam, a leader in the movement toward gender equality, really support a knitting project? Could this actually promote women’s well-being or liberation?

Once they began interviewing participants, the Oxfam staff discovered that many of the women had lost their husbands or other male family members during the conflict, and viewed knitting as a way to reconnect with their roles in a society torn asunder. The project grew into “Bosfam” (short for Bosnian Family), and the women began seeking ways to ensure that the project would be self-sustaining under their management. As one step in that direction, the women decided to host a fashion show, which they asked Oxfam to fund. The Oxfam staff was then faced with another dilemma, namely, how they could justify funding a project that could be interpreted as “reinforcing conventional prejudices about women’s preoccupation with their physical appearance, their excessive interest in fashion, and other frivolous diversion.”<sup>63</sup> Despite staff reluctance and even embarrassment, Oxfam funded the show. The results, according to both the program participants and the staff, were remarkable. Fiona Gell, deputy country representative at the time, recounted:

It was incredible and fantastic, a sort of glittering parade, in total contrast to all the gloom outside. . . . Young refugee women, ground down by bereavement and violence, their futures bleak and hopeless, were striding up and down a catwalk, tripping up and down playfully in silken evening dresses and gorgeous woolly jumpers. The atmosphere was bursting with self-confidence. They were lovely, exciting, sexy, had the audience rapt.<sup>64</sup>

In this case, therefore, as with earlier, had Oxfam simply stuck with its standard assumptions and intuitions, the activities would never have been implemented and the benefits—the very things it desired in the abstract—would not have been realized.

This example illustrates a series of issues that feature throughout this report. Of course, international and domestic NGOs assure funders that they include their beneficiaries in program

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design and implementation, and that they are sensitive to local needs and priorities. This has become a pro forma component of virtually any grant application. The example points to the challenges that lie beyond the facile rhetoric, and to the ways in which local gender agendas are not a seamless fit with international assumptions regarding gender equality and how best to achieve it. In particular, using *gender* as code for *women* limits the transformative potential of endeavors in the research, policy or practitioner arenas. As Sophie Richter-Devroe observes, “a gender perspective does not mean focusing exclusively on women. It means looking at the inequalities and differences between and among women and men.”<sup>65</sup> The example is also a powerful reminder that postconflict recovery may assume forms that bear scant resemblance to the increasingly standardized models routinely exported to various war-torn corners of the globe.<sup>66</sup>

## Gender and Conflict

In the following sections, we begin by examining processes of militarization and demilitarization, demonstrating that gender is a significant dimension of how security and peacekeeping are oriented and conducted. We conclude by contrasting conventional images of gender to the actual wartime experiences of women, especially as combatants.

### *Security and Peacekeeping*

Militarization and demilitarization involve micro- and macro-level changes. Every sphere of individual and collective life is affected, and both men and women are pressured to adapt and take on new roles as societies prepare for war or peace.

Numerous scholars have observed that the military and defense industries are steeped in gendered metaphors, frequently of an aggressive nature.<sup>67</sup> Catherine Niarchos, for instance, notes that “military language and training is [sic] saturated with sexual imagery, much of it misogynous.”<sup>68</sup> Traditional wartime constructs and propaganda similarly objectify women: “The enemy is portrayed as he who will rape and murder ‘our’ women; the war effort is directed at saving ‘our’ mothers, daughters, and wives.”<sup>69</sup> In some cases, women serve and fight alongside men in armed forces. Yet this can expose these women to higher risks of sexual violence and harassment. In other cases, the risk of such problems and associated questions about the effects of gender integration on morale—however circular they may be—have limited the extent of female involvement in militaries. Meanwhile, the same military bases installed in the name of security may lead to an increase in sexual violence or prostitution, underscoring the degree to which security itself is a gendered good.<sup>70</sup> In fact, in many instances women are either abducted or effectively provisioned to service male soldiers. Thus, the dynamic among the protection, objectification, and abuse of women by soldiers is contradictory.

What we need is a body of work that offers us what we now have for capitalism, colonialism, and globalization: a set of texts that analyze militarism in relation to nationalism, late modern capitalism, media cultures, and the state while mapping the ways in which militarism remakes communities, public cultures, and the consciousness of individual subjects in multiple geographic and social locations.<sup>71</sup>

Sexualized imagery and abusive conduct cannot be explained by small group norms or one bad apple: it appears to be systemic within many militaries, including that of the United States.<sup>72</sup> In Washington, DC, for instance, the group Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) reacted to this concern by embarking on a campaign that attempted to “re-humanize the Other.”<sup>73</sup> Cami Rowe reported that these veterans “described experiences of discrimination, sexual abuse, rape and harassment” within the U.S. military, and that their comments pointed

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to the conclusion that “gender discrimination is intricately linked with the construction and conduct of war.”<sup>74</sup> For instance, a gay male veteran asserted that stark homophobia can push men to commit abuses to prove their heterosexuality:

From my personal experience I can tell you that young straight men, otherwise good men, will go to great lengths and do horrible things to prove that they're not gay. That somehow this idea that men are beings devoid of feelings and compassion and that women are weak and just a ball of emotion is at the center of all this . . . It's got to stop . . . my highest idea of someone who serves in our military, the code of conduct that they would bring to the battlefield, has everything to do with dispelling these old ways of thinking around gender and sexuality.<sup>75</sup>

We highlight this veteran's insistence that a man's attitudes toward homosexuality may be a factor in his abuse of women. Of note, the performative nature of gang rape signals to other participants that each of the perpetrators is a “real man.” Thus it is not only soldiers' views about women, but also their views about sexuality—particularly homosexuality—that can drive them to commit sexually violent crimes.

Just as militarization and armed conflict are highly gendered, so are the demilitarization processes that follow. As Fionnuala Ní Aoláin notes, “The disarmament of weapons is not the disarmament of minds.”<sup>76</sup> As mentioned earlier, an upsurge in violence often characterizes postconflict periods. Though evidence is persuasive that reporting of domestic violence increases in significant measure due to restored (or newly established) access to local institutions such as police departments, the persistence of militarized mentalities may also be a contributing factor:

Attitudinal change is critical and under-valued. For women, it means that while guns may physically no longer be present in public spaces, this does not change a social psychology that makes the use of violence acceptable (whether in the private or public sphere).<sup>77</sup>

The possibility should therefore not be overlooked that militarized men, no longer having an external enemy to fight, shift their violent practices to the home. The bodily capital that served ex-combatants well in the war zone does not easily transfer into civilian forms of social capital when men demobilize.<sup>78</sup> Similarly, Colleen Duggan suggests the term *compromised masculinity* to refer to the loss of status and identity crisis that can affect men after armed conflicts end.<sup>79</sup> Such phenomena are not limited to former conflict zones, much less to particular regions of the world. In fact, research has revealed the high level of domestic violence in Western soldiers' homes following their return from combat, including the “intimate violence experienced by partners of military personnel.”<sup>80</sup> These circumstances prompt the question of how gender regimes could be reworked—in particular, to more effectively disarm masculinities—in the aftermath of war.

Gender inequalities can also be imported by international organizations that come into postconflict countries to facilitate transitional periods. For example, Ní Aoláin asserts that “much less scrutiny has been given to dissecting the patriarchy inherent in international institutions, even less to revealing the masculinist bias of these same bodies and the actors who represent them.”<sup>81</sup> Even as some “men who were in power are losing power, other men are taking their place,” thereby maintaining a male-dominated dynamic,

the international presence is lauded for rescuing such societies from the worst of their own excesses, [but] what is little appreciated is that such men also bring with them varying aspects of gender norms and patriarchal behavior that transpose into the vacuum they fill.<sup>82</sup>

In addition, she highlights the irony of “exporting western military models to transitioning states as presumed ideals of virtue” and notes how this might provoke “complementary rather

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*Militarized men, no longer having an external enemy to fight, shift their violent practices to the home.*

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than contradictory patriarchies” under the “guise of reform.”<sup>83</sup> Beyond traditional militaries, gender discriminatory behavior has also been found in the peacekeeping forces sent to provide security and aid, as mentioned earlier. In many cases, populations that have suffered the consequences of war and extreme conditions have been confronted with peacekeepers who engage in sexual violence or economic coercion, leading women to trade sex for food, protection, or aid to which they are entitled.<sup>84</sup> The upshot is that soldiers and peacekeepers contribute to an array of gendered violence, abusing the very people they are meant to protect.

As a result, scholars and practitioners now stress that security involves much more than just physical safety. Instead, they encourage the adoption of “a broad concept of security that encompasses physical, social, economic, and sexual security.”<sup>85</sup> Similarly, some have begun to analyze the relationship between the equality of women in a society and the level of security in that state. In a 2006 speech, Kofi Annan pointed out that there is “no policy more effective [in promoting development, health, and education] than the empowerment of women and girls” and that he would even venture that this is the most important policy “in preventing conflict, or in achieving reconciliation after a conflict has ended.”<sup>86</sup>

In sum, greater emphasis on incorporating gendered concerns in security sector reforms is vital, and, to this end, further research on gendered perceptions of security is necessary. In particular, understanding the processes used to militarize bodies and minds, the forms of violence practiced and suffered, and local and regional histories is crucial to determine how best to script new gender possibilities in the aftermath of war.

### *Gender Identities*

We began by noting that many variables generate, exacerbate, or deter violence. Among those variables are gender identities—the masculinities and femininities forged in times of peace as well as in conflict and postconflict settings.

Research on men is as old as scholarship itself, but a focus on masculinity, or men as explicitly gendered individuals, is relatively recent.<sup>87</sup>

“In explanations of atrocities, one particular form of social identity—masculinity—has frequently been ignored.”<sup>88</sup>

Although insights from masculinity studies have only recently been incorporated into the debates traced throughout this document, the preliminary efforts are promising. Here, we summarize these contributions with respect to four basic questions: What precisely is meant by masculinities? How are they forged and sustained? What is the relationship between wartime and peacetime masculinities? What are the resulting effects on women?

As a starting point, R. W. Connell has approached the concept of masculinities as a “configuration of practices within a system of gender relations.”<sup>89</sup> In other words, individuals draw on a diverse cultural repertoire of masculine behavior that is, in turn, informed by one’s class, ethnic, racial, religious, and other identities. Although emphasizing the relational aspects of gendered identities and their malleability, Connell argues that in any context “masculinity . . . occupies the hegemonic position in a given pattern of gender relations, a position that is always contestable.”<sup>90</sup> Hegemonic masculinity obscures the alternative masculinities that not only exist in each cultural context, but are also available for each individual. The concept of hegemonic masculinity is particularly salient to conflict settings in which the conflation of masculinity with the use of violence and weaponry may be an enduring fusion.<sup>91</sup> Indeed, as David Morgan has written, “of all the sites where masculinities are constructed, reproduced, and deployed, those associated with war and the military are some of the most direct.”<sup>92</sup>

According to Valerie Hudson and her collaborators, evolutionary theorists believe patriarchal hierarchies originated as a way to protect women. Women opted to “make adaptive choices that serve to perpetuate this system,” such as forming “a general preference for the most dominant men.” This strategic orientation may also have a biological consequence, whereby the “experience of chronic, intimate oppression, exploitation, and violence shapes women hormonally, molding them into creatures more easily persuaded by coercion to yield and submit.” These predispositions can then be passed on to daughters through hormones in the mother’s placenta, in this way reproducing more submissive women. The resulting patriarchal genetics spill over into political systems, in which “those with physical power also dominate political power.”<sup>93</sup>

Other researchers have investigated how dominant tendencies develop in young boys. Psychological studies “demonstrate that very young boys do not display more violence toward girls than girls display toward boys.”<sup>94</sup> Instead, boys become more violent toward women for three main reasons: male-bonded groups, immediate reinforcement (instant gratification), and modeling (what is observed from parents, society, the media, and so on).

Bonding in male-dominant environments generally involves elaborate socialization mechanisms that are critical to understanding the roles men assume during conflict. From fraternities to illegal armed groups to state-sponsored militaries, induction into male-dominant groups frequently involves brutal or demeaning rites of passage.<sup>95</sup> For example, several former soldiers from the Peruvian army have described the use of sodomy on young recruits who were reluctant to demonstrate the “appropriate” level of aggression vis-à-vis the civilian population.<sup>96</sup> These men also described severe beatings and verbal harassment. The status of men during conflict is thus complex. Even those in the position of acting as aggressors and victimizers, like the members of fighting forces, can, at times, be victims of sexual violence. Acknowledging such circumstances need not devolve into a lack of accountability or endless moral elasticity.<sup>97</sup> Rather, it is merely a statement of fact, which should be appreciated and warrants consideration in formulating appropriate responses.

Immediate reinforcement implies that “male children who imitate the violence they observe against women in the home are likely to perpetuate it as long as it gets them what they want.”<sup>98</sup> From this perspective, aggression toward women will continue unless it becomes less rewarding for men.<sup>99</sup>

A key but often overlooked aspect of reinforcement and modeling is the important part women play, as child-bearers and caretakers, in molding masculinities. Numerous examples underscore women’s role in “making men” who may be groomed for violence and armed combat. This evidence certainly explodes notions that women are naturally inclined toward peace, or necessarily drawn to peaceful men. Indeed, in conditions of scarcity or pervasive violence—for example, during a time of war—some women may seek out a male who is aggressive enough to ensure that rest of the “wolves” are held at bay.<sup>100</sup> In fact, a study by Lorraine Bayard de Volo, funded by a USIP grant, demonstrates how and why states mobilize motherhood for war, as well as how militaries benefit from “maternal framing.”<sup>101</sup> Some states make a special effort to target women, especially mothers of combatants, by capitalizing on their socially perceived maternal roles. Thus, women often engage in forging violent masculinities for various reasons, even if this contributes to the continuation of gender inequality, oppression, and violence.

The field of psychology also offers insights into the ways men are emotionally affected as adults by how closely they adhere to the societal roles assigned them. These studies have

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revealed that deviating from socially assigned roles can provoke internal conflict, low self-image, or even depression. James O'Neil has suggested that this gender role conflict is often related to "men's negative or violent attitudes toward women."<sup>102</sup> He writes,

[Gender role conflict] has been significantly correlated with sexually aggressive behaviors and likelihood of forcing sex, abusive behaviors and coercion, dating violence, hostile sexism, hostility toward women, rape myth acceptance, positive attitudes toward and tolerance for sexual harassment, and self-reported violence and aggression.<sup>103</sup>

During our own research, we easily found examples of how salient this psychological concept could be for the field of gender and conflict, underscoring the importance of cross-disciplinary dialogue. For instance, gender role conflict seemed particularly exemplified in a case study on the excess of male children in China. The one-child policy has resulted in many more men who want to marry than there are women available. The Chinese have developed a term for the surplus males in their society that translates as bare sticks or bare branches, referring to the men's inability to continue their family line because no wife can be found for them.<sup>104</sup> According to Valerie Hudson and Andrea Den Boer, most Chinese believe that a man is not truly a man unless he marries. As a result, men's inability to meet this societal expectation often results in "hypermasculine displays in order to prove to others, as well as to themselves, that they are indeed 'real men.'"<sup>105</sup> This can also cause a "greater amount of antisocial, violent and criminal behavior" than if these bare branches had been able to marry.<sup>106</sup>

The notion that men's "unmet sexual needs" pose a danger to women and to the broader society in which they live is a recurring argument.<sup>107</sup> This same sort of thinking contributes to the supposed need for soldiers to have access to sex workers—for fear their unmet sexual needs might otherwise lead them to abuse local women. As Cynthia Enloe has amply demonstrated, the military and prostitution travel together, reflecting a troubling assumption about men's allegedly uncontrollable sexual drives.<sup>108</sup> It is striking that across regions, militaries plan for sexual provisioning as much as they do for other supply needs.

Regarding future areas of inquiry, we echo what Connell has advocated:

Key to this work will be the capacity to grasp the situational specificity of masculinities, violence and violence prevention, and the capacity to move from the individual level to the level of institutions and nations. The continued development of our understanding of masculinities is an important part of the knowledge we need to build a more peaceful, survivable world.<sup>109</sup>

For these reasons, gender-sensitive research and programming must include a focus on men and boys, the identities that they (and others) adopt, and the contributing influences of institutional, social, and familial factors, including the manner in which children are raised—by women and men.<sup>110</sup>

### *"One of the Guys?"<sup>111</sup>*

Over the past century, the nature of armed conflicts has changed. In particular, wars are no longer primarily interstate conflicts arising out of national interests.<sup>112</sup> This reconfiguration has been accompanied by the increased awareness that women are no longer—if they ever were—simply civilians standing on the sidelines or camp followers trudging along (or lying beneath) the soldiers. As Charlotte Lindsey has observed, "The assumption that women are vulnerable overlooks the fact that women are more and more frequently taking up arms."<sup>113</sup>

We in the West are the heirs to a tradition that assumes an affinity between women and peace, between men and war, a tradition that consists of culturally constructed and transmitted myths and memories. Thus, in time of war, real men and women . . . take

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*The military and prostitution travel together. It is striking that across regions, militaries plan for sexual provisioning as much as they do for other supply needs.*

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on, in cultural memory and narrative, the personas Just Warriors and Beautiful Souls. . . . These paradigmatic linkages dangerously over-shadow other voices, other stories: of pacific males; of bellicose women; of cruelty incompatible with just-war fighting; of martial fervor at odds—or so we choose to believe—with maternalism in women.<sup>114</sup>

The growing interest in and research on women's agency during conflicts has contributed to “debunking the myth that women merely suffer in silence in times of conflict.”<sup>115</sup> A milestone in detailing women's multiple roles, including unfortunately as perpetrators of genocidal violence, was the 1995 African Rights Watch report, *Rwanda—Not So Innocent: When Women Become Killers*, which examines women's active participation in the 1994 genocide and murder of political opponents in Rwanda. A substantial number of women, and even girls, were involved in the slaughter in countless ways, inflicting tremendous cruelty on other women as well as on children and men. The women implicated in the violence came from many walks of life and social strata.

When women challenge the mythical division between Just Warriors and Beautiful Souls, they tend to be portrayed as particularly transgressive and ruthless, thus implicitly violating gender norms of femininity, which plays into other derogatory stereotypes. Consider, for example, the guerrilla movement known as the Communist Party of Peru—Shining Path, in which women are estimated to have formed 40 percent of the militants. The media depicted those women as reveling in their ruthlessness and the bloodletting and especially apt at rendering the fatal coup de grace to “enemies of the party.” These images were amplified in local gossip and lore. In one case, peasant patrollers in northern Ayacucho contended the female guerrillas had been harder to kill than their male counterparts: “We had to shoot them over and over again because they just refused to die.”<sup>116</sup>

Another much publicized example was the Liberian female rebel leader, Black Diamond, whom the Western media turned into a prominent symbol of women warriors. Gang raped by national forces at fifteen, Black Diamond responded by taking up arms. In 2003, she captivated the press and aroused great international interest despite being only twenty-two. Chris Coulter has analyzed how the Western media depicted Black Diamond and other West African female fighters. She quotes from a BBC article: “‘Black Diamond’ and her comrades may look like a bunch of street-wise girls with attitude but they have the military hardware to back up the look.” As Coulter explains, the photos accompanying the article portrayed the women “not as terrifying killers, but more along the line of ‘sexy ghetto chicks,’ using highly sexualized language that drew on a set of racist stereotypes about black women as sexually loose and seductive.”<sup>117</sup> The stereotype of female combatants being prone to promiscuity repeats across regions. Away from the glare of the cameras, however, women provided Coulter with different reasons for having taken up arms. Forced recruitment and abduction played important roles, and the level of sexual violence was staggering. Some women enjoyed the increased access to food from pillaging and some the benefits that could accrue to them if they were taken as bush wives by rebel commanders. Some in Sierra Leone cited the respect they had relished when they carried a gun.

The dimension of respect arises in other cases. In Mozambique, for example, Harry West encountered a similar dynamic among women soldiers who fought in the country's socialist guerrilla war of independence against Portugal (1964–74). Women were welcome to join and ostensibly treated as equals within the guerilla army (FRELIMO), which needed women's support. Of particular interest in West's research was the nostalgia former female guerrillas expressed: many missed the time when they had wielded power and benefited from the status of “being treated as men.” Rather than talking about what had

been done to them during the war (for example, whether they had been subject to sexual violations), the women would reminisce about their successes and time as rebel fighters because their participation reminded them of when they were treated as equals and received greater respect. West also noted the lack of post-traumatic stress disorder among women, even among those who entered as minors, in spite of their involvement in the army. A more common challenge for these women was to resume interfamily relationships and adjust to a patriarchal society following the conflict. The ambivalence these women express about their experiences as combatants is therefore compounded by how they are treated when they return to civilian life.

Research conducted with former combatants in various Latin American and African countries reveals how gender greatly influences the options available as these individuals transition from their armed group back into civil society.<sup>118</sup> Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs are often designed around certain gendered assumptions about combatants and their needs. Thus they tend to systematically marginalize women at each step of the process.

A larger insight is that women's experiences both during and after conflict are not homogeneous. Mats Utas's study of what he calls social navigation tactics in Sierra Leone affords a fascinating look at women's livelihood strategies in these contexts. "Rather than reproducing the opposition between conventional portrayals of 'women as victims' and the counter-hegemonic narratives (as represented by Black Diamond) of 'women as (hyper) agents,' . . . agency is manifest and deployed across the full range of women's wartime experiences."<sup>119</sup> He describes how during the Liberian civil war, women engaged in girlfriending: singling out and securing soldier boyfriends (the higher the rank, the better) in order to protect themselves and their families, and to provide them with food and money during a time of scarcity. Elsewhere, women have been known to trade sex "in a quid pro quo for the release of young men targeted for death by the military."<sup>120</sup> These strategies represent instrumentally pragmatic ways to increase women's security as well as their social or economic status within a war or postwar setting. As a result, Utas argues,

A more robust analysis of women's lives in the war zone requires seeing women as something other than mere victims devoid of agency or alternatively as 'fully free actors,' but rather as tactical agents engaged in the difficult task of social navigation.<sup>121</sup>

The ability to socially navigate, however, is paradoxically grounded in how a woman's body becomes a commodity on the market.<sup>122</sup> Women may begin to use their bodies in various ways for their own interests or protection, or to care for loved ones.

Such complexities and contradictions are crucial to explore when undertaking research and to acknowledge when designing policies and practical interventions. A richer awareness of the diversity of women's lived experiences of war and its legacies may permit more thoughtful approaches that actually take account of and address their wide range of circumstances and needs.<sup>123</sup>

### *Repertoires of Violence*

We have discussed dispositions toward violence, especially among men, and mentioned the particular phenomenon of sexual violence both during and after conflict.<sup>124</sup> These topics warrant further attention not least because they have been the subject of considerable focus among scholars and practitioners, yielding findings that challenge simple images and conventional wisdoms.

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*Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs are often designed around certain gendered assumptions. Thus they tend to marginalize women at each step of the process.*

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Rape becomes an unfortunate but inevitable by-product of the necessary game called war.<sup>125</sup>

Rape is not inevitable in war.<sup>126</sup>

Susan Brownmiller, who contributed to opening space for a discussion about rape, treated mass sexual violence during war as an inevitable outcome of transhistorical male domination. In other words, such violence is a natural by-product of prevailing and characteristically unequal systems of gender relations rather than an extreme departure from norms of behavior that materializes only temporarily in the midst of conflict. Recent research, however, has called for greater nuance in analyzing and explaining the prevalence of sexual violence within and across conflicts.<sup>127</sup>

In particular, Elisabeth Wood, drawing on research funded by a USIP grant, challenges the claim that sexual violence is endemic in conflict.<sup>128</sup> Her work, especially focusing on the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in Sri Lanka, establishes that rape is not a constant feature of armed conflict. In fact, the use and extent of rape varies across conflicts, among different warring parties within the same conflict, and even within the same group of combatants. She theorizes that the occurrence of rape, or more broadly acts of sexual violence, depends on a commander's strategies and beliefs, the strength of military hierarchy as it pertains to the dissemination of orders and punishment for infractions, the beliefs of individual combatants, and the cultural norms that evolve within smaller groups of combatants. Wood also argues that by showing that sexual violence is not an inevitable component of war, perpetrators are more likely to be held accountable for their crimes. Her compelling argument has stimulated a new generation of research on sexual violence during armed conflict.<sup>129</sup>

Another debate concerns the (dis)continuities between sexual violence during periods of peace and war. Evidence suggesting that sexual violence during conflict is intimately related to existing gender regimes and sexual practices is abundant. Maria Olujić provides one apt example, demonstrating how wartime atrocities in the former Yugoslavia had their origins in long-standing traditions:

Male teenagers would run after a woman, knock her down, jump on top of her, pin her onto the floor, roll her over, and then pinch her breasts or grab at her genital region. In public, this physical assault aroused the cheers of men and motivated women to yell out and pull the man off the victim . . . Since the attacked women usually rejected the men's advances, the play rape became a way for a man to publicly save face and publicly humiliate a woman for rejecting him. In short, it was a game of status in which men had to be on top.<sup>130</sup>

These peacetime male-female interactions were similarly "illustrated in songs, jokes, and stories" that provide evidence of the "undercurrent of dangerous violent sexuality" contained in courtship.<sup>131</sup> As a result, Olujić concludes, "violence against women is not restricted to war; its roots are well established in peaceful times. And use of violence against women in war cannot be understood without first examining its cultural meanings in peace."<sup>132</sup> This association is not limited to the former Yugoslavia, but is universal as studies of countries in other regions of the world indicate.

For example, Jelke Boesten has made similar arguments, using a case study of Peru, regarding the salience of peacetime gender relations to conflict periods. She notes that "sexual violence during political conflict is often framed by social codes and gender norms which make such violence acceptable, tolerated, and often justifiable both in war and peace."<sup>133</sup> Thus, "rape in wartime not only results in the breakdown of the existing social order, it is also reflected by that existing social order."<sup>134</sup> Indeed, until 1997, the legal code in Peru allowed a rapist to be exempt from punishment if he married his victim; in the case of gang rape, all the

perpetrators would be exempt from legal consequences if one of the men agreed to marry the victim. Although the law was changed, attitudes lag. In rural communities, it remains common for families of a rape victim to negotiate *un buen arreglo* (a good arrangement), whereby the rapist marries the woman he raped, or at least provides the family with some form of compensation. These traditional practices—and the commensurate sense of impunity for acts of sexual violence—probably contributed to soldiers’ use of sexual violence during the internal armed conflict. As former general German Parra stated in a televised interview following the release of the Peruvian TRC’s Final Report in 2003, “soldiers had to satisfy their instincts. . . . Anyway, rural women were used to that because their men do the same to them.”<sup>135</sup>

Likewise, the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women emphasizes the connection between wartime violence and ordinary social conventions in a report from a mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The executive summary states that “if the sexual violence associated with war is addressed in isolation, gender-based discrimination and violence endured by women in ‘peace’ will be grossly neglected and the war on women reinforced.”<sup>136</sup>

Sexual violence during wartime could be viewed, therefore, as representing an exacerbation of existing patterns and accepted norms of behavior under conditions that tend to multiply the number of armed actors and heighten their authority and freedom. Such a perspective is characteristic of the *continuum of violence* approach.<sup>137</sup> Margaret Walker acknowledges its logic but identifies important weaknesses:

The emphasis on a continuum of violence has indispensable uses. It is a basis for predicting forms of violence and harm women are likely to suffer, and it is essential to understanding social, institutional, and legal reforms needed in the aftermath of violence in conflict. Even so, it does not adequately capture the experience of catastrophic and life-changing violence many women experience in these conflict situations. In the context of reparations, a focus on the victim’s experience of harm and loss is essential.<sup>138</sup>

The distinction Walker draws is important. On the one hand, consistent with the continuum of violence approach, sexual violence during conflict can appear to mirror the gendered and structural forms of violence characteristic of normal daily life. On the other hand, women (and men) insist they have seen or practiced forms of violence they never could have imagined—forms of violence that challenge any notion of a moral community with its capacity to impose limits on human action. As Wood has noted, “repertoires of violence” may magnify existing patterns of interpersonal violence, yet they may also reflect innovation as perpetrators begin deploying forms of violence that are truly unprecedented in a particular region or armed conflict.

Researchers and practitioners ought to acknowledge these world-rupturing events which are particularly salient to discussions of sexual violence. On this front, Roland Littlewood lays out a series of compelling questions for further research:

What is the immediate motivation of the military rapist? What are his notions of sexual pleasure, of his usual sexual pleasure, his expectations of fatherhood? What does he think he is doing? . . . We need to know much more about the soldier’s view at the time of his act. How does he consider and deal with the conventional objections to rape? Perhaps by dehumanization, which then justified violence as a collective practice? But then how does he justify sexual intercourse with a “non-human”?<sup>139</sup>

Littlewood acknowledges that these questions will be difficult to answer given the “near impossibility of research in humans . . . and because of the postconflict disgust, on the part of both the principal and his surviving victim, which prevents any sort of detailed contextual study. War is sanitized in military memoirs, certainly on the part of the victors.”<sup>140</sup> Despite the challenges, quality research on this topic is essential, because understanding socialization into sexual violence may provide insights into undoing that process.

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*Sexual violence during wartime could be viewed as an exacerbation of existing patterns and accepted norms of behavior under conditions that tend to multiply the number of armed actors and heighten their authority and freedom.*

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Walker also makes a compelling argument that the focus ought to be on how individuals experience armed conflict, and how they prioritize certain aspects of their suffering as well as the forms of redress that might help them set their worlds right. Ironically, considering the tenacious effort to have sexual violence recognized as a war crime and crime against humanity, this might not be what women categorize as the worst violation they have endured during times of war. For example, survivors of sexual violence in Peru challenge common sense notions of rape as a “fate worse than death.”<sup>141</sup>

Equally significant, even if sexual violence is defined broadly, the gendered dimensions of conflict may still be viewed in overly narrow terms. In fact, an emphasis on sexual violence may obscure other issues that are of greater importance to many women. At a conference on gender and transitional justice, a participant recalled that “in the wake of the performances of the Vagina Monologues in Afghanistan, one Afghan woman [had] told her that her vagina [was] more concerned with socioeconomic issues regarding food security.”<sup>142</sup> As a result of encountering such perspectives, academics and practitioners are increasingly realizing that sexual violence may not be at the top of some women’s hierarchy of harms, and that more emphasis needs to be placed on discovering local women’s priorities, including their views of what constitutes appropriate justice and redress. It has also become clear that both the experience and meaning of sexual violence is “in significant measure *culturally determined* [emphasis added]” and as such may have different implications depending on local cultural codes.<sup>143</sup>

Thus, although sexual violence is an important aspect of conflict, it is not the only salient aspect from a gender perspective, especially because it is not a universal constant. Understanding the nature and sources of variation in sexual violence, including prevailing gender systems and cultural practices, is therefore a vital step. Equally significant, an appreciation of the gender dimensions of conflict must be more robust, encompassing other types of violations and their consequences. These considerations, in turn, are crucial to discussions on postwar reparations, a topic we address later.

### *Sexual Violence Against Men*

The emphasis on women as victims of sexual violence is understandable, but clearly the reality is more complicated.

The soldiers took the men aside. They raped the women in public, but the men—they took them somewhere else to do those things to them.<sup>144</sup>

Thus far, other forms of sexual violence—male on male, female on male, and female on female—have been “at the periphery of the existing discussion,” for a number of reasons.<sup>145</sup> Sandesh Sivakumaran asserts that men who are raped by men, or forced to perform some sort of sexual act with another male, are often “tainted” with the homosexual label, whereas the perpetrator is not. Many societies equate manhood with “the ability to exert power over others, especially by force,” thus making victimization and masculinity irreconcilable concepts. This leads to the “belief that men cannot be victims” and causes rape to be “dismissed as a woman’s issue.”<sup>146</sup> Furthermore, Sivakumaran found that “it is not uncommon for survivors to have become sexually aroused during the rape and this may even have been the intention of the perpetrator.”<sup>147</sup> Such a response can induce victims to have feelings of guilt, as well to confront difficult questions regarding sexual identity.<sup>148</sup> Male security officials and interviewers frequently add to the trauma with their own homophobia and misunderstanding of male-on-male rape. Reportedly, some police officers in the United States have asked male rape victims if

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*Both the experience and meaning of sexual violence is “in significant measure culturally determined” and as such may have different implications depending on local cultural codes.*

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*If women and girls find it difficult to speak about sexual violence due to stigma and shame, then this is magnified for men and boys.*

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they ejaculated and whether they had any homosexual friends, as if such a line of questioning were relevant to the abuse experienced by the victim.<sup>149</sup>

If women and girls find it difficult to speak about sexual violence due to stigma and shame, then this is magnified for men and boys. The silence of the latter two groups is compounded by the well-intentioned focus on these violations as happening overwhelmingly to women and girls, which may render other victims invisible. For instance, an Amnesty International report on rape and sexual abuse against women in detention centers observes that “although men are sometimes raped in custody by government agents, it is a form of torture primarily directed against women, and to which *women are uniquely vulnerable* [emphasis added].”<sup>150</sup> This assertion is partly true, particularly with respect to patriarchal social structures and biological differences, but to say that women are *uniquely* vulnerable implies that men are not. Similarly, in testimonies given to the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the same act—for instance, inserting a police baton into someone’s anus—was likely to be coded as torture when committed on a male and rape if committed on a female.<sup>151</sup> The same act was interpreted as sexualized not in and of itself, but rather as a function of the person against whom the violence was perpetrated. Even when some men did come forward and speak, therefore, what they said fell outside the range of what people were prepared to hear. Yet, objectively speaking, in both instances the act is torture and also sexual violence.

What this discussion makes clear is the need for a better understanding of the nature of experiences in a conflict, including the gender aspects. Fundamental to the task is greater fidelity of knowledge, which requires broad-based empirical research and tapping the local knowledge of practitioners to develop more precise and comprehensive pictures that capture and seek to explain variation within and across contexts. In the process, it is essential not to distort the picture by imposing limiting assumptions, especially if inconsistent with individual dispositions and realities on the ground, about what is most important and typical, or by losing sight of the reasons why certain violations may be underreported.

## Gender and Postconflict Transitions

This section concerns transitions from conflict and the extent to which transitional justice mechanisms and institutional reforms incorporate a gendered perspective. A central lesson is that the dividends of peace are not shared equally, in part because gender regimes forged or exacerbated in conflict can persist afterward. Violence against women and girls, in fact, frequently rises. Moreover, the design and implementation of specific postconflict policies can exclude women from accessing benefits, thereby reflecting and reinforcing their marginalization in society.

### *No Aftermath for Women?*

Armed conflicts are both destructive and transformative. During war, women frequently take on new roles which may lead to a greater sense of political protagonism and institutional savvy.<sup>152</sup> As Rita Manchanda has suggested, political violence and the transitional period that follows can open up “intended or unintended spaces for empowering women, effecting structural social transformations and producing new social, economic, and political realities that redefine gender and caste hierarchies.”<sup>153</sup> Yet the spaces women enter when men are at war often contract when conflicts end and governments find ways to “absorb a large number of demobilized soldiers.”<sup>154</sup>

That war is profoundly gendered has long been recognized by feminist international relations scholars. What is less recognized is that the postwar period is equally gendered.<sup>155</sup>

The changes in gender dynamics during and after war have thus become a subject of particular interest within gender studies, because transitional periods present an opportunity to script new gender roles if femininities and masculinities are made the object of study and intervention. Conversely, if gender issues are marginalized during transitional periods, existing social inequalities and power relations can remain largely intact.

The evidence shows clearly that the latter outcome is prevalent and set in motion by events before conflicts are resolved. In practice, women have been overwhelmingly excluded from peace agreements and national rebuilding efforts, and the additional burdens women assume as a result of armed conflict are often left unaddressed.<sup>156</sup> Christine Bell and Catherine O'Rourke explored whether—and if so how—this UN Resolution 1325 influenced peace agreements signed between January 1990 and January 2010.<sup>157</sup> They found relatively few specific references to women in the agreements, which led them to examine various barriers to fully implementing the resolution's call for women's equal participation with men and women's full involvement in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security.<sup>158</sup> Among the key barriers they identify are the many players in the world of peace mediation (the UN among them), a lack of gender awareness by the parties and mediators, the absence of female participants, and a worry that including gender-specific concerns of women makes it more difficult for the parties to reach agreement or stabilize any agreement reached. In response, Bell and O'Rourke emphasize that

addressing the status of women in peace agreement texts is significant not just for the inclusion of peace-building strategies but for their future inclusion in the domestic political and legal order itself [because] Peace agreements have a distinctive quasi-constitutional quality and sometimes even constitute or contain constitutions.<sup>159</sup>

Thus, moving from “pieces of paper” to “peace agreements” remains a challenge.

### *Truth Commissions: Speaking of Silences*

Peace agreements, of course, are just one step in the often lengthy and difficult transitions from conflict. Another common item on the agenda is transitional justice, which former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has defined as

the full range of processes and mechanisms associated with a society's attempts to come to terms with a legacy of large-scale past abuses, in order to ensure accountability, serve justice and achieve reconciliation. These may include both judicial and non-judicial mechanisms, with differing levels of international involvement (or none at all) and individual reform, vetting and dismissals, or a combination thereof.<sup>160</sup>

Among other options are truth commissions and reparations programs. Gender arrived a bit late to the transitional justice debates, but recent scholarship is quickly filling the void. Key issues include the conditions that may discourage people—women in particular—from coming forward to relate what happened to them during the conflict, as well as the removal of their agency and the discounting of their experiences when they do so.

When people talk about rape, they talk a great deal about silences.<sup>161</sup>

These issues reflect a host of causal factors that ideally should be remediated but often persist—which has implications for the functioning of the various transitional justice mechanisms and their utility for individuals and society at large.

In principle, the mechanisms can bring about consequential changes that benefit those who have been historically excluded, marginalized, and victimized. For example, Cheryl



McEwan noted, in research on South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission process, that "the role of women's personal testimony in shaping the nation and citizenship is particularly important in a country such as South Africa where the legacies of colonialism and apartheid have effectively silenced black women's voices."<sup>162</sup> Her observation resonates with claims that have been made more broadly about the ability of truth commissions to cultivate a participatory ethos, to afford a platform for publicizing the violations suffered by particular social groups, and to officially acknowledge and set the stage for redress of those harms.

Yet these positive outcomes are hardly a given. Truth commissions, if they are not careful, can easily continue prevailing patterns by failing to actively include the experiences of constituencies that have historically lacked a voice in the political and social arenas. On this count, the record shows that truth commissions, notwithstanding their ostensible purposes, can actually silence and sideline women's concerns and other gender dimensions of conflict.

What to do with these silences—how to listen to them, how to interpret them, how to determine when they are oppressive and when they may constitute a form of agency—is a subject of much concern and debate. Clearly, if there is a theme capable of imposing silence, it is rape. Women have many reasons to hide that they have been raped and, with justice a very distant horizon, few reasons to speak about a stigmatizing, shameful experience.<sup>163</sup>

For example, when South Africa's TRC was ongoing, one woman complained about powerful deterrents to reporting incidents of sexual violence: "Some of the rapists hold high political positions today—so if you spoke out you would not only undermine the new government you fought for, but destroy your own possibilities of a future."<sup>164</sup> Therefore, coming forth is not a straightforward opportunity that most everyone is inclined to embrace, but rather has major trade-offs, as going public might mean damaging the country's fragile democracy, confronting powerful elites and risking retaliation, or stigmatizing female politicians who had been raped by members of various state or opposition forces.

It does not help that the truth commissions in many countries have failed to make sufficient provisions for ensuring the privacy, anonymity, and even security of witnesses, considerations that come into play at multiple stages. The most obvious is in giving evidence, whether in the form of a written statement or oral testimony. Someone might be dissuaded from doing so if they felt exposed and vulnerable as a result. To minimize or avoid these concerns, Tristan Borer—in an article produced from a project supported by a USIP grant—has advocated that truth commissions adopt approaches "enabling gender-sensitive testimony to emerge, including allowing women to testify only before women commissioners, allowing them to testify in camera, and allowing them to remain anonymous."<sup>165</sup> Such protections of victims' confidentiality should become part of a standard protocol strictly heeded at all times, including after a truth commission—by nature a temporary body—concludes its work. Otherwise, serious problems can ensue. For instance, the archives of Peru's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which issued its final report in 2003, contain all documents on victims, including those concerning sexual violence. Many of their testimonies requesting confidentiality are filed with a copy of their national identification card, personal information, fingerprints, and, where relevant, a copy of the birth certificate of any child resulting from the rape. The archives are located in the center of Lima, Peru's capital, and can be accessed with relative ease. As a result, confidentiality is essentially out the window. There are other unintended, though arguably less damaging, consequences: for example, one of the managers of the archives claims that a girl learned she was a product of rape after perusing the testimonies.<sup>166</sup>

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*Truth commissions in many countries have failed to make sufficient provisions for ensuring the privacy, anonymity, and even security of witnesses.*

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These complications are not limited to truth commissions, but rather arise in other transitional justice proceedings. In fact, different mechanisms may be in tension with one another as far as the degree to which they accommodate the interests of victims. For instance, the concern for their anonymity has also been contemplated in the context of truth commission cases turning into criminal proceedings. Judith Gardam and Hilary Charlesworth find, however, that proposed changes to legal practice “have not been readily accepted” because there is “a perceived conflict . . . between the demands of a fair trial and the protection of women as victims and witnesses.”<sup>167</sup> These disparities limit the available options, at the very least tending to discourage certain individuals from taking part in legal cases because they may have to forego their privacy and therefore face unwanted insecurity.

Other factors can affect how gender-based violence is recalled. We noted earlier the impact of culture. Political dynamics can also influence how an individual feels about and opts to articulate their experience of conflict, as well as views patterns of abuses. Hungary affords a representative example of varying perceptions of sexual violence based on political affinities. Over the last century, the country endured two major conflicts—the Nazi takeover during World War II and the subsequent Soviet invasion. A study by James Mark found that those with left-wing stances sympathized more with the Soviets, saw them as their liberators, and minimized the acts of sexual violence the Red Army committed, whereas those with right-wing stances tended to defend the Nazis and to emphasize the sexual abuses perpetrated by the Soviets. These tendencies were observed even among the actual victims of sexual violence, some of whom had political beliefs that motivated them to express favor for, rather than condemn, their perpetrators’ side. Meanwhile, citizens of Jewish origin related more to the Red Army, minimizing their atrocities because they saw them as liberators:

They downplayed rape or provided different accounts of the sexual contact between Soviet soldiers and Hungarian women. In so doing, they used rape stories as a different form of “truth-telling”: to highlight their experience of 1945 as a liberation.<sup>168</sup>

The implication is that when constructing victimologies, individual and collective memories may be reworked to pursue a variety of ends beyond a straightforward, factual accounting of the legacies of violence.

Similarly, many sectors of society may participate in constructing and maintaining comfortable or convenient silences around sexual violence, as well as other types of atrocities. Consider situations when the mothers, wives, sisters, lovers, and daughters of soldiers returning from combat are regaled with war stories of battles fought and enemies slain; local officials organize days of commemoration, parades, and monuments for the heroes; and governments extend economic benefits frequently associated with military service, underscoring the close ties between military service and citizenship in many contexts. In any of these contexts, it is difficult to imagine the former combatants narrating tales of rape to the audiences that await their return, because rape is not what patriotic heroes are supposed to do. There is scant space for them to speak candidly, though not for lack of anything unseemly to describe:

There must be more than a million men alive who have carried out collective sexual violence against women in war, insurgency, riots or gang activism. And on these acts (with the exception of *The Winter Soldier Investigation of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War*) they have remained silent. How they make sense of them—forgetting, excusing, memorializing—we do not know. Nor whether their exculpations are all of a piece when talking to, say, their current sexual partner, their priest, doctor or former comrades.<sup>169</sup>

Some acts may thus be unspeakable and “unlistenable.” Sexual violations are, by their nature, prone to falling into one of these two categories.

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Despite the many silences, some women and men do speak out about sexual violence. For those who have occasion to talk—perhaps in the venue of a truth commission, criminal trial, or other formal setting—about the violations they experienced or witnessed, their testimony does not imply they are in control of the context, or that they exercise meaningful discretion over what they say or how it will be received and used. Additionally, the act of providing testimony does not ensure that the events recounted will receive appropriate attention or redress.

On this count, Catherine Cole contends that victims surrender their agency in any courtroom proceeding, especially one concerning serious violations of international law:

Trials about crimes against humanity can be particularly debilitating and disempowering for victims. As with all trials, the courtroom casts victims in a passive rather than active role, allowing them to speak only when spoken to by an agent of the court, and even then to speak only on certain terms and topics, subject to cross-examination that may be of an adversarial nature.<sup>170</sup>

The diminished sense of agency in transitional justice contexts is even more commonplace and pronounced for women, because they frequently speak about the sufferings of others rather than their own experiences. Sidonie Smith describes that in the South African case, “women became witnesses to mourning for lost loved ones” rather than “witnesses to their own experiences of harm and degradation.”<sup>171</sup> A similar pattern has been observed elsewhere, when women provide testimony about sexual violence.

This outcome can be influenced by a sense of shame about discussing one’s own violations, especially when they likely confer social stigma, but it also reflects the gendered nature of memory specialization. Women typically narrate communal suffering and the quotidian impact of war. It is unsurprising, therefore, that they become the bearers of collective memories of sexual and other violations as well and are routinely called on to narrate degrading and brutal episodes of violence as part of transitional justice proceedings. Yet placing this burden on women is problematic, given that they are not the only victims or witnesses; offering testimony is demanding, invasive, and even dangerous, and what ensues may be out of their control. Among the pressing needs are more creative evidentiary methods, particularly ones that would shift the responsibility for recounting episodes of sexual violence away from women (and especially toward the rapists), without jeopardizing their access to justice, reparations, and other forms of redress.<sup>172</sup>

Even when people do speak up about sexual violence, their interlocutors may be ill equipped to hear them. A poignant case from Peru concerns a young woman named Rosalia, who was raped during the internal armed conflict. In a taped conversation stored in the TRC archives in Lima, an interviewer asked Rosalia for details about her rape. Rosalia explained that she was initially raped by a soldier who was stationed near her home. In accordance with the convention mentioned earlier, Rosalia was married to her rapist. Before he disappeared, she also became pregnant. In relating her story to the interviewer, Rosalia stated from the outset that her child was the product of rape. When the interviewer heard the story, he insisted the child was conceived during marriage. Growing frustrated with her, he insisted that she was not being honest with him. Yet Rosalia viewed her marriage and subsequent pregnancy as a product of the initial rape: had she not been raped, she would neither have married the man, nor have been obligated to continue having sex with him, which led to the birth of her child. The interviewer was undoubtedly prompted by the training he had received: the “interviewer’s task is not only to take a testimony that is as accurate as possible from victims as they experienced events, but also to try to establish ‘facts’ for legal purposes.”<sup>173</sup> In the end, therefore, the requirements of evidence and the designs of an individual narrating his or her life painfully diverge.

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A related but more general problem is that the forms of harm experienced by women tend to be overlooked or classified as less serious in relation to the human rights violations suffered by men. Ní Aoláin argues that “harm naming” is essential during times of transition to understand the abuses that occurred.<sup>174</sup> The problem is that this process may result in a hierarchy of victimization that prioritizes certain abuses above others. For example, Julie Guillerot found that the Peruvian TRC classified violations according to a scale. Death and disappearance were considered the most serious violations because they affected the right to life. Next was disability, because it entailed a loss of the ability to generate income, followed by imprisonment, because it entailed the interruption of a life project. She notes, however, that

Rape ended up at the bottom of the scale because it was not considered to have any impact on such rights or abilities. This view failed to take into account, however, the potential consequences of rape on the victim’s social status, including rejection by the husband, impossibility of getting married, stigmatization in the community and so on—all of which can lead to the impossibility of accessing means of livelihood, within the context of a society based on mutual help relations, reciprocity, and gender divisions of labor.<sup>175</sup>

The myopic perspective, which effectively minimizes the significance of rape, offsets a laudable move by the Peruvian TRC to adopt a broad definition of sexual violence, including forms of abuse extending beyond rape.

The scope and severity of women’s experiences of conflict can also be diminished by a narrow focus on particular violations. Certain truth commissions that have implemented “gender-sensitive” strategies overwhelmingly emphasize gathering women’s first-person testimonies about rape.<sup>176</sup> In particular, Fiona Ross argues that the South African TRC essentialized violations of bodily integrity as the predominant gender-based harm. Consequently, the commission constructed, and arguably prized, the rape-victim narrative, which was condensed from testimonies during the public hearings and became emblematic of women’s experience of apartheid.<sup>177</sup>

This example is symptomatic of how truth commissions consistently contour the manner in which people come forward to narrate their lives and experiences during eras of conflict. A common feature is the overriding orientation toward recounting stories of suffering and loss. Such a victim-centric approach has definite merits because it avoids ignoring the important history of abuses, but it may also inadvertently silence other significant relationships people have with their pasts, such as defiance, protagonism, and pride.<sup>178</sup> Women, who tend to already be marginalized in these processes, are especially subject to the latter repercussions. For example, because women were often testifying either as victims of rape or as witnesses of violations experienced by others, they came to be portrayed in the final report of the South African TRC as “a secondary class of victims without agency in the [anti-apartheid liberation] struggles.”<sup>179</sup> In other words, the picture is that they were on the periphery of what was happening politically, observing the violence and suffering modest unrelated violations, as opposed to those to which male activists were frequently subjected (arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, torture, beatings, abduction, attempted murder, assassination).

Of course, women have much more to say, without which understandings of the nature and impact of conflict and the needs of postconflict transitions will not reflect the true breadth of experience. In conversations outside the framework of Peru’s TRC, women described systemic injustice, the gross violations of their socioeconomic rights, the sting of ethnic discrimination, and the futility of seeking justice from the national and local legal systems. Their reflections also reveal other dimensions of conflict that women face disproportionately: the suffering of their family members and communities, the long daily walks to the river for water, the hours

spent scrounging for bits of kindling, their children's gnawing hunger that they tried to calm with water and salt, and being subjected to ethnic insults in the streets of the cities in which they sought refuge. When abuses against women and girls have been addressed within transitional justice processes, however, the emphasis is largely on sexual violations, obscuring the many other ways in which armed conflicts affect women and girls versus men and boys.

The failure to adequately recognize the full profile of experiences and violations during conflict, including its gender dimensions, limits the prospects of reparations for harms and their associated potential to transform gender regimes. As a result of the narrow focus on certain classes of violations, especially physical ones, viewed as most severe and often disproportionately suffered by men, most formal reparations programs are woefully insensitive to the many other ways in which women and girls are affected by violence and surrounding circumstances. At a minimum, these programs rarely account for pervasive problems such as forced labor, coerced marriage, displacement, chronic health problems stemming from sexual violence and malnutrition, and a sharp rise in female-headed households and the resulting feminization of poverty, which can be exacerbated by male-biased land tenure systems and inheritance patterns. Another profoundly significant thing the programs often ignore is the myriad opportunities that are foregone or never available because of the loss of family members, economic assets, institutional upheaval, and infrastructural damage. In principle, another recourse victims have is to resort to filing a civil lawsuit. Among the challenges of this strategy, however, is that the daily violence women experience has yet to be recognized or defined in many legal systems.<sup>180</sup>

Responding to these sorts of issues, Ruth Rubio-Marín has advocated for harnessing the transformative potential of reparations to destabilize gender hierarchies.<sup>181</sup> In part, she recommends moving from a rights-based to a harms-based approach when designing reparations programs. As justification, she argues that reparations, when conceived as redress for the violations of rights, are likely to reproduce the gender biases characteristic of many existing rights systems.<sup>182</sup> In contrast, focusing on harms can capture the wider range of consequences women disproportionately bear:

Indeed, the need to identify who, beyond the right holder, has been individually or collectively affected by the violation and deserves redress allows movement beyond the rights paradigm in one concrete way that may be fundamental to women, namely by bringing to the fore the interrelatedness of the harms and the ways in which the diffuse nature of harms affects women specifically. For instance, although, strictly speaking, there is no human right not to be widowed, the harm done to women whose husbands are executed or disappeared can nevertheless find adequate recognition through this harms-based notion of victim.<sup>183</sup>

Approaching reparations in a way that captures diffuse harms can permit recognition of women's roles as primary caretakers in most societies, thereby affording the basis of measures that support both them and their "children born of war."<sup>184</sup>

## Recommendations

We have reviewed the history of legal developments and the evolution of policies, approaches, and activities related to the field of gender, conflict, and peacebuilding. We have also examined recent discussion in the field and described evident shortcomings and needed improvements in research and practice. Here we summarize those insights and recommendations and offer our reflections on several cross-cutting issues.

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*Most formal reparations programs rarely account for pervasive problems such as forced labor, coerced marriage, displacement, chronic health problems stemming from sexual violence and malnutrition, and a sharp rise in female-headed households.*

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### *Institutionalizing Gender Sensitivity*

Disagreement on the meaning of the word *gender* disrupts efforts to create gender-sensitive strategies for conflict and postconflict periods. Despite attempts at consensus, strategies and models still suffer greatly from contradictory definitions and interpretations that ultimately undermine their effectiveness. Agreement on certain fundamentals is necessary to ensure that work on gender does not remain inconsistent or piecemeal and to enable research, policy, and practice to advance constructively. At the same time, the gap between conventions and enforcement remains tenacious. Even when international and domestic legislation has been progressive, abiding by the resulting requirements continues to be a key concern for the field. Unfortunately, the prevalence of these issues has undermined the fight for gender equality.

- Recommendation 1: Adopt clear definitions of gender.
- Recommendation 2: Standardize gender policies and practices.
- Recommendation 3: Internalize norms of gender sensitivity across the community of researchers, policymakers, and practitioners.
- Recommendation 4: Engage in strong, consistent enforcement of formal rules and policies.

### *From Women to Gender*

The insights that gender studies offer policymakers, scholars, and practitioners working on the issues of conflict and peacebuilding are impoverished when gender is reduced to women. Obviously, navigating conflict and postconflict situations in such a way that women and girls do not end up being ignored or marginalized is essential. An exclusive focus on women and girls, however, leaves important angles unexplored and overlooks the fact that they alone cannot create real, lasting changes in gender dynamics. Involving men and boys in gender-sensitive endeavors—as subjects, participants, contributors, and proponents—is therefore in the best interest of the field. The focus should not be limited to violent men but should also include those men who have carved out space for alternative, peaceful forms of masculinity, yet are frequently rendered invisible in conflict and postconflict settings.

- Recommendation 1: Approach gender broadly, not simply as a synonym for women.
- Recommendation 2: Include men and boys as well as women and girls in gender-sensitive programs.

### *Gender and Conflict*

To reiterate, security is a gendered good. Further research would help us better understand how women and girls as well as men and boys define security and what they prioritize in their daily lives. Such information can also help expand notions of security and identify barriers to fully implementing UN Resolution 1325.

Likewise, gender is equally central to the phenomenon of conflict, especially insofar as it relates to expectations and norms of behavior, patterns of interactions among individuals in society, and individuals who become perpetrators and victims. Efforts to forestall conflict and promote peace must therefore address gender identities, especially by examining local variants of masculinity and the ways they are conducive to violent or misogynistic behavior.

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At the same time, one cannot assume that such dispositions are universal, especially because it is evident that rape and other forms of sexual violence vary greatly within and across armed conflicts. Accounting for this variation will provide not only insights into how men (and, at times, women) are socialized into committing acts of sexual violence, but also the steps that can be taken to prevent and punish these abuses. Part of what may be required is to confront gender inequities and biases that are structural and persistent, rather than a temporary artifact of conflict.

- Recommendation 1: Recognize that gender infuses all aspects of providing security, including conflict and peacebuilding.
- Recommendation 2: Pay close attention to the way in which various gender identities and roles are reinforced during times of peace and thus foster conflict.
- Recommendation 3: Study violence with gender dimensions, including identifying and explaining variation as well as appreciating its counterintuitive complexities and individual and societal effects.
- Recommendation 4: Acknowledge the strong links among gender-related violence before, during, and after conflict and prevailing systems of gender relations.

### *Gender and Postconflict Transitions*

Conflict never spares one gender entirely, but the harms to which the different genders are exposed need not be identical in type and prevalence. Proper accounting of past conflict and its impact on the population is vital and should embody these features. A critical step in this regard is to avoid giving clear priority—official or de facto—to one gender by privileging their narratives or characteristic experiences in transitional justice processes. Achieving balance and breadth in reporting and redress requires affirmative efforts on a number of fronts. People must feel welcome, free, and safe to speak. At a minimum, this necessitates that opportunities for input are open, inclusive, and nondiscriminatory. Individuals should not be constrained, based on assumptions about gender, by misguided expectations concerning what or whose violations they will discuss. Instead, they should be allowed to relate the experiences of conflict that matter to them, at their discretion.

For this to be most successful, the responsibility of truth telling is ideally distributed so that both genders, victims and perpetrators alike, take part actively. Creative approaches in both practice and research can facilitate these efforts. Meanwhile, appropriate protections of privacy and confidentiality must be afforded, wherever warranted, that reflect the vulnerabilities and disincentives associated with gender, social status, and the information in question. Reparations measures should be similarly cognizant of and aim to remediate the actual losses that people experience as a result of conflict, again with an eye toward the gender dimensions of considerations such as the distribution of different types of violations and the background social, political, and economic conditions.

- Recommendation 1: Comprehend the entire range and diversity of the experiences of conflict across the genders.
- Recommendation 2: Appreciate and alleviate the gender-based constraints to people talking about abuses they suffered and other harms due to conflict.
- Recommendation 3: Design and implement means of redress that more fully reflect the true nature of harms, including gender-based disparities before and after conflict.

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### *Cross-Cutting Reflections*

There are several final thoughts that apply across the board to the field of gender, conflict, and peacebuilding.

First, a pressing need remains for further conceptual and theoretical improvement, consolidation, and innovation; empirical and applied research; and development of policy and practice related to each of the issues discussed. The field is still young. Many of the shortcomings and other problems described can be attributed to the early stages of maturation and the inevitable growing pains that ensue. These circumstances are not cause to be disillusioned, because countless people, organizations, institutions, and governments have been actively involved on all of these fronts and important progress has been made in a relatively short period. Instead, the evident weaknesses and needs form the basis of an agenda worth pursuing with vigor and optimism about what more can be accomplished in the years ahead, and we urge a redoubling of efforts to pursue these objectives.

Second, the work in this field must be undertaken with creativity and tremendous respect for the people who are engaged and their environments. The goals of achieving gender sensitivity and equality, especially in conflict and peacebuilding contexts, cannot be separated from the necessity of rigorous, responsible, and ethical methods. This stipulation bears mention because its importance is heightened when the ambition is to advance by conducting research, designing policies, and implementing programs on sensitive topics. Furthermore, one cannot forget that it is usually developing countries that experience conflict and people from developed countries who bring in funding to help. In these settings, a certain lack of understanding and cultural differences are not always properly acknowledged. Also, a degree of resentment often arises in receiving countries toward those who are helping, given the attitudes of arrogance and superiority associated with those doing the giving.

Third, communication and cooperation ought to be strengthened among people in the field from different academic disciplines and professional domains. Despite the considerable body of research in gender studies generated since the 1970s, dialogue among academics, practitioners, and policymakers is still limited. The reasons for this are numerous. One is the basic culture of academia, which typically does not enable or encourage follow-up to test the applications of research findings. Such efforts may run afoul of incentives that significantly favor publications over impact on policy and practice, as well as concerns about maintaining a certain level of neutrality on political and social issues. In addition, many academic programs lack a practice focus that would be a stimulus to orienting and translating research outputs to international institutions, governments, and NGOs. Moreover, few formal channels of communication exist among academics, policymakers, and practitioners to ensure joint learning opportunities and exchange ideas and knowledge, which constrains the prospects of collective endeavors.

Beyond these general issues, the field of gender, conflict, and peacebuilding faces specific challenges. Being newer, it has not yet acquired the sort of consistent, full-fledged mainstream status that ordinarily brings attention, resources, and influence. Instead, gender often resides on the interstitial margins and is afforded token interest in both academic and professional settings—valued by those directly involved, but not necessarily more widely. The field is also inherently interdisciplinary in scope, yet interdisciplinary partnership is lacking. Balkanized methods, findings, and research topics, as well as academic and

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*Despite the considerable body of research in gender studies generated since the 1970s, dialogue among academics, practitioners, and policymakers is still limited.*

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practitioner fiefdoms, have limited the quality and impact of work. These problems are not easy to overcome, but if the field is to make additional headway, interactions among key contributors and stakeholders must increase and be sustained, the obstacles to building bridges among the relevant disciplines must be overcome, and research, policymaking, and practice must complement one another.

## Appendix: Related USIP Grantmaking

In this report, Kimberly Theidon and Kelly Phenicie examine the historical events, landmark decisions, and trends in policymaking, practice, and research that have brought the field of gender, conflict, and peacebuilding to its present state, and offer recommendations for the future. Their analysis provides a useful lens through which to reflect on USIP's related grantmaking. Since 1986, the Grant Program has awarded a total of roughly \$86 million in support of more than 2,100 projects. Gender has been an explicit consideration in at least 109 of these projects, representing 5.2 percent of grants. This appendix identifies patterns among those projects, describes noteworthy examples, and considers the broad impact of this area of grantmaking with reference to the insights the report provides.

### *General Patterns*

Sixty-two projects have emphasized gender, and forty-seven others have incorporated gender as a secondary theme. In terms of geographic distribution, Iraqi civil society organizations have been awarded a disproportionate share of the grants, including fully half (thirty-one) of those emphasizing gender. This particular pattern is a by-product of the structure of grantmaking activity.<sup>189</sup> Among the other grants that emphasize gender, there is a modest concentration in Africa (ten projects) and a conspicuous absence in East Asia. The remainder is distributed across the rest of the Middle East and North Africa outside Iraq (six), Europe (four), Latin America (three), and South Asia (one), or else cross-regional (six). The vast majority of these projects (fifty) are oriented primarily toward practice; relatively few (twelve) are research studies. The topics and goals of the projects are enormously varied but can be roughly grouped into three major categories: the relationship between gender identities and the dynamics of conflict and peacebuilding (twenty-five), sexual violence in conflict (ten), and promoting women's equality or building women's capacity (forty-five). At least twenty of the grants are for multifaceted projects and thus fall into multiple categories. Such grants, when highlighted, are discussed within the category that most clearly captures the core of the project.

The following sections highlight grants in each of these gender-emphasis categories and briefly discuss the grants in which gender is secondary and those made to organizations that focus on women.

### *Grant-Funded Projects that Emphasize Gender*

The projects with an emphasis on gender are roughly distributed into one of three categories: gender identities, sexual violence, and promoting women's equality or developing women's capacity.

#### **Gender Identities**

A central theme of a number of the grants that focus on the ways gender identities can have an impact on conflict and peacebuilding is the role of women as peacebuilders. Addressing this angle is warranted given the historical exclusion of women from peace processes, which this report describes. Yet Theidon and Phenicie caution that women-centric approaches may obscure the fact that femininities and masculinities interact to influence conflict and peace. As a result, they conclude by recommending a shift towards work "involving men and boys in gender-sensitive endeavors" (31).

To an extent, the trends in USIP grantmaking reflect such a reorientation. A number of the earlier awards, such as one to Herbert Kelman and Eileen Babbitt (Harvard University) and several others to the Fund for Peace, were devoted to women as peacebuilders. Several more recent awards, however, adopt a more nuanced view of the role of both genders in building peace and igniting conflict. In particular, Lorraine Bayard de Volo (University of Kansas), Michael Kimmel (State University of New York—Stony Brook), and the IANSA Women's Network (Nigeria) stand out for their novel approaches.

Kelman and Babbitt received a grant in 1992 for the project *Transforming the Israeli-Palestinian Relationship to Assure a Stable Peace: A Proposal for a Women's Workshop* (SG-155-92). This activity was not explicitly aimed at rectifying women's exclusion from peace processes, but rather took the practical view that "women's special capacity to build relationships across lines of conflict" could be harnessed to "create a political environment conducive to strengthening the peace negotiation process." The burgeoning socio-biological literature on women's proclivity toward peaceful, collaborative interactions, which Theidon and Phenicie discuss (17), clearly influenced the design of the project. Babbitt, with Tamra Pearson d'Estree, ultimately furthered scholarship on this topic by publishing a journal article concerning the methodology and results of this workshop and several similar initiatives. In follow-up interviews, the women reported no direct political consequences of their participation, but did cite improved networks between Palestinians and Israelis, as well as increased ability to understand the other's perspective.<sup>190</sup>

The Fund for Peace received three grants for work conducted in Somalia and Somaliland in 1995 (USIP-170-94F), 1996 (USIP-018-95F), and 1997 (USIP-018-95F). The common objective was "to strengthen the capacity of Somali women leaders and women's organizations to participate effectively in the establishment of peace and security in Somalia." The participants received training on conflict resolution and then were asked to transfer their newly acquired skills to local community members and lead discussions on women's involvement in peace processes. These projects did not necessarily introduce a novel perspective to the field of gender and peacebuilding. By addressing the historical exclusion of women from decision-making in Somalia, they did broaden the spectrum of the population involved in peace initiatives in Somalia. In addition, they capitalized on the female participants' unique access to networks in their home communities, thereby expanding the conflict resolution capacity in a war-torn environment with few formal opportunities for intensive, sustained education.

In the past decade, USIP's grantmaking has gone beyond a focus on women as peacebuilders to include research projects that explore the underappreciated ways that both masculinities and femininities can influence conflict and peacebuilding.

A case in point is the grant Bayard de Volo received in 2003 for the project *Women's Non-Violent Action in Latin America* (SG-229-02S). Drawing primarily on the case of Nicaraguan women who were mobilized by the Sandinista National Liberation Front, she explored organizations of mothers of fallen soldiers and their consequences for the women who participate and for society at large. She cites a collective maternal solidarity as one of the nonmaterial gains for the female participants, explaining how they perceive themselves as having acquired through the trials of motherhood the strength necessary to endure war and loss.<sup>191</sup> The centrality of motherhood in their self-conception renders them highly traditional in one sense, but they are also nontraditional in that they effectively transcend victimhood as they channel their responses to losses into political action. In addition, Bayard de Volo examines the use of maternal imagery and maternal framing to mobilize support for conflict.<sup>192</sup>

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Meanwhile, Kimmel, who received support in 2001 for the project *The Gender of Ethnic Nationalism: A Comparative Study* (USIP-048-01S), is one of the few grantees to examine the interplay between masculinity and conflict. His research examined how unrealized expectations of manhood can contribute to the rise of extremist groups. He found that extremist groups in the United States, Sweden, and the Muslim world were drawn in large part from “downwardly mobile” young men whose goals of being able to support themselves and their families were frustrated by globalization and changing gender norms. In this context, extremist groups that assert male domination in the process of denigrating the enemy are attractive to men who seek to reclaim the prominent role they consider to be theirs in society.<sup>193</sup> Although Kimmel’s research does not necessarily challenge the dominant narrative of men as aggressive and women as peaceful, his results were significant in documenting how societal expectations of masculinity can indirectly contribute to violent behavior.

The support for Bayard de Volo and Kimmel’s projects resulted in contributions to the empirical research literature that advanced understandings of gender identities in conflict. An evolution, perhaps more subtle, is likewise evident in grant-funded practitioner work, which incorporates recent trends, albeit without dramatically breaking conventions.

One example is a project of the IANSA Women’s Network, funded in 2010, on *Enhancing Women’s Participation in Peacebuilding in the Niger Delta* (SG-221-10). This initiative seeks to build the conflict resolution capacity of women, who “by virtue of their customary role as caregiver and the respect they command . . . are well-placed to act as change agents and lead efforts to restore peace and security in the region.”<sup>194</sup> The training curriculum, developed by IANSA, brings a gender perspective to a number of different issues, including early warning systems and small arms control. The curriculum also includes a Gender Dialogue for Peacemakers, during which male and female participants engage each other and discuss the gendered effects of conflict, the different ways men’s and women’s organizations engage in peacebuilding, and how peacebuilding initiatives can contribute to gender equity.

### Sexual Violence

All of the grants for work on the analysis, prevention, and reporting of sexual violence have been made in the past fifteen years. This situation is not surprising because the time frame coincides with increased international attention to the subject following the mass rapes in and subsequent ad hoc tribunals for Rwanda and Yugoslavia, which the report describes (8). Although the Grant Program has supported some recent work that broadens the spectrum of approaches to sexual violence, the majority of the funded projects concern female victims, seeking either to provide services to victims or to understand the scope of rape in particular contexts. Three noteworthy examples of women-centered work are grants to Opportunities Industrialization Centers International, the Jerusalem Rape Crisis Center, and an Iraqi organization.<sup>195</sup>

Opportunities Industrialization Centers International received funding in 2002 for the project *Emergency Response to Support Women and Girl Survivors of Sexual Violence in Sierra Leone* (SG-156-00). The primary purpose was to train counselors, who then provided psychosocial support to seventy-five female victims of sexual violence. After the trainings, the project team compiled a guide on the phenomenon of sexual violence in Sierra Leone and specific strategies for helping women and girls overcome trauma. The initiative reached only a tiny fraction of those who had been victimized. Thus, whether the project made an appreciable impact on the ground is open to interpretation. Regardless, this project deserves praise for having

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provided a much-needed response, however limited, in the context of an embryonic transition, a fragile peace, and a severe humanitarian crisis.

Sexual violence has been used as a weapon of war far less frequently in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but the abuse of women is nonetheless a persistent social problem in this setting. Responding to the concern, the Jerusalem Rape Crisis Center initiated *Joint Forces for Social Change* with USIP funding in 2006 (USIP-141-05S). The project aimed to “create and train a cadre of Palestinian and Israeli student volunteers who will sustain long-term professional contact following their participation in a comprehensive educational project addressing sexual violence.” A group of twenty Jewish and twenty Arab youth—all students at Hebrew University—participated in a year-long course on human rights, women’s rights, and the relationship between conflict and sexual violence, and subsequently collaborated on a campaign to raise awareness about sexual violence in more than fifty youth clubs and high schools in Jerusalem. Although the project addressed rape in the context of everyday life rather than as a weapon of war, the macro-context—a protracted conflict with intermittent episodes of serious violence—may conceivably have contributed to a higher incidence of rape. The domestication of violence following armed conflict discussed in the report (6) could logically be observed in the Israel-Palestine context, where young men who are mobilized for conflict return to their families during the calmer interludes. In addition to addressing a concrete social problem that is plausibly exacerbated by the conflict context, this grant project served as a medium for people-to-people peacebuilding by bringing together Palestinians and Israelis to work on a problem of common interest.

Another example of USIP funding of women-centered projects on sexual violence is a current grant to an Iraqi organization that is working with female prisoners, a relatively small population in Iraq that until recently had not received much attention. In response to reported rapes in a particular facility, the grantee organization is carrying out a campaign to educate 600 local police officers on the proper treatment of women in prisons, and has formed a team of practitioners to visit the women, monitor their treatment, and report instances of abuse. The project team is also seeking to mitigate the practice of shunning rape victims, a common problem in Iraq, by facilitating family visits to the women detainees.

These three grants, all thoughtful projects that responded to real needs on the ground, concentrate on female victims of sexual violence. Theidon and Phenicie (24), although acknowledging the importance of continued research and practice in this vein, encourage more attention to some of the less-explored areas of gender-based violence, namely temporal and geographic variation in the prevalence of sexual violence, women as agents of violence, and male rape victims. They point out how female perpetrators and male victims can tend to challenge societal gender roles. The typical result is not long-term change but rather a backlash, reflected in the extreme stigmatization of male rape victims, as well as disbelief or disgust regarding women who inflict violence. Two recent USIP grants in particular, to Elisabeth Wood (Yale University) and Colombia’s Historical Memory Commission, have yielded research that broadens our understanding of sexual violence and provides promising avenues for future work.

Theidon and Phenicie acknowledge Wood’s USIP grant (USIP-070-06F) for the project *Sexual Violence During War: Understanding Variation* and stress the importance of her work in dispelling the myth that wartime rape is inevitable and universal. They review some of her hypotheses on variation in sexual violence (21), and Wood’s work also merits recognition for her attention to male rape victims and her discussion of the numerous forms of sexual violence other than rape. These two facts, which historically have not received suf-

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ficient recognition, are crucial considerations in providing appropriate services for victims and adequate justice for perpetrators.

Whereas Wood's work spans numerous conflicts, a recent grant (SG-147-08) supports a detailed inquiry by Colombia's Historical Memory Commission into gender-based violence in one specific context: Northern Colombia between 1995 and 2008. The first stage consisted of historical memory workshops, led by a team of professionals, for several groups of women who had been victimized in some of the most brutal and notorious cases in the region. The testimonies from the workshops will be included in a forthcoming report, which discusses a number of less-explored elements of the Colombian conflict, including women's participation in armed groups and variation in the type and extent of sexual violence inflicted by individual, paramilitary, and guerilla units. Another important contribution of this project is a toolkit for conducting historical memory workshops, which the commission has distributed to other Colombian organizations that work with victims. Although testimonies gathered during this project are not intended for official truth and justice proceedings in Colombia, the more private nature of the historical memory workshops could hold promise as an alternative to traditional court proceedings that may risk retraumatizing victims, a concern that Theidon and Phenicie also isolate (28).

### Women's Rights and Empowerment

The grants in this category are especially eclectic, with varied goals, methods, and target beneficiaries that reflect the diversity Theidon and Phenicie identify among the work on women's advancement, where definitional clarity and agreement on approaches are still largely absent in spite of consensus on the importance of empowering women. USIP has funded projects on women's empowerment that seem to have been influenced as much by local political and cultural contexts as they were by internationally accepted norms. The different reference points are evident in three grants to the League of Women Voters for projects in Europe, a grant to Human Rights Education Associates to research gender equity in Moroccan textbooks, two grants to Iraqi organizations for work with war widows and disabled women, a current grant to the Hunt Alternatives Fund to empower women leaders to moderate extremism in Pakistan, and a grant to Isobel Coleman (Council on Foreign Relations) to investigate the role of women in rebuilding Iraq and Afghanistan.

The grants to the League of Women Voters were made during the early 1990s, amid democratization in Eastern Europe and the conflict and subsequent peace processes in the Balkans. A pair of the grants supported similar projects in Poland in 1992-1993 (USIP-057-91F) and Hungary in 1994-1995 (USIP-014-93F), which sought to offer "emerging women leaders . . . opportunities to learn the various techniques of citizen participation in a democratic system." These initiatives responded to an unusual opening to increase women's participation that was created by rapid changes to the political arena as these countries transitioned from communism to democracy. A third grant in 1998 (USIP-031-98S) funded a project to strengthen a newly established chapter in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to enable its members to take a more active and equal role in both the peace process and upcoming elections by building the capacity of women leaders to articulate a gender perspective.

Whereas these projects were motivated by new spaces resulting from transitions to democracy and away from an armed conflict accompanying the creation of a new state, the 2004 grant (SG-187-04S) to Human Rights Education Associates was spurred by liberalizing reforms in Morocco. In particular, a new family code that afforded women increased social, political,

and economic rights had passed amid significant controversy, with little agreement about how it should be implemented. This project, therefore, sought to assess gender inequality in school curricula and textbooks, with an eye toward improving tolerance and respect for women's equality in the educational system. The findings of the study were in keeping with what one would expect in a society that had not historically prioritized women's rights: among other things, men constituted 86 percent of textbook writers and 95 percent of the writers referenced within textbooks, and 29 percent of the images of women and girls in textbooks depicted them performing household chores, versus a scant 3 percent of the images of men and boys.<sup>196</sup> Ultimately, the findings and a series of recommendations on promoting gender equity were shared with the Moroccan Ministry of Education. Although this study yielded useful information on gender equity, its link to USIP's mandate is less direct and obvious than in most other funded projects.

The same cannot be said of a recent grant (SG-135-10) to Hunt Alternatives Fund's Institute for Inclusive Security, which has worked to stimulate women's leadership in a variety of active conflict zones in Pakistan and is now partnering with PAIMAN, a local NGO, to empower women to moderate extremist violence. Fifteen female civil society leaders are receiving training in leadership and advocacy, at the conclusion of which they are expected to establish a coalition to develop and pursue a concrete agenda on reducing extremism. In the process, the project aims to leverage mothers' unique ability to influence their sons' receptiveness to extremist ideologies, which Theidon and Phenicie cite as an emerging trend in gender studies (17).

Some of USIP's grantmaking in Iraq embraces a similar theory of change. In particular, two Iraqi organizations have recently received funding to work with disadvantaged groups whose ranks have expanded rapidly as a result of war and sectarian strife. One organization is providing literacy training to war widows and their families to help them participate more effectively in the national Iraqi reconciliation process. The widows are also receiving legal guidance in reclaiming lost property and accessing other benefits provided by the Iraqi government. A final element of this project is community-level dialogues that seek to mitigate the sectarian divides that tend to affect widows disproportionately. The other organization is carrying out an equally multifaceted project focusing on disabled women. Four hundred women are being trained to advocate for their equal rights as citizens in a society where they have traditionally been treated only as objects in need of protection and assistance. The organization is also holding conferences to raise disability awareness among other NGOs and the general public. The project will culminate in facilitated meetings between the disabled women trainees and Iraqi legislators. By providing the women the opportunity to meet with lawmakers and advocate for themselves, the project team is cementing participants' learning and undertaking a key step in changing perceptions of disabled women. More significant for the purpose of USIP's mandate, given disability affects society at large and is therefore a unifying issue, are the relationships formed among the participants that can help reduce sectarian tensions.

International trends in practice likely influenced these two projects, as the grantees are well-networked organizations run by individuals with broad experience. At the same time, both arose from the particularities of a violence-ravaged Iraq where marginalized women saw their rights even further imperiled by the rise of conservative religious thought. This context is ably documented in Coleman's project, supported by a grant in 2005 (USIP-155-04S), to examine the history of women's rights in Iraq and discuss the prospects for empowering women in light of reforms that followed the overthrow of Saddam Hussein. She points to positive developments for gender equality, such as a quota system allotting 25 percent of the seats in the legislature to women. Yet she also underlines the challenges of guaranteeing freedoms for

women in a setting where opposing factions in government hold different interpretations of the Iraqi family code.<sup>197</sup>

### *Grant-Funded Projects for Which Gender Is Secondary*

Additional projects overtly incorporated women into broader initiatives on themes other than gender. In most of these instances, women were listed as one of a number of constituencies (for example, religious leaders, human rights activists) whose voices should be heard or who could play some sort of role in peacebuilding efforts. Women also appear in certain grants as one of several groups (for example, children, orphans, refugees) deemed to be uniquely vulnerable in armed conflict. An argument in favor of projects having a secondary gender focus is that it achieves a degree of gender mainstreaming, which remains the conventional model of advancing the status of women and girls. Yet Theidon and Phenicie (31) oppose treating gender in such a simplistic fashion, warning that “the insights that gender studies offer policymakers, scholars, and practitioners working on the issues of conflict and peacebuilding are impoverished when gender is reduced to women.” The inclusion of women in relatively crude ways tends to ignore their differences, as well as how conflict dynamics are a function of both men and women, the roles assigned to them by society, and the manner in which they interact. In particular, one-dimensional portrayals of women as victims, with a homogenous perspective, obscure their individual agency in exacerbating violence or promoting peace.

### *Grants to Organizations that Focus on Women*

Thirteen grants have been made to organizations for which women are central to their mandate. Gender was a primary emphasis in only five of the funded projects, and a secondary element in eight. The distribution suggests that a majority of these grantees have pursued and been successful in building a more diverse portfolio of work. This transition can be challenging, because organizations with a focus on women often encounter questions about their desire and capability to work on other thematic areas.

## **Conclusion**

This appendix has summarized and given illustrative highlights of USIP’s grantmaking in the field of gender, conflict, and peacebuilding. The review, considered in conjunction with the body of the report, leads to several final reflections and, in turn, to a series of recommendations for the Grant Program.

To begin with, it is immediately apparent that the profile of funded projects is not entirely in keeping with what Theidon and Phenicie advocate. These discrepancies do not necessarily constitute cause for major concern, however. In part, they arise because the grants were awarded over twenty-five years, during which time both the field and USIP’s grant competitions evolved significantly. Therefore, the potential is inherent that the overall orientation of USIP grantmaking and the individual grants could appear outdated and off base when viewed in retrospect, even if at the time they made reasonable sense in light of the state of the field and institutional parameters.

At least some evidence actually suggests a different, more favorable picture: certain projects supported by USIP funding provided impetus for advances in research and practice that are important to the development of the field and to real-world engagement with central issues that Theidon and Phenicie discuss. In particular, grantees have made noteworthy contribu-

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*One-dimensional portrayals of women as victims, with a homogenous perspective, obscure their individual agency in exacerbating violence or promoting peace.*

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tions concerning gender identities, sexual violence, and women's empowerment. In these ways, grantmaking to date has proven to be a catalyst for novel and cutting-edge work rather than merely a mirror for current or obsolete conventions.

Yet the structure of the grant competitions and the high fraction of grants supporting practice-oriented projects constrain efforts to improve the standardization of the field and move it forward in a precise way. The awards in the Annual Grant Competition are given to a small set of the best projects from the large pool of unsolicited applications that are received each year. In any given year, there is no guarantee that a substantial share of the applications, let alone the projects USIP ultimately funds, will include significant gender aspects and plans to advance the field in new directions. The arrangements afford little opportunity for pursuing specific applicants and allow relatively modest input by program staff into grantees' goals, underlying theories, and methods. Instead, this sort of targeting, intensive interaction, and strategic guidance is largely restricted to the Priority Grant Competitions, where staff regularly communicate with prospective applicants from the earliest stages of conceptualizing a project. Meanwhile, the grants for practice work are often made in response to urgent situations on the ground. Under these circumstances, addressing the intersection of gender and conflict in a sophisticated, nuanced way is not always a consideration or even feasible. In sum, the Grant Program has limited scope for making gender a point of emphasis, much less for defining specific courses of action and research, aside from responding favorably to proposed projects that happen to integrate this angle constructively and creatively.

Looking ahead to the future, the Grant Program can realistically aim to take account of Theidon and Phenicie's observations and support work at the leading edge of the field of gender, conflict, and peacebuilding and still operate within the confines of the existing grantmaking structure and of USIP's mandate. With these goals in mind, I recommend that the Grant Program should move forward on the following efforts:

- *Institute a new Priority Grant Competition that would focus on gender.* Absent such a dedicated grantmaking process, past experience indicates that relatively small shares of the proposed and funded projects will include gender dimensions, especially as a central feature. A Priority Grant Competition on Gender could provide a useful vehicle for staff to actively solicit and assist applicants who are capable of making innovations in the field.
- *Emphasize funding projects concerning gender identities and sexual violence.* USIP has made notable grants for projects on these two topics, supporting work that emerged as influential in the field. It makes sense to continue to fund these areas of strength and to find means of aggregating insights and impact, including via projects that connect the themes, that is, exploring the impact of sexual violence on gender roles and vice versa.
- *Encourage the implementation of gender-related projects that include boys and men.* The field of conflict resolution and peacebuilding is boosted by research and practice that considers how both genders experience and contribute to conflict. This broader interest would not necessarily imply, however, that all funded projects with explicit gender dimensions must give equal attention to both genders. For example, it is well established that the victims of wartime sexual violence are overwhelmingly female. As a result, grants for work with victims of sexual violence might plausibly concentrate largely or entirely on women and girls.
- *Support projects involving gender equality and women's rights and empowerment only when the conditions targeted for improvement are a direct result of or have a bearing on the potential for armed conflict.* Although changing structural discrimination and disparities in participation based on gender are laudable objectives, USIP has a specific, restricted mandate that must be respected in the grantmaking process. In this context, a project that addresses

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gender biases or is implemented by a women's organization does not warrant interest unless some strong association is drawn to conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

- *Promote more extensive linkages among researchers, practitioners, and policymakers.* Progress on this front can be achieved in several ways. One way is to retain the preference for funding projects that foster such relationships across segments of the field, for example, practitioner projects that incorporate rigorous research and evaluation methods and research projects involving fieldwork and the collection and analysis of primary empirical data that have a clear relevance to practitioners and policymakers. Another way is to convene public events at which grantees can share their experiences and insights with one another and other interested parties, as well as consolidate understandings about best practices, including those concerning gender sensitivity, security for vulnerable populations, and ethics. Staff can also make additional efforts to connect grantees that would benefit from learning about each other's work, receiving guidance, and collaborating.
- Last, the Grant Program should *remain responsive to the new challenges and areas of work* that will inevitably materialize and grow in prominence as the field continues to develop.



## Notes

1. UN Doc A/51/322, September 3, 1996.
2. See Kimberly Theidon, "Domesticando la Violencia: Alcohol y las Secuelas de la Guerra," *Ideele: Revista del Instituto de Defensa Legal* 120 (July 1999): 56–63; and "Gender in Transition: Common Sense, Women and War," *Journal of Human Rights* 6, no. 4 (2007): 453–78. The latter article was a product of a USIP grant-funded project.
3. Mark Ellis, "Breaking the Silence: Rape as an International Crime," *Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law* 38, no. 2 (2006–07): 225–47.
4. Ellis, "Breaking the Silence," 228.
5. Catherine N. Niarchos, "Women, War, and Rape: Challenges Facing the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia," *Human Rights Quarterly* 17, no. 4 (1995): 649–90. On the absence of rape in the Nuremberg Charter, see also Theodor Meron, "Rape as a Crime Under International Law," *American Journal of International Law* 87, no. 3 (1993): 424–28.
6. Natalie Florea Hudson, "Security Discourse as a Political Framework for Action: A Comparative Analysis of Children and Women in the UN Security Council" paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association, New York City, February 15, 2009.
7. Ellis, "Breaking the Silence," 229.
8. Articles in the Geneva Convention that protect women, as indicated by Ellis ("Breaking the Silence," 236–37).
9. UN Human Rights Council, "Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, its Causes and Consequences," Yakin Ertürk, "15 Years of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Its Causes and Consequences (1994–2009)—A Critical Review" panel discussion, UN Secretariat, New York, May 27, 2009, 21.
10. Niarchos, "Women, War, and Rape," 674.
11. UN Human Rights Council, "Report of the Special Rapporteur," 21–22.
12. United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, "Short History of the Commission on the Status of Women," 4, [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/CSW60YRS/CSWbriefhistory.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/CSW60YRS/CSWbriefhistory.pdf).
13. Article 3 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, adopted 18 Dec. 1979, G.A. Res. 34/180, 34 U.N. GAOR Supp. (No. 46), U.N. Doc A/34/36 (1980), entered into force September 3, 1981.
14. "Outcomes on Gender and Equality," [www.un.org/en/development/devagenda/gender.shtml](http://www.un.org/en/development/devagenda/gender.shtml).
15. See UNIFEM website, [www.unifem.org/about/faq.php](http://www.unifem.org/about/faq.php).
16. Beijing Platform for Action, "Critical Areas of Concern," Fourth World Conference on Women, September 15, 1995, A/CONF.177/20/Add.1 (1995). See also Judith Gardam and Michelle Jarvis, "Women and Armed Conflict: The International Response to the Beijing Platform for Action," *Columbia Human Rights Law Review* 3, no. 1 (2000–01): 4.
17. United Nations Economic and Social Council, "Gender Mainstreaming," Extract from the Report of the Economic and Social Council for 1997 (A/52/3) September 18, 1997, at 2.
18. Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, article 7, July 17, 1998.
19. Ellis, "Breaking the Silence," 236.
20. *Ibid.*, 226–27.
21. Kelly D. Askin, "Sexual Violence in Decisions and Indictments of the Yugoslav and Rwandan Tribunals: Current Status," *American Journal of International Law* 93, no. 2 (1999): 98.
22. Hudson, "Security Discourse," 5.
23. *Ibid.*
24. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, adopted October 31, 2000, S/RES/1325 (2000).
25. UN Human Rights Council, "Report of the Special Rapporteur," 25.
26. Christina Binder, Karin Lukas, and Romana Schweiger, "Empty Words or Real Achievement? The Impact of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women in Armed Conflicts," *Radical History Review* 101 (Spring 2008): 26.
27. United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, "Short History of the Commission on the Status of Women," 13, [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/CSW60YRS/CSWbriefhistory.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/CSW60YRS/CSWbriefhistory.pdf).
28. Sylvia Chant and Matthew C. Gutman, *Mainstreaming Men into Gender and Development: Debates, Reflections and Experiences* (London: Oxfam, 2000), 6.
29. Sophie Richter-Devroe, "Gender, Culture, and Conflict Resolution in Palestine," *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 4, no. 2 (Spring 2008): 34.
30. Suzette Mitchell, "Gender and Development: A SAFE Recipe," *Development in Practice* 6, no. 2 (May 1996): 140.

31. Hilary Charlesworth, "Not Waving but Drowning: Gender Mainstreaming and Human Rights in the United Nations," *Harvard Human Rights Journal* 18, no. 1 (2005): 2.
32. Mitchell, "Gender and Development," 140.
33. Anne Gallagher, "Ending the Marginalization: Strategies for Incorporating Women into the United Nations Human Rights System," *Human Rights Quarterly* 19, no. 2 (1997): 288.
34. United Nations Economic and Social Council, "Gender Mainstreaming," extract from the Report of the Economic and Social Council for 1997 (A/52/3) September 18, 1997, at 2.
35. WHO, "WHO Gender Policy: Integrating Gender Perspectives in the Work of WHO" (2002) 1, [www.who.int/gender/documents/engpolicy.pdf](http://www.who.int/gender/documents/engpolicy.pdf).
36. Charlesworth, "Not Waving but Drowning," 5–6.
37. Hannah Warren, "Using Gender-Analysis Frameworks: Theoretical and Practical Reflections," *Gender & Development* 15, no. 2 (July 2007): 189.
38. *Ibid.*, 190.
39. Among the most well-known gender options are the Harvard Framework; the People-Oriented Planning Framework; the Moser Framework; the Gender Analysis Matrix (GAM); the Capabilities and Vulnerabilities Framework; the Women's Empowerment (Longwe) Framework; and the Social Relations (Kabeer) Framework. It is beyond the scope of this report to provide a detailed assessment of each approach, but suffice it to say that the variety of approaches, while not negative per se, reflects the lack of consensus on key concepts and methods, which may, in turn, obscure both means and ends.
40. Warren, "Using Gender-Analysis Frameworks," 189.
41. *Ibid.*
42. Elaine Zuckerman, Wu Qing, Aida Orgocka, and Hilary Sims Feldstein, "Reforming the World Bank: Will the New Gender Strategy Make a Difference? A Study with China Case Examples" (Washington, DC: Heinrich Böll Foundation, 2003), 10.
43. Shakra Razavi and Carol Miller, "Gender Mainstreaming: A Study of Efforts by the UNDP, the World Bank and the ILO to Institutionalize Gender Issues," occasional paper 4, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development and United Nations Development Program, 1995, iii.
44. Camille Pampell Conaway, "The Role of Women in Stabilization and Reconstruction," report, United States Institute of Peace Stabilization and Reconstruction Series No. 3, August 2006, 1. This report is based on a series of consultations under the auspices of the Working Group on the Role of Women in Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations, chaired by Harriet Hentges, former USIP executive vice president, and Harriet C. Babbitt, senior vice president of the Hunt Alternatives Fund. More than fifty experts from the U.S. government and international and nongovernmental organizations were convened in 2004 and 2005 to identify best practices and select priority recommendations on the role of women in stabilization and reconstruction.
45. Conaway, "The Role of Women," 5–6.
46. Zuckerman et al., "Reforming the World Bank," 11.
47. Noëlle Quéniwet, "The Dissonance Between the United Nations Zero-Tolerance Policy and the Criminalisation of Sexual Offences on the International Level," *International Criminal Law Review* 7, no. 4 (2007): 660.
48. Judith Gardam and Hilary Charlesworth, "Protection of Women in Armed Conflict," *Human Rights Quarterly* 22, no. 1 (2000): 159.
49. Zuckerman et al., "Reforming the World Bank," 10.
50. Hudson, "Security Discourse as a Political Framework," 2.
51. Charlesworth, "Not Waving but Drowning," 13.
52. *Ibid.*, 18.
53. Warren, "Using Gender-Analysis Frameworks," 189.
54. For a discussion of this dynamic in DDR programs, see Kimberly Theidon, "Reconstructing Masculinities: The Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration of Former Combatants in Colombia," *Human Rights Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (2009): 1–34.
55. This approach has informed the structure of the Colombian National Commission on Reparations and Reconciliation (CNRR) as well. The DDR program appears as one area of intervention. The Gender and Specific Populations unit—defined to include women, children and indigenous populations—is another. Although one of the stated goals is to make gender a transversal theme, this is not a propitious way to begin.
56. Chant and Gutman, *Mainstreaming Men*, 4.
57. *Ibid.*
58. Feleke Tadele, "Men in the Kitchen, Women in the Office?" in *Gender Works: Oxfam Experience in Policy and Practice*, edited by Fenella Porter, Inés A. Smyth, and Caroline Sweetman (London: Oxfam Great Britain, 1999), 33.

59. Ibid., 34.
60. Ibid., 35.
61. Although Tadele refers to both genders in his article, we prefer *all genders* to avoid the heteronormativity the former terms implies.
62. For an eloquent critique of Western feminism as a form of theoretical and discursive imperialism, see Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourse," in *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*, edited by Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Ann Russo, and Lourdes Torres (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991).
63. Usha Kar, "Much Ado About Knitting," in *Gender Works*, 27.
64. Ibid.
65. Sophie Richter-Devroe, "Gender, Culture, and Conflict Resolution in Palestine," *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 4, no. 2 (Spring 2008): 7.
66. For more on this point, see Theidon's various articles on gender, trauma, and social repair in Peru.
67. The classic work on this subject is Carol Cohn, "Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals," *Signs* 12, no. 4 (1987): 687–718.
68. Niarchos, "Women, War, and Rape," 670.
69. Ibid. See also the analysis of the gendered language of nuclear weapons scientists in Cohn, "Sex and Death."
70. See Theidon, "Reconstructing Masculinities," 453–78.
71. Hugh Gusterson, "Anthropology and Militarism," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 36 (2007): 165.
72. The legal theorist, and former Air Force ROTC officer, Elizabeth Hillman has produced a body of work on "blue on blue" violence, that is, violence that occurs within the military, involving soldiers sexually assaulting other soldiers. Hillman's extensive publications can be found on her website at the University of California Hastings College of the Law (<http://library.uchastings.edu/library/bibliographies/faculty/Elizabeth-L.-Hillman/>).
73. Cami R. Rowe, "That Whole Gender Paradigm: Iraq War Veterans Embodying Feminist Approaches to Dissent," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association, New York City, February 15, 2009.
74. Ibid.
75. Ibid.
76. Fionnuala Ni Aoláin, "Women, Security, and the Patriarchy of Internationalized Transitional Justice," *Human Rights Quarterly* 31, no. 4 (2009): 1067.
77. Ibid., 1067.
78. Theidon, "Reconstructing Masculinities."
79. See Colleen Duggan, "Foreword," in *What Happened to the Women? Gender and Reparations for Human Rights Violations*, edited by Ruth Rubio-Marín (New York: Social Science Research Council, 2006), 18.
80. Ni Aoláin, "Women, Security, and the Patriarchy," 1072.
81. Ibid., 1060.
82. Ibid., 1062.
83. Ibid., 1072.
84. For example, see Catherine Lutz, *Homefront: A Military City and the American 20th Century* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2001). In addition, see Cynthia Enloe's body of work on militarization and gender.
85. Ni Aoláin, "Women, Security, and the Patriarchy," 1065.
86. Valerie M. Hudson, Mary Caprioli, Bonnie Ballif-Spanvill, Rose McDermott, and Chad F. Emmet, "The Heart of the Matter: The Security of Women and the Security of States," *International Security* 33, no. 3 (Winter 2008–09): 8.
87. Scott Coltrane, "Theorizing Masculinities in Contemporary Social Science," In *Theorizing Masculinities*, edited by Harry Brod and Michael Kaufman (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994).
88. Foster 2000: 223. Foster notes that the South African TRC's Final Report acknowledged the commission had neglected to study masculinity and violence, which prompts him to pose a series of interesting questions: "What is it about masculinity that under certain circumstances render such an identity form so noxious? What are the circumstances? All of this awaits research," 227.
89. R. W. Connell, *Masculinities*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 84.
90. Ibid., 76.
91. Among others, see Joshua Goldstein, *War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
92. David H. J. Morgan, "Theater of War: Combat, the Military, and Masculinities," in *Theorizing Masculinities*, edited by Harry Brod and Michael Kaufman (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994), 165.

93. Hudson et al., "Heart of the Matter," 15, 23. Theidon irreverently refers to this literature as the "But what about chimpanzees and testosterone?" approach to understanding gender inequalities. For a powerful critique of the inherent sexism that has influenced the primatology studies on which many of these theories are based, see Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (London: Routledge, 1990).
94. Hudson et al., "Heart of the Matter," 23.
95. The classic work on male fraternities is Peggy Sanday, *Fraternity Gang Rape: Sex, Brotherhood and Privilege on the College Campus* (New York: New York University Press, 1990). On military socialization, the literature is vast. A good place to start is with Goldstein, *War and Gender*; Dave Grossman, *The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society* (New York: Little, Brown, 1996); and Richard Holmes, *Acts of War: The Behavior of Men in Battle* (New York: Free Press, 1985). For a fascinating analysis of how torture may be resignified as a source of pride and a route to male authority, see Julie Peteet, "Male Gender and Rituals of Resistance in the Palestinian 'Intifada': A Cultural Politics of Violence," *American Ethnologist* 21, no. 1 (1994): 31–49. In addition to academic and practitioner texts and documents, some of the finest work has been authored by former soldiers. For an overview of key texts, see Keith Brown and Catherine Lutz, "Grunt Lit: The Participant Observers of Empire," *American Ethnologist* 34, no. 2 (2007): 322–28.
96. Preliminary findings from the Harvard University–funded project, "After the Truth: The Legacies of Sexual violence in Peru," which involves ongoing research that Theidon is conducting with Edith Del Pino and Juan José Yupanqui.
97. For further discussion of these issues, see Kimberly Theidon, *Intimate Enemies: Violence and Reconciliation in Peru* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, forthcoming). This book is a product of a USIP grant-funded project.
98. Hudson et al., "Heart of the Matter," 24.
99. Ibid.
100. See Theidon, "Reconstructing Masculinities." Another compelling example of this phenomenon can be found in Anonymous, *A Woman in Berlin: Eight Weeks in the Conquered City—A Diary*, 2nd ed. (New York: Picador, 2006).
101. See Lorraine Bayard de Volo, "Mobilizing Mothers for War: Cross-National Framing Strategies in Nicaragua's Contra War," *Gender and Society* 18, no. 6 (December 2004): 715–34.
102. James M. O'Neil, "Summarizing 25 Years of Research on Men's Gender Role Conflict Using the Gender Role Conflict Scale: New Research Paradigms and Clinical Implications," *Counseling Psychologist* 36, no. 3 (2008): 393.
103. Ibid.
104. Valerie Hudson and Andrea Den Boer, "A Surplus of Men, a Deficit of Peace: Security and Sex Ratios in Asia's Largest States," *International Security* 26, no. 4 (Spring 2002): 11.
105. Ibid., 17.
106. Ibid., 14–15.
107. The notion that men's sexual needs must be satisfied, lest they pose a danger to the broader society, has been used to justify the establishment of brothels, recruitment of sex workers, and, at times, elaborate military planning for "servicing the troops." See Cynthia Enloe, *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).
108. Ibid.
109. Connell, *Masculinities*, 260.
110. An excellent edited volume on women's multiple roles is Meredith Turshen and Clotilde Twagiramariya, eds., *What Women Do in Wartime* (London: Zed Books, 1998).
111. We borrow this heading from Tara McKelvey, ed., *One of the Guys? Women as Aggressors and Torturers* (Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2007).
112. See, for example, Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999); Stathis Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
113. Charlotte Lindsey, "The Impact of Armed Conflict on Women," in *Listening to the Silences: Women and War*, edited by Helen Durham and Tracey Gurd (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, 2005), 22.
114. Jean Bethke Elshaint, *Women and War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 4.
115. Cheryl Toman, "Women, War, and Conflict," *Women's Studies International Forum* 32, no. 3 (2009): 326.
116. See Theidon, "Reconstructing Masculinities."
117. Chris Coulter, *Bush Wives and Girl Soldiers: Women's Lives through War and Peace in Sierra Leone* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009), 139–40.
118. See, among others, *ibid.*; Vanessa Farr, *Gendering Demilitarization as a Peacebuilding Tool*, (Bonn: Bonn International Center for Conversation, 2002); Rachel Brett and Irma Specht, *Young Soldiers: Why They Choose to Fight* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Reiner, 2004); Dyan Mazurana and Susan McKay, *Where Are the Girls? Girls in Fighting Forces in Northern Uganda, Sierra Leone, and Mozambique: Their Lives During and After War*,

- (Montreal: Rights and Democracy, 2004); and Natalia Springer, *Desactivar la guerra: alternativas audaces para consolidar la paz* (Colombia: Editorial Aguila, 2005).
119. Mats Utas, "Victimcy, Girlfriending, Soldiering: Tactic Agency in a Young Woman's Social Navigation of the Liberian War Zone," *Anthropological Quarterly* 78, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 406.
  120. Nancy Caro Hollander, "The Gendering of Human Rights: Women and the Latin American Terrorist State," *Feminist Studies* 22, no. 1 (1996): 62.
  121. Utas, "Victimcy, Girlfriending, Soldiering," 426.
  122. Hollander, "Gendering of Human Rights," 62.
  123. See also Utas, "Victimcy, Girlfriending, Soldiering," 407: "By employing a perspective that makes a woman exclusively a victim, researchers risk creating a permanent state of what Kathleen Barry calls victimism; i.e. a woman's victim status 'creates a framework for others to know her not as a person but as a victim, someone to whom violence is done.'"
  124. For a discussion of this theme, see Elizabeth Wood, "Armed Groups and Sexual Violence: When is Wartime Rape Rare?" *Politics & Society* 37, no. 1 (2009): 131–62.
  125. Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1975), 24.
  126. Wood, "Armed Groups and Sexual Violence," 153.
  127. Ibid.
  128. Ibid.
  129. One of the newest contributors of note is Dara Cohen, who was a USIP Jennings Randolph Peace Scholar in 2008–09.
  130. Maria B. Olujić, "Embodiment of Terror: Gendered Violence in Peacetime and Wartime in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina," *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (1998): 37.
  131. Ibid., 35.
  132. Ibid., 31.
  133. Jelke Boesten, "Marrying Your Rapist: Domesticated War Crimes in Peru," in *Gendered Peace: Women's Struggles for Post-War Justice and Reconciliation*, edited by Donna Pankhurst (Geneva: Routledge & UNRISD, 2007), 205.
  134. Ibid., 206.
  135. Quoted in Julie Guillerot, "Linking Gender and Reparations in Peru: A Failed Opportunity," in *What Happened to the Women?* 185.
  136. UN Human Rights Council, "Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Its Causes and Consequences," Yakin Ertürk, "Addendum—Mission to the DRC," A/HRC/7/6/Add.4, Summary, [www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/women/rapporteur/annual.htm](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/women/rapporteur/annual.htm).
  137. See Cynthia Cockburn, "The Gendered Dynamics of Armed Conflict and Political Violence," in *Victims, Perpetrators or Actors? Gender, Armed Conflict and Political Violence*, edited by Carolyn Moser and Fiona Clark (London: Zed Books, 2001).
  138. Margaret Urban Walker, "Gender and Violence in Focus: A Background for Gender Justice in Reparations," in *What Happened to the Women?* 23.
  139. Roland Littlewood, "Military Rape," *Anthropology Today* 13, no. 2 (1997): 13.
  140. Ibid.
  141. See Kimberly Theidon, *Entre Prójimos: El conflicto armado interno y la política de la reconciliación en el Perú* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 2004 and 2009).
  142. Vasuki Nesiha, "Discussion Line on Gender and Transitional Justice: An Introductory Essay Reflecting on the ICTJ Bellagio Workshop on Gender and Transitional Justice," *Columbia Journal of Gender and Law* 15 (2006): 805.
  143. Harry G. West, "Girls with Guns: Narrating the Experience of War of FRELIMO's 'Female Detachment,'" *Anthropological Quarterly* 73, no. 4 (October 2000): 181.
  144. Interview with a communal authority in an unnamed community in central Ayacucho, July 2009. Theidon suspects that although soldiers were willing to be seen raping women, they were less inclined to publicly rape men for fear of being labeled homosexual.
  145. Sandesh Sivakumaran, "Male/Male Rape and the 'Taint' of Homosexuality," *Human Rights Quarterly* 27 (2005): 1279.
  146. Ibid., 1289.
  147. Ibid., 1291.
  148. Ibid.
  149. Ibid.
  150. Amnesty International, "Rape and Sexual Abuse: Torture and Ill-Treatment of Women in Detention," ACT 77/011/1991, at 1.



151. See Michele Leiby, "Digging in the Archives: The Promise and Perils of Primary Documents," *Politics & Society* 37, no. 1 (2006): 75–99.
152. This title is borrowed from Sheila Meintjes, Anu Pillay, and Meredith Turshen, "There Is No Aftermath for Women," in *The Aftermath: Women in Post-Conflict Transformation*, edited by Meredith Turshen, Anu Pillay and Sheila Meintjes (London: Zed Books, 2002).
153. Rita Manchanda, "Ambivalent Gains in South Asian Conflicts," in *The Aftermath*.
154. Borer, "Gendered War and Gendered Peace," 1172.
155. Tristan Anne Borer, "Gendered War and Gendered Peace: Truth Commissions and Post-conflict Gender Violence: Lessons From South Africa," *Violence Against Women* 15, no. 10 (2009): 1170.
156. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, UN Doc. S/RES/1325 (2000).
157. Christine Bell and Catherine O'Rourke, "Peace Agreements or Piece of Paper? The Impact of UNSC Resolution 1324 on Peace Processes and their Agreements," *International Comparative Law Quarterly* 59 (October 2010): 941–80.
158. Bell and O'Rourke found that only 16 percent of peace agreements make any sort of reference to women ("Peace Agreements," 968). They note that even the increase of 27 percent (up from 11 percent) following Resolution 1325 indicates a long way to go.
159. *Ibid.*, 948.
160. United Nations Security Council, "The Rule of Law and Transitional Justice in Conflict and Post-Conflict Societies: Report of the Secretary General," S/2004/616 (2004).
161. Theidon, *Entre Prójimos*.
162. Cheryl McEwan, "Building a Postcolonial Archive? Gender, Collective Memory and Citizenship in Post-Apartheid South Africa," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 29, no. 3 (September 2003): 756.
163. Theidon, *Entre Prójimos*.
164. Antjie Krog, *Country of My Skull: Guilt, Sorrow, and the Limits of Forgiveness in the New South Africa* (New York, Random House, 1998), 240, as quoted in Tristan Anne Borer, "Gendered War and Gendered Peace."
165. Borer, "Gendered War and Gendered Peace," 1180–181.
166. All of this information is based on the personal experience of Kelly Phenicie, who resides in Lima, Peru.
167. Judith Gardam and Hilary Charlesworth, "Protection of Women in Armed Conflict," *Human Rights Quarterly* 22 (2000): 158.
168. James Mark, "Remembering Rape: Divided Social Memory and the Red Army in Hungary," *Past and Present* 188 (2005): 151.
169. Littlewood, "Military Rape," 13.
170. Catherine M. Cole, "Performance, Transitional Justice, and the Law: South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission," *Theatre Journal* 59 (2007): 170.
171. Sidonie Smith, "Narrating the Right to Sexual Well-being and the Global Management of Misery: Maria Rosa Henson's Comfort Woman and Charlene Smith's Proud of Me," *Literature and Medicine* 24, no. 2 (2005): 168.
172. For example, the Commission on Illegal Detention and Torture in Chile, based on a close study of the modus operandi of various detention centers, presumed that whoever was shown to have spent time in certain detention centers during certain periods had been tortured and therefore deserved compensation. Sexual violence, of course, calls for creative evidentiary procedures. In many cases, there will be a pattern of sexual torture as part of abuse in detention centers. Other patterns can be context-specific, such as the systematic mass rape of women and girls by the army prior to massacres in Guatemala shows. See Claudia Paz y Paz Bailey, "Guatemala: Gender and Reparations for Human Rights Violations," in *What Happened to the Women?*
173. Boesten, "Marrying Your Rapist," 215.
174. Ní Aoláin, "Women, Security, and the Patriarchy," 1059.
175. Guillerot, "Linking Gender and Reparations."
176. Theidon, *Entre Prójimos*.
177. Fiona C. Ross, *Bearing Witness: Women and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa* (Sterling, VA: Pluto Press, 2003).
178. See Theidon, *Entre Prójimos*.
179. Sidonie Smith, "Narrating the Right to Sexual Well-being and the Global Management of Misery: Maria Rosa Henson's Comfort Woman and Charlene Smith's Proud of Me," *Literature and Medicine* 24, no. 2 (2005): 168.
180. See generally Fionnuala Ní Aoláin, "Political Violence and Gender during Times of Transition," *Columbia Journal of Gender and Law* 15, no. 3 (2006): 829–50.
181. See Ruth Rubio-Marín, ed., *What Happened to the Women?; The Gender of Reparations: Unsettling Sexual Hierarchies While Redressing Human Rights Violations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

182. *What Happened to the Women?* 31.
183. Ibid.
184. For a ground-breaking study on children born of war, see R. Charli Carpenter, *Born of War: Protecting Children of Sexual Violence Survivors in Conflict Zones* (Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press, 2007). She uses the term to refer to persons of any age who were conceived as a result of violent, coercive, or exploitative sexual relations in conflict zones (3). As she also notes, to date there has been no systematic fact-finding mission at the global level to assess the needs and interests of these children with respect to advocating for them and ensuring their human rights (2).
185. Fionnuala Ní Aoláin and Eilish Rooney, "Underenforcement and Intersectionality: Gendered Aspects of Transition for Women," *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 1, no. 3 (2007): 338–54.
186. Cheyanne Church, *Mind the Gap: Research Impacting Policy* (Ulster: INCORE, 2005), [www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/policy/rip](http://www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/policy/rip).
187. Beatrix Schmelzle, *Training for Conflict Transformation—An Overview of Approaches and Resources*, [www.berghof-handbook.net/uploads/download/schmelzle\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.berghof-handbook.net/uploads/download/schmelzle_handbook.pdf); Craig Zelizer, *Skills, Networks & Knowledge: Developing a Career in International Peace and Conflict Resolution* (Alexandria, VA: Alliance for Conflict Transformation, 2003).
188. The Grant Program is responsible for only one element of USIP's activities on the theme of gender and peacebuilding. Since the Institute was created in 1984, many of its programs have incorporated gender considerations into projects to analyze, prevent, and resolve conflict, as well as into educational programming with students and practitioners in the United States and overseas. In 2009, USIP systematized its efforts on this theme by creating the Gender and Peacebuilding Program (recognized in 2011 as one of the Institute's Centers of Innovation), which works to convene experts, to promote policy change on gender through academic and practitioner work, and to increase the role of women and peacebuilding through training directed towards both women and men. Since its inception, the Gender and Peacebuilding Center has produced twelve publications and sponsored thirty-six public events featuring 245 panelists, including several current and former USIP grantees.
189. The Grant Program currently has two distinct vehicles for grantmaking: the Annual Grant Competition that receives unsolicited proposals from academics and practitioners worldwide, and a set of priority grant competitions centered on either countries (at present, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, and Sudan; in the past, Colombia and Nigeria) or themes (beginning this year, Communications for Peacebuilding). Of the country-focused competitions, the one for Iraq is by far the largest, having awarded seventy-three grants totaling more than \$7.1 million to date.
190. Tamra Pearson d'Estree and Eileen F. Babbitt, "Women and the Art of Peacemaking: Data from Israeli-Palestinian Interactive Problem-Solving Workshops," *Political Psychology* 19, no. 1 (March 1998): 185–209.
191. Lorraine Bayard de Volo, "The Nonmaterial Long-Term Benefits of Collective Action: Empowerment and Social Capital in a Nicaraguan Women's Organization," *Comparative Politics* 38, no. 2 (January 2006): 161–62.
192. Lorraine Bayard de Volo, "Mobilizing Mothers for War: Cross-National Framing Strategies in Nicaragua's Contra War," *Gender & Security* 18, no. 6 (December 2004): 715–34.
193. Michael S. Kimmel, "Globalization and its Mal(e)contents: The Gendered Moral and Political Economy of Terrorism," *International Sociology* 18, no. 3 (September 2003): 603–20.
194. IANSA grant proposal to USIP, 2010.
195. The identifying details of all Iraqi grantees have been intentionally omitted for security reasons.
196. Abderrahim Sabir, "Review of Moroccan Schoolbooks for Gender Equality and Human Rights: Project Results," 2007.
197. Isobel Coleman, "Women and the New Iraq," *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 1 (January/February 2006): 24–38.







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This report, the result of an initiative to reflect on developments in areas where USIP grantmaking has been concentrated, focuses on gender, which has been incorporated into more than one hundred USIP grant-funded projects to date. The Praxis Institute for Social Justice was commissioned to review the state of the field of gender, conflict, and peacebuilding, to identify lessons learned, and to contemplate future directions of work. The analysis describes how this field emerged, became institutionalized in law, policy, and practice, and has been studied in academic research. Both important progress and significant gaps are identified in the understanding and awareness of the gendered dimensions of conflict and its legacies. A parallel examination of USIP grantmaking highlights notable contributions to the field, as well as shortcomings in the extent of attention and impact.

## Related Links

- *Women and War: Power and Protection in the 21st Century* ed. Kathleen Kuehnast, Chantal de Jonge Oudraat, and Helga Hernes (2011)
- *The Other Side of Gender: Including Masculinity Concerns in Conflict and Peacebuilding* by Kathleen Kuehnast and Nina Sudhakar (Peace Brief, January 2011)
- *Security After the Quake? Addressing Violence and Rape in Haiti* by Brooke Stedman (Peace Brief, January 2011)
- *The Role of Women in Global Security* by Valerie Norville (Special Report, December 2010)
- *Real Change for Afghan Women's Rights: Opportunities and Challenges in the Upcoming Parliamentary Elections* by Nina Sudhakar and Scott Worden, (Peace Brief, August 2010)
- *Rape in War: Motives of Militia in DRC* by Jocelyn Kelly (Special Report, May 2010)
- *The Afghan Peace Jirga: Ensuring That Women Are at the Peace Table* by Palwasha Hassan (Peace Brief, May 2010)
- *The Health Sector and Gender-Based Violence in a Time of War* by Anjalee Kohli, Kathleen Kuehnast, Leonard Rubenstein (Peace Brief, April 2010)
- *Peace Education: State of the Field and Lessons Learned from USIP Grantmaking* by Mari Fitzduff and Isabella Jean (Peaceworks, September 2011)

