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CIPS WORKING PAPER

The Impact of Women's Participation, Inclusion and Agency on Peace:

A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the adoption of UNSC Resolution 1325 in October 2000, the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda has been a top priority for the United Nations and for many of its member states. UNSC Resolution 1325 is credited with two achievements. First, it established a gendered perspective on violence and war, by stating that women and girls suffer disproportionately from the impacts of war and violence, and called for more prevention and better protection. Second, resolution 1325 also recognized that women can be resourceful and effective actors in the field of peacebuilding.

This latter perspective is instrumentalist. In this view, women's inclusion and participation in peacebuilding activities will lead to better outcomes; hence women's inclusion and participation are instrumental for more effective peacebuilding activities. Three claims dominate the instrumentalist discourse:

> (1) the participation and inclusion of women in UN-led peacekeeping can make peacekeeping more effective ("operational effectiveness claim").
>
> (2) the participation and inclusion of women in formal peace negotiations can make peace more durable ("better peace agreements claim").
>
> (3) the agency of women in local peacebuilding activities can make peacebuilding more effective ("better local peacebuilding claim").

This systematic review aims to collect and summarize the existing evidence on these politically influential instrumentalist claims. This is the first systematic review on this topic. Given the importance of the WPS agenda and the prominence of the three causal claims, we believe it is important to collect and present the available evidence on these instrumentalist claims and to highlight existing gaps. The review systematically collects and synthesises qualitative and quantitative evidence from studies meeting specific inclusion criteria. The study protocol was registered with OSF (Open Science Framework) on February 19, 2021 as OSF-Standard Pre-Data Collection Registration.[1]

We ran searches in relevant databases and searched the websites of important international organizations, international non-governmental organizations, think tanks, and bi-lateral donors. We included studies that met the following criteria: Published between 2000 and 2021, in English, employing a methodological design suited for identifying causal relations, or studies that contain some original empirical data (without necessarily making a rigorous attempt at inferring causality). This is an unusually low methodological threshold for systematic reviews, but we still only found 16 studies.

While these 16 studies provide interesting insights, they fall short of providing evidence for the three instrumentalist claims. The most important - and unexpected - finding from this systematic review is that there is no evidence base for the claims that including

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[1] Available at https://osf.io/6wtra/links (accessed March 29, 2021).

women in peacekeeping missions increases operational effectiveness, that including women in formal peace agreements increases the durability of peace, and that women peacebuilding movements have comparative advantages.

While we found no evidence for these claims, the studies still offer important insights. In societies where women traditionally do not participate in public life, the predominant experience of women peacebuilders is one of marginalization and exclusion. This not only makes their peacebuilding activities difficult, but it also explains why women peacebuilders were nowhere able to transcend boundaries and become involved in the formal peace processes. Constrained by traditional societal values and institutional barriers, women's peacebuilding engagement was often limited to the household or community level, as examples from Nepal, Kenya, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Afghanistan show.

In many cases, the activities in which women peacebuilders engage are best characterized as service delivery, such as providing support for victims of domestic violence, educational programs, providing employment skills, fundraising, and provision of food. These activities address needs, but they are not necessarily conflict transformative. In some cases, it appears that foreign donors have created a demand for women peacebuilding organizations, which encourages women grassroots organizations to rebrand their activities as peacebuilding. As a result, there is a conceptual mismatch between what both donors and grassroots organizations say they are doing (namely peacebuilding), and what local organizations actually do (namely service delivery).

In contexts where women traditionally do not participate in public life, women peacekeepers rarely interacted with the local population, since contacts between "our own" and "foreigners" are limited. In addition to the culturally limited opportunities for interaction, a lack of basic security often limited the contacts. In such contexts, the assumption that female peacekeepers interacting with the local population increases operational effectiveness is a false start, since the opportunities for interactions are very limited to begin with.

Conversely, when societal structures enable participation in public life, women peacebuilders found more space and had more opportunities to contribute to building peace. Many of these pre-existing structures are rooted in traditional ideas about gender roles. Examples from Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands show how women peacebuilders relied on the Church, on customary institutions and on traditional value systems related to matrilineality for organizing peacebuilding activities. Women peacebuilders also relied on pre-existing traditional gender roles, such as being mothers of the land, for legitimizing their peacebuilding efforts. In Afghanistan, religious women peacebuilders could increase their space by virtue of their knowledge of Islamic law. Women in Bosnia-Herzegovina used images of traditional gender roles as an enabling tool for their peacebuilding activities. Paradoxically, the structures which enabled women peacebuilders to have a greater space also constrained them, because these structures are based on traditional gender roles.

Surprisingly, the available literature on the instrumentalist approaches to WPS is mostly normative and descriptive, and rarely empirical and analytical. Most studies are predominantly interested in making visible the involvement of women in issues of peace and security (which too often goes unnoticed), but do not engage with the question of effectiveness, which would require a different methodological approach, including a theoretical specification of the assumed causal mechanisms.

Given the lack of evidence and the lack of sound theory for instrumentalist approaches, donors should refrain from using instrumentalist arguments, at least until more evidence becomes available. Donors may find it more useful to promote the WPS agenda by employing rights-based arguments.

For women's peacekeeping, a rights-based approach would drop the "increased operational effectiveness" argument. Instead, the goal would be to ensure that women who wish to serve as peacekeepers can do so in a meaningful way and at all ranks.

Regarding the inclusion of women into formal peace negotiations, one avenue for a rights-based approach would be to argue that peace negotiations can offer an opportunity to introduce provisions fostering gender equality in the postwar society.

It should be noted, however, that in some contexts, attempts at transforming traditional gender roles may increase societal tensions and reduce the prospect for successful peace negotiations. This is especially so when gender equality is perceived by segments of society as an unwelcome "Westernization". This is a difficult dilemma to navigate for Western donors who wish to support both a peace agreement and women's rights, and donors are well-advised to acknowledge the existence of such dilemmas.

Regarding women peacebuilders, a rights-based approach could posit that women have the right to engage in meaningful ways in local peacebuilding activities. But as the studies in our sample demonstrate, in societies that constrain the involvement of women in public affairs, there is not much space for effective women peacebuilding activities. Donor support to organisations that operate in such environments is unlikely to change this. Taken seriously, a rights-based approach to peacebuilding would therefore have to target constraining institutions, which requires long-term commitments in fields such as access to education, access to justice, more gender equal property and heritage rights, or constitutionally embedded rights for women. Changes in these fields will translate, in the long run, to more opportunities and larger space for women's peacebuilding at the local level.

ACRONYMS

AFD Agence française de développement
AICS Italian Agency for Development Cooperation
ASC Academic Search Complete
ASPI Australian Strategic Policy Institute
BMZ German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CPA Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CSO Civil Society Organization
DfID UK Department for International Development
FPU Formed Police Unit
GAC Global Affairs Canada
GIZ German Agency for International Cooperation
IBSS International Bibliography of the Social Sciences
IPSA International Political Science Abstracts
LNP Liberian National Police
MFAT New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
MINUGUA UN Human Rights Mission in Guatemala
NAP National Action Plans
NMA Naga Mother's Association
NORAD Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NSCN National Socialist Council of Nagaland
OSF Open Science Framework
PAIS Public Affairs Information Service
PMC Australia Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
RCT Randomized Controlled Trials
SIDA Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SPLM Sudan People's Liberation Movement
TNA Transitional National Assembly
TNC Transitional National Charter
UN United Nations
UNMIL UN Mission in Liberia
UNOSOM United Nations Operation in Somalia
UNPOL UN Police
UNSC United Nations Security Council
UNSCR United Nations Security Council Resolution
URNG Guatemala National Revolutionary Unity
USAID United States Agency for International Development
WONGOSOL Women NGOs Secretariat of Liberia
WPS Women Peace and Security

ORGANIZATIONS

AFD Agence française de développement
African Union
AICS Italian Agency for Development Cooperation
ASPI Australian Strategic Policy Institute
Australia Office for Women
BMZ German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CARE International
Danida Danish International Development Agency
DfID UK Department for International Development
Finnida Finnish Department for International Development Cooperation
GAC Global Affairs Canada
GIZ German Agency for International Cooperation
LNP Liberian National Police
Mercy Corps International
MFAT New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
MINUGUA UN Human Rights Mission in Guatemala
NMA Naga Mother's Association
NORAD Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NSCN National Socialist Council of Nagaland
PMC Australia Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
SIDA Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SPLM Sudan People's Liberation Movement
TNA Transitional National Assembly
TNC Transitional National Charter
UN United Nations
UNMIL UN Mission in Liberia
UNOSOM United Nations Operation in Somalia
UNPOL UN Police
UNSC United Nations Security Council
URNG Guatemala National Revolutionary Unity
USAID United States Agency for International Development
WONGOSOL Women NG's Secretariat of Liberia
World Bank
World Vision International

INTRODUCTION

Since the adoption of UNSC Resolution 1325 in October 2000 and subsequent resolutions on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), the WPS agenda has been a top priority for the United Nations and for many of its member states. The WPS agenda lies at the intersection of the international community's commitment to gender equality, empowering and protecting women and girls, and preventing and responding to conflicts.

UNSC Resolution 1325 is credited with two achievements: First, it firmly established a gendered perspective on violence and war, by stating that women and girls suffer disproportionately from the impacts of war and violence: "While women and girls endure the same trauma as the rest of the population - bombings, famines, epidemics, mass executions, torture, arbitrary imprisonment, forced migration, ethnic cleansing, threats, and intimidation - they are also targets of specific forms of violence and abuse, including sexual violence and exploitation" (United Nations 2002).

Secondly, Resolution 1325 also recognized that women not only suffer disproportionately, but that they can be resourceful and effective actors in the field of peacebuilding. But the full potential of women as actors for peace can only be realized when barriers to meaningful participation are removed. These two achievements of UNSCR 1325 – a gendered perspective and a commitment to empowerment – have changed how we think about war and peace, and have led to policy innovations, many of which can be found in the National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security. As of today, 83 UN Member States have UNSCR 1325 National Action Plans (NAPs) in place.

The WPS agenda has always been open to two different (but not mutually exclusive) interpretational frameworks. In its origins, the agenda was often understood as rooted in a rights-based approach. In this view, the agenda is a tool to promote women's rights and gender equality in all aspects relating to security. The inclusion and participation of women in security-related issues, and the increased attention to the protection of women in humanitarian contexts, serve to promote basic women's rights.

As the WPS evolved, its rights-based approach with a strong focus on protection has been complemented with a more instrumentalist perspective. In this view, women's inclusion and participation in peacebuilding activities will lead to better outcomes; hence women's inclusion and participation are instrumental for more effective peacebuilding activities.

This instrumentalist position is prominent in the discourse of political actors. For example, Canada's National WPS Action Plan 2017-2022 states:

"Women's participation in conflict resolution, as negotiators or mediators, for example, makes peace agreements more durable."[2] Canada's Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace

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[2] Canada's National Action Plan 2017-2022 - For the Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security. Available at https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/gender_equality-egalite_des_genres/cnap-pnac-17-22.aspx?lang=eng (Accessed March 29, 2021).

Operations states that "investing in women in peace operations is more important now than ever before (...) as this is a key factor in making them more effective and situationally aware."[3] Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy states "that when women are involved in peace and security efforts, solutions are more comprehensive (...) This offers a better opportunity to address the root causes of conflicts."[4]

Similar claims are made by the UN ("Deployment of Female Personnel Boosts Effectiveness, Says Secretary-General, as Security Council Holds Open Debate on Women in Peacekeeping")[5], the World Bank ("including women in peace processes has a positive impact on the durability of peace agreements, which thus prevents conflict from reoccurring")[6], the Council of Foreign Relations ("evidence shows that peace processes overlook a strategy that could reduce conflict and advance stability: the inclusion of women")[7], Amnesty International ("women and girls are not only victims of war; they are also powerful peace-builders whose efforts to prevent conflict and secure peace have been critical")[8], and many other organizations.

In sum, instrumentalist claims are widely used in the communication of political actors about the WSP agenda. Three claims dominate the discourse.

(1) The participation and inclusion of women in UN-led peacekeeping can make peacekeeping more effective ("operational effectiveness claim").

This claim states that female peacekeepers may be able to build a better rapport with the civilian population, which may lead to more legitimacy for the peacekeeping operation. Furthermore, female peacekeepers may be in a better position to collect critical information, thereby improving situational awareness. Female peacekeepers are also thought to be better at defusing tensions, and they can search local women at checkpoints. All of this may contribute to more effective peacekeeping (Mazurana 2003, Bridges and Horsfall 2009, and Jennings 2011).

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[3] Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations. Available at https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/gender_equality-egalite_des_genres/elsie_initiative-initiative_elsie.aspx?lang=eng (Accessed March 29, 2021).

[4] Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy. Available at https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/priorities-priorites/policy-politique.aspx?lang=eng#5.6 (Accessed March 29, 2021.

[5] SC/13773of April 11, 2010, Meetings Coverage 8508th meeting, available at https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/sc13773.doc.htm (accessed March 29, 2021).

[6] Crespo-Sancho, Catalina, 2018. Can gender equality prevent violent conflict? World Bank Blogs, March 28. 2019. Available at https://blogs.worldbank.org/dev4peace/can-gender-equality-prevent-violent-conflict (Accessed March 29, 2021).

[7] Council of Foreign Relations: Women's Participation in Peace Processes. Available at https://www.cfr.org/womens-participation-in-peace-processes/ (Accessed March 29, 2021).

[8] Amnesty International, 2017. Women as a Force for Peace. Available at https://www.amnestyusa.org/themes/womens-rights/women-peace-security/ (accessed March 2021).

(2) The participation and inclusion of women in formal peace negotiations can make peace more durable ("better peace agreements claim").

This claim suggests that a meaningful participation of women in formal peace negotiations increases the odds that the resulting peace will be durable (for example Krause, Krause and Bränfors, 2018; Shair-Rosenfield and Wood 2017). This is in line with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon's claim that "bringing women to the peace table improves the quality of agreements reached, and increases the chances of successful implementation" (Ban Ki-Moon 2009).

(3) The agency of women in local peacebuilding activities can make peacebuilding more effective ("better local peacebuilding claim").

In conflict situations, women may often act more effectively as "peacebuilders" at the local level than men. Women may have access to all warring parties, they face fewer risks, they often reach out to all parties, they can tap into women's networks that transcend boundaries between antagonized communities and they often prioritize peace over war (for example, Anderson 2000, Porter 2007). A number of case studies make similar claims in various settings, for example, Israel-Palestine (Aharoni 2011, 2017), Bosnia (Berry and Rana 2019; Helms 2003), Nepal (Berry and Rana 2019; Ramnarain 2015), Colombia (Boutron 2018), Afghanistan (Fabra-Mata and Jalal 2018), Sierra Leone (Ladum and Haaken 2017; Abdullah and Fofana-Ibrahim 2010), Kenya (Mueller-Hirth 2019), Nigeria (Akpan and Odey 2014), Liberia (Debusscher and Martin de Almagro 2016; Gizelis, and Joseph 2016), Cyprus (Demetriou and Hadjipavlou 2018), South Sudan (Jolaade and Abiola. 2016), Iraq (Khodary 2016), East Timor (Mason 2005), and Northern Ireland (McWilliams 1995).

In this review, we systematically identify the existing evidence for these three instrumental claims.

OBJECTIVES

This is the first systematic evidence assessment on the topic. We could neither identify a published review nor a registered protocol of an ongoing, similar review. Given the importance of the WPS agenda and the prominence of the three causal claims, we believe it is important to collect and present the available evidence on these instrumentalist claims and to highlight existing gaps.

Our study focuses on the causal mechanisms which link "better peace" to "inclusion, participation, and agency of women". It is thus a contribution to foundational research. At the same time, the study is policy relevant as it has the potential to make WPS efforts more effective by identifying what we know and what we do not know.

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

(1) To identify and summarize the existing evidence of the impacts of women's inclusion, participation and agency in peacebuilding activities on peace outcomes.

(2) To better understand existing gaps in the evidence.

(3) To better understand the causal mechanisms which link women's inclusion, participation and agency in peacebuilding activities on peace outcomes.

THE RESEARCH QUESTION

In line with the instrumentalist aspects of the WPS agenda, we systematically collect the available evidence about three causal claims:

1) Does the participation and inclusion of women make UN-led peacekeeping more effective ("operational effectiveness claim")?

2) Does the participation and inclusion of women in peace negotiations make peace more durable or of higher quality ("better peace claim")?

3) Does the agency of women make local peacebuilding efforts more effective ("better local peacebuilding claim")?

For all three claims, the outcome measure is "peace": We use a narrow understanding of "peace" that is linked to the absence of physical violence, or to a significant and sustained reduction of violence. Concepts related to peace can include durability of peace, sustainable peace, reduction of violence, absence of violence, conflict management, conflict transformation, reconciliation, and other synonyms and antonyms.

WHAT THIS STUDY DOES NOT COVER

We focus on the instrumentalist perspective of the WPS agenda, with a narrow focus on "peace" as an outcome. It should be noted that the WPS agenda, both its original conception in UNSC Resolution 1325 and in its evolution over the past two decades, is much broader.

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 is typically understood as having four pillars: prevention; protection; participation; and relief and recovery (Rehn and Johnson Sirleaf 2002; O'Reilly 2019).

Most Security Council resolutions that followed Resolution 1325 on WPS focused on protection (e.g., considering the impact of war on violence against women and girls, health, displacements, and socio-economic situations) and on relief and recovery (e.g., bringing gender perspectives to humanitarian operations, and to post-war reconstruction and rehabilitation). Prevention and participation received less attention.

This study focuses exclusively on the participation pillar, and within this pillar exclusively on domains with an immediate effect on peace.

We do not collect evidence on many other relevant aspects of the WPS agenda which have garnered much attention in the literature, such as, for example: How to increase the meaningful participation of women as decisions makers; the effects of female role models, the effect of women peacekeepers on the prevalence of sexual violence in peacekeeping operations; the role of WPS as a mobilizing norm for gender equality; the role of WPS as a catalyst for change in societies transitioning from war to peace.

It is important to keep in mind that this review covers only one specific segment of the WPS agenda, that is, protection.

METHODOLOGY

The review systematically collected and synthesised qualitative and quantitative evidence from studies meeting specific inclusion criteria (see below).

The review followed the Campbell and Cochrane Collaborations approaches to systematic reviewing (Cochrane Collaboration, n.d.; Hammerstrøm et al., 2010; Shemilt et al., 2013).

Registration of the protocol

We registered our protocol outlining the scope and methodology of the study with OSF (Open Science Framework) on February 19, 2021 as OSF-Standard Pre-Data Collection Registration.[9]

Changes to the protocol

We report four deviations from the protocol:

(1) We had planned to include only studies which aspire to infer causality and which meet a minimum methodological threshold. Since we could only identify three such studies, we decided to also include all studies which contain empirical data and description of this data, without necessarily being set up to identify causal relations. While such studies cannot contribute to causal evidence, they can suggest possible causal mechanisms and scope conditions that future research may investigate.

(2) We planned to provide a systematic assessment of the risk of bias for all included studies. Since we found so few studies that attempt to infer causality, we dropped the bias assessment.

(3) Due to time constraints, we reduced the number of websites we searched. We did not search the websites of

- the aid agencies of emerging donors (Brazil, India, Russia, China)
- the aid agencies and foreign offices of the ten largest troop-contributing countries in 2020
- the aid agencies and foreign offices of Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland.

(4) We planned to also include evaluation studies dedicated to assessing the impact of an intervention on one of the three causal claims. We only found three such studies. Since this is a very small sample, we dropped these three studies.

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[9] Available at https://osf.io/6wtra/links (accessed March 29, 2021).

Search strategy

Our search strategy was developed in cooperation with a research librarian and covers relevant bibliographic databases as well as searches of grey literature and reference screening.

Electronic searches in databases

We searched the following academic databases:

- IPAS
- PAIS
- Gender Watch
- IBSS
- Academic Search Complete (ASC)
- International Political Science Abstracts (IPSA)
- Econlit

Grey literature searches on websites

We searched the website of the following actors and organizations:

International Organizations

- UN agencies, especially UN Women
- African Union
- World Bank

International Non-Governmental Organizations

- Mercy Corps international
- CARE international
- Oxfam international
- World Vision international

Important bi-lateral donors and their development and evaluation units

- US / USAID
- UK / DfID
- France / Agence française de développement (AFD)

- Italy / Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS)
- Canada / GAC
- Sweden / SIDA
- Norway / NORAD
- Denmark / Danida
- Finland / Finnida
- Australia / PMC/Office for Women - ASPI & WPS Coalition
- New Zealand / MFAT
- Germany / GIZ and BMZ
- Mercy Corps international
- CARE international

Inclusion criteria

Studies that meet the following criteria were included:

- Studies published between January 1, 2001 and January 1, 2021
- Studies published in English
- In electronic searches, we only included articles (books are excluded)
- Studies that investigate one or more of the above mentioned causal claims (the participation and inclusion of women can make UN-led peacekeeping more effective; the participation and inclusion of women in peace negotiations can make peace better; the agency of women makes local peacebuilding more effective)
- Studies which use as their outcome measure a concept of peace which is directly linked to the absence of physical violence or to a significant and sustained reduction of violence
- Studies that use a design suitable for causal inference, such as
    - randomised controlled trials (RCTs)
    - regression discontinuity designs
    - natural experiments
    - non-randomised studies with pre-intervention and post-intervention outcomes data in treatment and comparisons groups
    - difference-in-differences
    - interrupted time series
    - non-randomised studies with control for observable confounding, including
    - various matching design
    - regression designs, including repeated cross-sectional regressions
- Studies that meet our lenient threshold for empirical studies, such as
    - qualitative comparative studies which contain a description of the research question, the rationale for the case selection, procedures for collecting data,

> procedures for analysing data, and a discussion of the generalizability and limitation of the findings.
> - process tracing in a single case or multiple case studies, which contain a description of the research question, a description of the causal chains that are to be traced, procedures for collecting data, procedures for analysing data, and a discussion of the generalizability and limitation of the findings
> - studies which contain original empirical data (such as interviews, participatory observations, survey data), which contain at least a rudimentary description of how data was collected.

We exclude: Studies based exclusively on secondary literature; summaries of findings based on empirical data which is not sufficiently described or is not publicly available; studies which do not provide a minimal description of their data (for example, number of interviews, descriptions of the structured or semi-structured questionnaire, information on respondents).

The screening process

Database search

The database search identified 45797 studies. 17501 duplicates were removed and 28296 studies were screened against title and abstract. 28187 studies were excluded, and 109 studies were screened in full text. **Thirteen studies were included.**

Web site screening

The website screening identified 17 studies, three of which were evaluations. These 17 studies were screened in full text. **Zero studies were included.**

Reference screening

We screened all studies which were previously screened in full text (n = 118) for references. Forty-five additional studies were identified and screened in full text. **Three studies were included.**

THE EVIDENCE BASE

Included studies

The following 16 studies were included in the final sample:

Peacebuilding:

Bhattacharya, Joyati. 2010. "Gender, peacemaking and the case of northeast India". *The Indian Journal of Political Science:* .233-239.

Cross Riddle, Karie. 2017. "Structural Violence, Intersectionality, and *Justpeace* : Evaluating Women's Peacebuilding Agency in Manipur, India." *Hypatia* 32 (3): 574–92. https://doi.org/10.1111/hypa.12340.

Fabra-Mata, Javier, and Muzhgan Jalal. 2018. "Female Religious Actors as Peace Agents in Afghanistan." *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development* 13 (2): 76–90. https://doi.org/10.1080/15423166.2018.1472031.

Garap, Sarah. 2004. "Kup Women for Peace: Women Taking Action to Build Peace and Influence Community Decision-Making". *Discussion Paper 2004/04,* State, Society and Governance in Melanesia. The Australian National University, Research School of Pacific and Aisan Studies.

George, Nicole. 2016. "Light, Heat and Shadows: Women's Reflections on Peacebuilding in Post-Conflict Bougainville." *Peacebuilding* 4 (2): 166–79. https://doi.org/10.1080/21647259.2016.1192241.

Gizelis, Theodora-Ismene, and Jonathan Joseph. 2016. "Decoupling Local Ownership? The Lost Opportunities for Grassroots Women's Involvement in Liberian Peacebuilding." *Cooperation and Conflict* 51 (4): 539–56. https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836716672897.

Helms, Elissa. 2003. "Women as Agents of Ethnic Reconciliation? Women's NGOs and International Intervention in Postwar Bosnia–Herzegovina." *Women's Studies International Forum* 26 (1): 15–33. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0277-5395(02)00352-7.

Justino, Patricia, Rebecca Mitchell, and Catherine Müller. 2018. "Women and Peace Building: Local Perspectives on Opportunities and Barriers: Women and Peace Building: Opportunities and Barriers." *Development and Change* 49 (4): 911–29. https://doi.org/10.1111/dech.12391.

Monson, Rebecca, 2013. Vernacularising political participation: strategies of women peace-builders in Solomon Islands. Discussion paper.http://hdl.handle.net/1885/31265

Mueller-Hirth, Natascha. 2019. "Women's Experiences of Peacebuilding in Violence-Affected Communities in Kenya." *Third World Quarterly* 40 (1): 163–79. https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2018.1509701.

Peacekeepers

Heinecken, Lindy. 2015. "Are Women 'Really' Making a Unique Contribution to Peacekeeping? The Rhetoric and the Reality". *Journal of International Peacekeeping*, 19 (2015): 227-248. https://doi.org/10.1163/18754112-01904002

Karim, Sabrina. 2017. "Reevaluating Peacekeeping Effectiveness: Does Gender Neutrality Inhibit Progress?" International Interactions 43 (5): 822–47. https://doi.org/10.1080/03050629.2017.1231113.

Negotiations

Krause, Jana, Werner Krause, and Piia Bränfors. 2018. "Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations and the Durability of Peace." International Interactions 44 (6): 985–1016. https://doi.org/10.1080/03050629.2018.1492386.

Nakaya, S., 2003. Women and gender equality in peace processes: From women at the negotiating table to postwar structural reforms in Guatemala and Somalia. *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations*, 9(4), pp.459-476.

Stone, Laurel Anne. 2014. "Women Transforming Conflict: A Quantitative Analysis of Female Peacemaking." *SSRN Electronic Journal*. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2485242.

Westendorf, Jasmine-Kim. 2018. "Peace Negotiations in the Political Marketplace: The Implications of Women's Exclusion in the Sudan-South Sudan Peace Process." *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 72 (5): 433–54. https://doi.org/10.1080/10357718.2018.1510895.

Regional distribution

Peacebuilding: 2 studies on Afghanistan, 2 studies on Liberia, 1 study on Nepal, 1 study on Sierra Leone, 2 studies on India, 1 study on Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1 study on the Solomon Islands, 1 study on Kenya, 2 studies on Papua New Guinea, one study which covers Afghanistan, Liberia, Nepal and Sierra Leone.

Peacekeeping: 1 study on Liberia, 1 study on DR Congo and the Darfur region of Sudan.

Negotiations: 2 studies covering all countries with a peace agreement; 1 study on Southern Sudan Autonomous Region (now South Sudan); 1 study on Guatemala and Somalia.

PEACEBUILDING

The evidence base

Our search strategy produced 10 studies that provide empirical data on the claim that the agency of women makes local peacebuilding more effective ("better local peacebuilding" claim). These studies are gathered by region as follows:

Afghanistan, Liberia, Nepal, and Sierra Leone

Justino, Mitchell, and Müller (2018) analyze the opportunities and barriers for women's participation in peacebuilding activities in Afghanistan, Liberia, Nepal, and Sierra Leone. Based on a qualitative study through interviews and focus groups with local participants and government officials, the authors assess how women in these localities participated in peacebuilding processes at the individual and community levels. Interview questions revolved around the activities performed by women and their level of engagement in peacebuilding activities; the role of different actors, institutions, and norms in supporting or restricting women's role; and how the community, as well as national and international organizations, perceive women's role in peacebuilding activities.

India

Bhattacharya (2010) discusses the role of women in peacebuilding in the Northeast of India, a region that has been through five decades of militancy and armed conflict. Based on limited evidence from statements by India's authorities and declarations from women's

NGOs, the author analyzes how the patriarchy shapes women's role in the peace process while constraining their political activities.

Also in the Northeast of India, Cross Riddle (2017) assesses women's peacebuilding efforts in the state of Manipur. Her study relies on interviews and participant-observer research with five female peacebuilding groups in 2014 and 2015, from four ethnic origins: Meitei, Kuki, Naga, and Pangal. Cross Riddle's research focuses on identifying the different forms of structural violence across these women's groups that may impact their ability to build peace locally. Moreover, she investigates how these women conceptualize peace and what peacebuilding methods they have employed within their respective ethnic groups.

Afghanistan

Fabra-Mata and Jalal (2018) assess the engagement of religious women peacebuilders in Afghanistan. They investigate the relationship between gender, peacebuilding, and religious literacy by assessing how local religious women perceive peace and work towards achieving it. The study relies on structured interviews with 20 female members of a network of religious actors working for peace, as well as quantitative data on activities carried out by those women and other network members.

Bosnia-Herzegovina

Based on over two years of ethnographic fieldwork, Helms (2003) examines how international NGOs and foreign donors portray women in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the implications of such representations for them in the postwar reconstruction processes in this country. The author considers the role of international actors for women's participation in peacebuilding important because foreign donors and institutions have played a key role in funding NGO and reconciliation activities, and may shape local policies based on their perspectives. Secondly, these international institutions usually aim to increase women's participation in ethnic reconciliation processes and refugee integration based on gender essentialisms in which women are considered more peaceful than men due to their maternal attributes.

Kenya and Liberia

Mueller-Hirth (2019) assesses women's understanding of peacebuilding as well as the agency exerted by them in selected post-electoral violence-affected communities in Kenya. This qualitative study is based on observational research, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups with 57 female participants conducted in 2017.

Gizelis and Joseph (2016) study Liberian women peacebuilders from the cities of Monrovia, Lofa, Nimba, and River Cess, who were active after the 2003 civil war. The study aims to understand the key factors to implement WPS policies and initiatives at the local level. They focus on the concept of "decoupling," which refers to the gap between an international policy and its local-level implementation. Their methodology relies on semi-structured and non-randomly selected interviews with 28 organizations in Liberia between April and June 2011.

Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands

George (2011) studies women's peacebuilding efforts in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea. She conducts 20 long-duration interviews with local women leaders in the church, community organizations, and economic and political domains who were active peacebuilders during Bougainville's years of conflict and/or its post-conflict reconstruction. Similar to Helms (2003) and Gizelis and Joseph (2016), George seeks to draw out the subtle nuances of the interplay between global peace initiatives (e.g. WPS agenda and Resolution 1325) and local peacebuilding efforts. The purpose is to offer a more comprehensive understanding of the implications of making the "local turn," which has become increasingly popular in global peacebuilding discussions and academia.

Garap (2004) assesses the role of female peacebuilders in the highlands of Papua New Guinea. The article's empirical evidence draws from the author's experience as a founding member of a women's peace NGO called Kup Women for Peace organization. She illustrates the progress of work by the Kup Women for Peace organization up to December of 2003 in their efforts to put an end to the tradition and practice of tribal fighting in this country.

Monson (2013) examines the strategies utilized by women peacebuilders during and in the aftermath of the Solomon Islands' civil conflict that lasted from 1998-2003. Based on documentary materials such as scholarly articles and records from this country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the author analyzes how the use of traditional norms by women in the Solomon Islands for peacebuilding purposes, based on maternal imagery as well as customary and Christian norms and discourses, contests gender inequality and violence and challenges Western notions of human rights and feminism.

Outcomes

Most studies report that *women's participation in peacebuilding efforts is limited, albeit positive*. Despite the lack of financial resources and political power, women have a positive effect in advancing a culture of peace and ethnic reconciliation in their communities as well as basic rights (i.e health, education, employment).

Nonetheless, the ten studies highlight that the *inclusion of women in peacebuilding activities happens mostly at the local level and in informal settings of decision-making*. Among these activities, women usually exercise mediating roles (Justino, Mitchell, and Müller, 2018; Fabra-Mata and Jalal, 2018; Helms, 2003; Mueller-Hirth, 2019) both within their ethnic groups and across them, benefiting from traditional gender roles that position them as apolitical.

Moreover, *women's participation has been more prominent in non-peacebuilding activities*, usually related to service delivery. Some studies have shown that this might be explained not only by social constraints but also by the comprehensive view on peace women peacebuilders have, encompassing activities beyond conflict prevention. These activities include providing support for victims of domestic violence (Justino, Mitchell, and Müller, 2018); educational programs to promote literacy among local women (Justino,

Mitchell, and Müller, 2018), and employment skills (Cross Riddle, 2017; Mueller-Hirth, 2019); organization of prayer groups, fundraising, and provision of food (Mason, 2013; Cross Riddle, 2017). Lastly, some studies revealed that women and men adopt different perspectives on what peace means.

Afghanistan, Liberia, Nepal, and Sierra Leone

An in-depth look at the ten studies corroborates our conclusions for the outcomes of the inclusion of women in peacebuilding. Justino, Mitchell, and Müller (2018) report that women, both at the individual level and the community level, contribute to peacebuilding activities in diverse ways, although mostly through informal channels and at the local level in Afghanistan, Liberia, Nepal, and Sierra Leone. The authors adopt a broad conception of peacebuilding, including activities that are not conflict transformative, such as women's role in mediation within their communities (e.g., providing support to conflict survivors, mediating domestic disputes, etc.). As a result, women's role is more significant in non-peacebuilding activities, such as securing safe spaces for girls and women to organize and meet in the four countries under analysis. Both in Nepal and Sierra Leone, women's organizations provided support for victims of domestic violence, and educational initiatives to advance literacy among the population. Lastly, it is worth mentioning that the results presented in this study cannot be generalized beyond the research sample, given that the interviews conducted to collect primary data for this research is not representative of the whole population.

India

In Northeast India, Bhattacharya (2010) reports that women have a limited role in peacebuilding due to this country's patriarchal society. The study lacks robust evidence to sustain this argument, but the limited evidence presented, including declarations from government officials and women's activists, shows that women's roles are limited to the civic sphere of the peace process and ethnic mediation initiatives, and do not enter the realm of politics and decision-making. As an example, women were excluded from the first peace talks in 2003 under the justification that they were not ready for this role, their inclusion would delay the peace process, and the Indian society was not ready to accept their presence at the negotiation table. However, women participated in informal economic development activities through women's organizations, such as the Naga Mother's Association (NMA).

Similar to Bhattacharya (2010), Cross Riddle (2017), in her ethnographic research in Manipur, India, finds that women peacebuilders have developed and employed specific tactics to fight structural violence and define peace and peacebuilding activities beyond the achievement of ceasefires. For them, peacebuilding includes any activities that "reduce violence and destructive cycles of social interaction and at the same time increase justice in any human relationship". Therefore, the author argues that women act as peacebuilders while fighting structural violence when they work as community organizers to fight against oppressive religion-based laws, as well as engaging in women's organizations to fight militarization and interethnic violence and provide training and support for women. Lastly,

Cross Riddle (2017) informs that the role of women peacebuilding groups is restricted to the local level and not directly related to traditional peacebuilding activities. Women have participated in activities to fight political inequality and sexual harassment by military members and Manipur insurgents, as well as leading group prayers women's social racketing networks, providing educational training on marketable skills and agriculture.

Afghanistan

Fabra-Mata and Jalal (2018) find that women's religious knowledge in Afghanistan can play an important role in confronting the limitations caused by social and cultural norms to engage in peacebuilding activities. Their knowledge of Islamic studies and their capacity to link peace discourses and Islamic teachings enable women to take advantage of the peacebuilding spaces available for them. This shows that women are aware of their culturally limited role as female actors in Afghanistan and employ religious literacy as an empowering force for them. These skills enable them to move beyond their domestic role and engage in the public sphere, such as madrassas, public schools, and local TV, promoting peace education. Based on their legitimacy as religious experts within their communities, women are also allowed to work with male religious actors on local efforts, albeit with the limitations imposed by their male counterparts.

Bosnia-Herzegovina

Helms (2003) posits that the representation of women as natural peacemakers and apolitical citizens by foreign donors, NGOs, and Bosnian women has both positive and negative outcomes for their inclusion in peacebuilding. On the one hand, gender stereotypes prevent women from participating in formal peace processes due to the patriarchal nature of Bosnian society. On the other hand, it benefits women's role as peacemakers in ethnic reconciliation because they are seen as fragile and apolitical, allowing them to cross ethnic boundaries and exercise indirect power on multiethnic statebuilding. In a nutshell, gender essentialisms encourage women to achieve political goals, such as peace and ethnic reconciliation, while marginalizing them from formal instances of peacemaking. Examples of women's peacebuilding activities are ethnic reconciliation and refugee settlement at the local level. Women's NGOs, such as ''The Association of Mothers and Sisters of Srebrenica and Podrinja'', hold interethnic meetings, provide humanitarian assistance to refugees as well as activities to encourage the return of the displaced persons to their former homes.

Kenya and Liberia

Mueller-Hirth's (2019) analysis shows that women in Kenya work as peacebuilders because of their position in a patriarchal gender order which shapes their agency as peacebuilders. This conclusion refutes the popular claim that women are inherently more peaceful than men. Similar to Justino, Mitchell, and Müller (2018)'s comparative study, Mueller-Hirth (2019) concludes that female participants' role is limited to the local level, due to their particular gender roles, often related to community mediation. Mueller-Hirth (2019) informs that women in Kenya have participated in most informal and underfunded activities, such as female informal groups to discuss the importance of peace and conflict

resolution, initiatives to develop warning systems to mitigate the heightening of community tensions as well as mediation training and ethnic conflict resolution activities. Women also participated in non-peacebuilding endeavors, such as economic empowerment initiatives (i.e micro-savings groups and mentorships projects), and trauma counseling training and groups.

Gizelis and Joseph (2016), in their study on women peacebuilders in Liberia, find that the country is unable to fully implement the WPS agenda for mainly two reasons. First, local elites, who control the agenda of peacebuilding groups, reject the WPS agenda because they perceive it as foreign and threatening to their values and norms. Secondly, the structure, characteristics, and capacity of local peacebuilding groups do not match the expectations of international organizations. In this context, women's work in Liberia has been more prominent in non-peacebuilding activities, such as the consultative process to develop the country's National Action Plan, a guideline to implement the Women, Peace, and Security agenda, as outlined in Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325). Women are usually represented through community-based NGOs and leading women's CSOs, such as the Women NGO's Secretariat of Liberia (WONGOSOL).

Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands

George (2011), in her study of women peacebuilders in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, finds that the outcome of making peacebuilding development less externally driven in Bougainville, and more people-centred and participatory, is ambivalent. It ensured women's participation in local peacebuilding whereas overshadowing them as leaders and political actors, by fetishizing them as virtuous and maternal peacebuilders and depoliticizing their work as peacebuilders. As a result, women have mostly participated in informal consultations to share their perspectives on the conflict, as well as on the future of their country. More recently, some political advancements have allowed women to participate in the administration between 2002 to 2004 as well in Bougainville's 39-seat territorial parliament with three reserved seats.

Garap (2004) reports that women's participation in peacebuilding processes in the highlands of Papua New Guinea has achieved several results, including free movement of people through rival tribal lands and into towns, schools, and other places with no concern or worry of opposition groups. There has also been a disarmament process led by women to convince men about the risks of possessing guns and the benefits of voluntarily giving away their armament and including the history of tribal fights in children's curriculum in schools. Other non-peacebuilding activities developed by women include peace education, labour-market oriented training, and advocacy for women's and girls' rights at the community level.

Similar to George (2011), Monson (2013) informs that the adoption of a discourse based on the notion of maternity and Christianity by women's organizations in the Solomon Islands is ambivalent. It limited women's participation in decision-making processes while also allowing them to go beyond the domestic sphere and promote their participation in the public sphere. For instance, women have participated in peacebuilding activities focused

on ethnic reconciliation, such as hosting meetings with combatant groups and raising awareness among the community on the social consequences of conflicts. Non-peacebuilding activities include service delivery, such as the organization of prayer groups; fundraising; provision of food and other needed items to both victims and militants.

Opportunities and constraints

Most studies report that *cultural and socioeconomic factors represent the main obstacles for the inclusion of women in peacebuilding activities*. Women are often depoliticized and framed through gender stereotypes, and are therefore restricted to local and informal peacebuilding initiatives, as shown in the previous section. Nonetheless, *the framing of women through gender stereotypes also represents an opportunity for women peacebuilders to exercise agency in places men are not allowed.* By portraying women as peaceful, traditional gender norms allow them, mothers, and in some contexts, religious actors, to work on ethnic reconciliation across different tribes and use the cultural context strategically to exercise agency beyond the household.

Justino, Mitchell, and Müller (2018) find that women's participation in peacebuilding activities in Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, Nepal, and Liberia is mostly restrained to the local level due to socioeconomic and cultural barriers. According to them, women's limited role illustrates a dichotomy between the advancement of gender equality discourse in peacebuilding processes at the international level – with the approval of the UNSCR 1325 as the most notorious example – and local determinants of women's participation. Their study reveals that this disparity is attributable to traditional gender values, economic constraints, and lack of education that restrict women's participation in peacebuilding initiatives to informal settings at the household or community levels while excluding them from formal peace processes, regardless of the implementation of national gender equality or gender quota policies. Respondents, both male and female, perceive women's participation in these processes as dangerous, and women often receive threats for their participation. From an economic perspective, lack of financial support, ranging from funds for women's local organizations and activities to transport and logistical costs, as well as loss of daily earnings, prevent women from participating in these - often voluntary - activities. In a similar vein, lack of literacy and formal education are also a barrier for women's inclusion in formal peacebuilding processes. This might represent a missed opportunity as the authors state that women's participation in peacebuilding is beneficial because they tend to emphasize areas, such as community reconciliation, which are neglected by international peacebuilding missions.

India

Bhattacharya (2010) reports that women's participation in peacebuilding activities in Northeast India is limited by their identification with an apolitical and ethnic agenda. The depoliticization of women's role by politicians and the community constrain women to gender stereotypes, framing their involvement in ethnic reconciliation as acceptable and desirable but not in decision-making processes. Any attempt to acquire a more decisive role is looked upon by the authorities who justify women's exclusion from peace treaties

with sexist arguments, such as their inability to work in politics and the difficulties created by their inclusion in peace negotiations.

Cross Riddle (2017), in her study of women peacebuilders in Manipur, India, identifies four primary constraints to women's peacebuilding agency: geography, social inequalities, political inequalities, and militarization. First, the diverse communities of Manipur are highly dependent on agriculture. Geography limits women's peacebuilding agency because ethnic majorities and minorities have legitimate, geographical causes for complaint, as some of them do not have access to certain locations, creating resentment among tribal groups. Social inequalities created by local laws that provide benefits to some tribes to the detriment of others as well as by religious affiliation which incite violence against those who do not share the same beliefs also limits women's agency to act as pacifiers between different tribes. Political inequalities, in particular gender, hinder women peacebuilders' progression past the individual, family, and community levels. Many women cited having great difficulty in entering formal politics. Finally, militarization constrains individual freedoms, such as movement and free speech; this greatly constrains women's peacebuilding efforts (Cross Riddle 2017, p. 581).

Bhattacharya (2010) reports that, despite the acceptance of the women's role as peacemaker and peacebuilders in the Northeast region of India, they are continued to be treated secondary in the political sphere. The attempt to control and preserve women's subordination happens regardless of the positive role the women have played in the conflict and the peacebuilding process. This challenge is rooted in the patriarchal aspect of the society which has limited the scope for the political role of the women who are active in the promotion of peace. Women's role in the peace process is welcomed but they are excluded from active politics and deprived of benefits, like their male counterparts, from dividends of peace initiatives. This exclusion from politics is reflected officially in the manifesto of many women's peace organizations including the Naga Mothers's Association (NMA). Bhattacharya argues that such an exclusion from active politics is intentional and dictated by the male politicians in Northeast India Afghanistan.

Fabra-Mata and Jalal (2018) argue that female religious peacebuilders can play an important role in local peacebuilding efforts in Afghanistan. The use of religion by women peacebuilders represents a powerful weapon and an opportunity for them. Through their religious knowledge, they can collaborate with their male religious counterparts, expanding the boundaries of their presence beyond the household. This is illustrated by the presence of religious women on TV and social media, as well as schools, madrassas, and women's organizations, teaching peace education and conflict resolution as part of their peacebuilding efforts.

Bosnia-Herzegovina

Similar to Justino, Mitchell, and Müller (2018), Helms (2003) argues that the main opportunities and constraints for women's participation in peacebuilding in Bosnia relate to their inclusion in informal and local ethnic reconciliation processes and their exclusion from formal peace processes due to gender essentialisms. On the one hand, the international

discourse based on gender essentialisms (i.e women are more peaceful than men, women have a maternal instinct) leverages international efforts that encourage refugee return and ethnic reconciliation through informal initiatives. Gender essentialisms allow women's NGOs to bypass formal political structures because they are cast as apolitical and humanitarian in Bosnia patriarchal society. Secondly, women are the principal actors in the maintenance of community relations on a day-to-day, household-to-household basis, positioning them at a crucial role in community reconciliation. On the other hand, gender essentialisms construct women outside of politics and, therefore, have negative consequences. It keeps women's efforts towards community-level reconciliation dependent on what happens in the formal political sphere, dominated by men, from which they are marginalized. The mainstream discourse at the international level - which reifies gender stereotypes and conceives women's role in peacebuilding as an extension of their role at the household - reinforces this exclusion, relegating women to informal settings of peacebuilding. Local NGOs that depend heavily on international funds are forced to emulate this discourse to mobilize funds, especially for peace initiatives.

Kenya and Liberia

Mueller-Hirth (2019) argues that women in post-electoral communities in Kenya have relied on gender constructions to exercise agency in peacebuilding initiatives, given a context of underfunded and often informal peace processes. Female respondents in this study have said that they became peacebuilders due to their experiences as victims, their role as caring mothers as well as the empowerment provided by training and education. Thus, women's role in Kenyan patriarchal society is contradictory, similarly Helms' (2003) study in Bosnia-Herzegovina. It limits women's agency by preventing them to exercise power in formal peace processes at the national level while also prompting women to work on mediation in local and informal post-electoral peace initiatives due to a gender responsibility for peace, in which society charges women to cope with the consequences of violence and mediate local conflict.

According to Mueller-Hirth (2019), the persistence of patriarchal cultures and values, particularly in rural areas, is another factor limiting women's agency in Kenya. Women's peacebuilding roles and changing identities clash with such gender-unequal norms, for example, that women should not be speaking in front of men or participating in community decision-making. While Kenya's new constitution of 2010 includes provisions to promote gender equality, such as the one-third gender quota, many felt that this has only helped women who were already more educated or privileged.

Gizelis and Joseph (2016), in their study of Liberian peacebuilders, report a series of constraints to women's peacebuilders' capacity. Firstly, the access and cost of transportation in remote areas represent a challenge for women peacebuilders as the transportation infrastructure may be incipient and expensive. This means that women either do not have access to certain areas or they must travel hours by walking there. The second constraint is organization capacity, specifically, in terms of self-financing as many women may depend on their male counterparts to finance their activities. The third is adult literacy

and education; this limits women's ability to access resources, including writing proposals for external donors and performing their roles as local peacebuilders.

Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands

George (2011) highlights in her study of women peacebuilders in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, the importance of local cultural norms and traditions in creating both opportunities and constraints on women's peacebuilding efforts. On the one hand, these norms legitimize the work of peacebuilders as part of women's traditional roles. On the other hand, traditional norms legitimize the role of women as peacebuilders only at the household and community levels. The same norms that empower women at the local level prevent them from exercising their agency in formal peacebuilding efforts, such as local and national politics.

Monson (2013) informs that the matrilineal principles of the Solomon Islands' society create some opportunities for women's engagement in peacebuilding. The maternal imagery is strategically used by women peacebuilders to resist and contest the conflict, and in mediation efforts with combatant groups in an attempt to achieve a ceasefire. Women usually recur to ancestral models of women's roles, and core Christian values, such as biblical principles in responding to conflict, to enable them to transcend divides based on ethnicity and religious affiliations among combatants, allowing them special access including in the everyday activities, such as the transportation of essential goods from one community to the other.

Summary

We identified ten studies that provide empirical data on the claim that the agency of women makes local peacebuilding more effective ("better local peacebuilding"). None of the studies explicitly address the impact of women's peacebuilding activities, hence we cannot derive conclusions about effectiveness.

Together, these studies suggest that women's participation in peacebuilding efforts remains very limited, happening mostly at the local level and in informal settings of decision-making. Often, what is framed as peacebuilding activities is in fact service-delivery.

Cultural and socioeconomic factors are in many contexts obstacles for the inclusion of women in peacebuilding activities. Women are often depoliticized and framed through gender stereotypes and are therefore restricted to local and informal peacebuilding initiatives. Nonetheless, the framing of women through gender stereotypes also represents an opportunity for women peacebuilders to exercise agency. Traditional gender norms sometimes allow them to work on reconciliation across societal cleavages.

The studies also note a gap between the international discourse and local discourses on women's participation in peacebuilding. While the international discourse relies heavily

on universal and equal rights, women on the ground often have to validate their activities with traditional gender characteristics, such as motherhood and women's peaceful nature.

PEACEKEEPING

The evidence base

We found two studies investigating the "better peacekeeping" claim: Heinecken (2015) and Karim (2017).

Heinecken (2015) examines contextual opportunities for and constraints on female peacekeepers and their impact on peacekeeping operations through a survey of 23 male and 51 female South African peacekeepers who had been deployed to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the Darfur region of Sudan. Participants included platoon and section commanders, and different rank groups. Focus group interviews, using sets of open questions, were conducted with groups of four to six peacekeepers, segregated by rank and gender to encourage free expression. The peacekeepers' responses and the discussions in the focus group meetings were analysed in relation to the main claims for female peacekeepers' effectiveness, which include their greater ability to interact with the local population, especially women and children, to reduce the incidence of gender-based violence, and to contribute towards demolishing traditions that marginalise women, whilst also having a positive impact on the behaviour of their male colleagues.

The causal mechanism in Heinecken's (2015) analysis is not formally stated. The presence of women peacekeepers, who are perceived as less of a threat than male peacekeepers to the local population, and less confrontational, reduces tension and facilitates interaction with the local people, especially with women. No counterfactual is provided.

Karim (2017) investigates female peacekeepers' effectiveness within the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). Specifically, the study asks whether female peacekeepers perceive themselves as making peacekeeping missions more effective, and whether the local population perceives female peacekeepers as improving the peacekeeping missions. This study documents the self-reported assessments of female peacekeepers and the perceptions of the local population about the work of the peacekeepers.

Karim first conducts interviews and focus groups with peacekeepers at the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). The methodology is qualitative and does not assess causality. The focus groups included 83 women from the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the UN Police (UNPOL) (Karim, 2017, p. 831). Additionally, 17 women and 13 men from the military and police operations were interviewed (Karim, 2017, p. 832). The purpose of this study is to collect lived experience and perspectives from female peacekeepers. In the article, Karim includes longer quotations from peacekeepers to provide greater detail about their

experience. The lived experience reported in the first study can serve as a finding to help validate or refute the findings in the second study.

The second part of Karim's work is a survey of the local population in Liberia in two communities close to the UNMIL. The sample consisted of 1280 respondents in two communities in Monrovia, Liberia (Karim, 2017). In both communities, there were ex-combatants among the population, and therefore the communities were likely to have lower trust in peacekeeping missions. Hence this is a "hard case" (Karim, 2017, p. 837), and the results are unlikely to be skewed by pre-existing positive perceptions about peacekeepers. The surveys were conducted as a representative cross-sectional random cluster. The control variables in this study are: a control for no contact with peacekeepers, victims of violence, age, sex, participation in an armed group, being a native of the capital district (Montserrado), having contact with a female police officer, having contact with the Liberian Armed Forces, and their general perspective of peacekeeping missions (Karim, 2017, p. 838).

Outcomes

Heinecken (2015) analyses South African peacekeepers' responses during the focus group interviews based on claims made in the literature about women's unique contribution to peacekeeping based on certain supposed "female" characteristics based on biological or societal roles. Her study is based on peacekeepers' self-reported perceptions.

It is claimed that female peacekeepers are *less confrontational and aggressive* than their male counterparts towards the local population. There was consensus among the peacekeepers interviewed for Heinecken's (2015) study that female peacekeepers are less confrontational and more compassionate and respectful to local people. Female peacekeepers are also believed to be better able to *defuse potentially violent situations.* The South African women peacekeepers cited numerous examples where they claim to have lowered tensions and defused conflict when confronting rebel forces. The men's opinion is not given.

It is claimed by some (Hudson, 2000; Bouta and Frerks, 2001) that female peacekeepers are *less confrontational and aggressive* than their male counterparts. The presence of female peacekeepers is believed to deter illicit or inappropriate behaviour by male peacekeepers, and to limit the incidence of abuse and sexual violence perpetrated by them. The findings of Heinecken's study show mixed results. Female peacekeepers report that when peacekeepers are interacting with the local population, their own presence can encourage restraint: *"if a woman is present, the chances are that the conduct of male peacekeepers improves"* (Heinecken, 2015: p. 35). Female peacekeepers said that they did not see it as their responsibility to police the men; they were well aware that this would lead to resentment.

Female peacekeepers are claimed to be able to *reduce the incidence of sexual and gender-based violence in the local community*. Heinecken (2015) cites UN Resolution 1888

(United Nations, 2009) which says that local women may be more likely to report cases of sexual violence to female peacekeepers. As she points out, this depends on many factors: the extent to which female peacekeepers interact with the local population; the level of trust in women peacekeepers; the fear that, if rebels were responsible for the violence, the peacekeepers will tell them that the incident was reported; and the extent to which local women see female peacekeepers as women or as another soldier in uniform. Heinecken (2015) notes that, despite the high levels of rape in the DRC and Darfur, none of the female peacekeepers mentioned having to deal with a report of sexual violence; they saw their role as preventing, rather than dealing with sexual violence. One said that although they could see what was happening and would like to assist, but "they are not mandated to deal with this" (Heinecken, 2015: p. 236), and that if they were approached with a case of sexual violence they would report it to medical personnel. They also explained that they are not trained to manage cases of sexual violence and because of this they do not know how to assist, or even where to refer the women for help.

Women peacekeepers are claimed to be able to help *influence gender norms in the local population and break down patriarchal attitudes that discriminate against women*. The literature claims that there is evidence that women can be role models who are able to break down traditional views of men as providers of security and to encourage local women to join peace committees, or even the police or military. To a large extent, any ability to change entrenched norms is likely to depend on the cultural similarities and understanding of the peacekeepers with the country in which they are deployed. Most of the South African peacekeepers doubted whether they had such influence, particularly those who had operated in Sudan. In the DRC, some peacekeepers felt that they did sometimes inspire women, and cited the example of a group of schoolgirls being excited to find out that they were women after they took off their helmets (Heinecken, 2015: p. 239).

Women and children are often considered to be good informants and there are claims that, given women peacekeepers interacting with local women, they are well-placed to *gather intelligence from the community*. Yet, as one female peacekeeper pointed out, they do not receive any intelligence training. Another said that men were often better at obtaining information from local women by getting a girlfriend.

Karim (2017) finds that in general peacekeepers very rarely interact with the local population. Despite this, most of the female peacekeepers said that working with local women was "the best part of their job" (Karim, 2017, p. 832). The findings in the first study are truly about the female peacekeepers' own perceptions of their role and influence towards the local community in Liberia. Karim reports that many female peacekeepers believe that in their role they "inspire and encourage local women" (Karim, 2017, p. 833). Karim finds that peacekeepers in the all-female Indian-formed police unit (FPU) believe that their presence is increasing the number of Liberian women joining the police force (Karim, 2017, p. 833). Karim notes several instances of female peacekeepers expressing that they feel like role models for Liberian women (Karim, 2017, p. 834).

By interviewing female peacekeepers, Karim (2017) finds that they perceive their work as effective and that they believe that, as women, they bring specific skills and abilities that

strengthen the work of the mission (Karim, 2017, p. 832). In particular, the study finds that female peacekeepers believe that they have an important role to play in mitigating and responding to instances of rape (Karim, 2017, p. 833). For instance, Karim provides an example of a female Ugandan United Nations Police (UNPOL) officer helping a Liberian woman report a rape to the Liberian National Police (LNP) (Karim, 2017, p. 833).

However, in surveying the local population, it seems that female peacekeepers have very few interactions with the local population, including with local women. Karim (2017) surveyed the local population regarding female peacekeepers and their impact on the community. In the sample (n=1280), 19% of respondents had a conversation with a peacekeeper (Karim, 2017, p. 837). Of those, 11% had spoken with a male peacekeeper and 8% with a female peacekeeper (Karim, 2017, p. 837).

The study also finds that contact with a female peacekeeper increases the probability, up to 13% higher, of a respondent perceiving female peacekeepers as better than male peacekeepers (Karim, 2017, p. 838). This effect, however, is driven entirely by men. The female respondents who had contact with female peacekeepers, just 15 respondents, were not more likely to believe that female peacekeepers were better than male peacekeepers. All of these results should be treated with caution because the sample is very small.

The study reports that the local population has low confidence in peacekeepers, male or female, at protecting them from rape. The survey found that 4% and 6% of the sample thought that female peacekeepers and male peacekeepers, respectively, could prevent rapes (Karim, 2017, p. 840). Furthermore, the majority of the local population reports that they would prefer men and domestic actors, rather than international actors, to deal with sexual violence (Karim, 2017, p. 840).

In sum, the findings of the study suggest that while female peacekeepers perceive themselves as making peacekeeping missions more effective, the local population does not necessarily perceive female peacekeepers as improving the peacekeeping missions. There is, therefore, a misalignment in how the women see their roles and how the local population views their impact. The limited interaction between peacekeepers, but especially female peacekeepers, and the local population is what Karim (2017) refers to as an "access gap": peacekeepers simply do not interact often enough with the population.

Opportunities and constraints

Peacekeeping brings both opportunities and constraints for peacekeepers to contribute to the local community and to maintain peace. Many are contextual, and some relate to the inclusion of women in peacekeeping operations.

A constraint reported by the South African female peacekeepers is *the pressure on them to be like men and to behave as aggressively as men.* The female peacekeepers interviewed for Heinecken's (2015) study said that they were expected to show the same level of aggression as men, and to "behave like a soldier, not a woman" (Heinecken, 2015: 232).

Male peacekeepers often considered them as weak and to lack bravery, and the women were pressured to "man-up", or face ridicule (Heinecken, 2015: 232). Male peacekeepers in Heinecken's (2015) survey expressed concern that their female colleagues were not tough enough for the job and that this could make them a liability. In some circumstances they were considered a "gendered security risk" (Heinecken, 2015: 245), weakening the capacity of the group and making them more vulnerable to attack.

Lack of appropriate training is a major constraint to female peacekeepers being able to carry out the additional roles expected of them as women. South African peacekeeping troops receive standard combat training intended to make them physically and mentally strong and able to conduct themselves well under difficult conditions. The female peacekeepers interviewed for Heinecken's (2015) study were uncertain of what was expected of them as women and how to achieve it. Women do not generally receive extra training in gender awareness or building societal relations and are, therefore, ill-equipped to mediate in community disputes, support local peacebuilding efforts, or address gender-based violence. Even if they had such training, it would be of little value unless they also receive training in the language of the regions of deployment and cultural norms. Women are being expected to perform special roles as women, yet they are not equipped to do so.

The ability of men or women to identify with and help address the problems facing the local population depends on the *extent to which they are able to interact* with local people. There are strict rules regarding such interactions which may limit opportunities for women peacekeepers to work with local communities (Heinecken, 2015). South African peacekeepers agreed but said also that this was context specific.

The social and cultural context in which peacekeepers are deployed may be an opportunity or a constraint. Heinecken's (2015) paper analyses the experiences of South African peacekeepers in the DRC and the Darfur region of Sudan, two very different contexts. Heinecken states that most South African peacekeepers are likely to find more affinity with the local populations in the DRC than in Darfur. Female peacekeepers reported that in the DRC they could connect more easily with women and children, and this was said to be because they were mostly Black and understood Swahili, and because the South Africans tended to interact more with the community than other peacekeeping contingents. In Darfur, by contrast, local women were discouraged by their male relatives from interacting with peacekeepers, male or female, due to a general lack of trust. This distrust, therefore, limited their contact. Local women might talk, where necessary, to female peacekeepers, but if this was to happen female peacekeepers had to be out on patrol with their male colleagues. If women peacekeepers do go into the community, the fact that they are wearing a military uniform may constrain their relationship with the women more than if they were civilian doctors or social workers.

Karim identifies *the access gap* as a key barrier that prevents female peacekeepers from doing community engagement (Karim, 2017, p. 842). Karim notes that the access gap "inhibits peacekeeping missions from reaching their full potential because female peacekeepers who could bring added benefits to missions are largely prevented from doing so" (Karim, 2017, p. 844). The access gap perpetuates gender roles in the peacekeeping

operation (Karim, 2017, p. 842). This is particularly relevant for the first claim about operational effectiveness and the third claim related to better local peacebuilding. This assumption of an access gap is reflected in Karim's study by finding that relatively few locals have interacted with female peacekeepers (Karim, 2017, p. 843). However, as there are so few female peacekeepers present there are few significant findings.

Karim argues that gendered work is perpetuated within the peacekeeping mission itself by placing institutional restrictions on the female peacekeepers, thus hampering female peacekeepers from leaving the UN base (Karim, 2017, p. 835). Karim identifies that the division of work in the UN base along gendered lines reflects its institutionalized view of gender (Karim, 2017, p. 827-828). Karim observes that "female peacekeepers express that they are unable to perform a wide variety of tasks, particularly those that involve them going into the field and interacting with locals" (Karim, 2017, p. 828). This also contradicts Karim's note that female peacekeepers' presence may serve to promote gender equality in Liberia (Karim, 2017, p. 834). There is a disaccord between the assumption that the female peacekeepers should play an active role in building connections with the local community and the institutional barriers in the base and UN that restrict the women's ability to take on that role.

Summary

We found only two studies investigating the "better peacekeeping" claim. Both studies show that female peacekeepers perceive their activities as meaningful and effective. But neither study provides initial evidence that female peacekeepers might have comparative advantages. The studies do not suggest that female peacekeepers are less confrontational and aggressive than their male counterparts, reduce the incidence of sexual and gender-based violence in the local community, influence gender norms in the local population or efficiently gather intelligence from the community.

The studies highlight that there is in general limited interaction between peacekeepers, but especially female peacekeepers, and the local population. Peacekeeping effects that require interaction are therefore a priori not possible. This suggests that the theoretical foundations of the "better peacekeeping claim", which requires interaction, may not be valid.

NEGOTIATIONS

The evidence base

We identified four studies, Krause et al. (2018), Nakaya (2003), Stone (2014), and Westendorf (2018), related to peace negotiations.

Krause et al.'s (2018) study analyses the impact of including female signatories in formal peace agreements on the quality and durability quality of peace. The study used both qualitative and quantitative methods to test two hypotheses. First, women's direct participation in peace negotiations – measured as female signatories – increases the durability of peace. Secondly, women's direct participation in peace negotiations – measured as female signatories – increases the quality of peace (Krause et al., 2018, p. 990). Krause et al. (2018) use both statistical tests and case studies to analyse the linkages between women signatories, civil society organizations, and peace outcomes. The statistical tests are based on 82 peace agreements, of which 13 had female signatories. The 13 peace agreements took place in six peace processes in DR Congo, El Salvador, Guatemala, Liberia, Papua New Guinea, and the UK/Ireland.

The dependent variable is the durability of peace as measured by the number of days between the signing of an agreement and the potential re-emergence of armed conflict. The independent variable is women signatories, such as government officials, rebel groups or civil society representatives. Several control variables are used. A first group of control variables refers to armed conflict, namely: conflict duration, intensity of conflict, the number of warring parties, and conflict issue. A second group accounted for the "characteristics of peace agreements" such as: power sharing, whether or not the agreement is a comprehensive peace agreement (CPA), and the inclusion of civil society. A third group of control variables are related to the nature of the international and domestic environment such as UN peacekeeping, political rights, empowerment rights, democracy, and GDP per capita. The results suggest that female signatories, together with higher GDP per capita and higher level of democratic institutions, increase the durability of peace.

The proposed explanation is that when women are signatories for a peace deal, they act as representatives for women's civil society organizations. Because of such linkages, there is a higher probability that provisions for gender equality are included in the peace accords and implemented. However, the authors do not explain how such provisions would translate to longer-lasting peace. Furthermore, the fact that the number of cases with female signatories is small (n =13), taken from only 6 peace processes, urges some caution concerning the robustness of the findings.

Stone (2014) examines women's participation in peace agreements, as quantified by the number of female signatories to an agreement. The sample includes 156 peace agreements from 1989-2011. From the sample, 25.3% of the peace agreements included women as participants (Stone, 2014, p. 22). The independent variable is "women's inclusion" and "women's participation" (Stone, 2014, p. 14), which is defined as women being included at future peace processes as official participants, for example as a negotiator, mediator, witness, and/or signatory (Stone, 2014, p. 14). The durability of peace is measured in both lenient and strict terms. Lenient durability of peace is defined as conflict ceasing for less than a year (Stone, 2014, p. 13). Strict durability of peace is either when peace lasts for up to five years before a new conflict emerges or peace lasting longer than the agreement, which is coded as "ended" (Stone, 2014, p. 13). Binary logistic regression analysis is used to assess the impact of the independent variables on peace duration.

Nakaya (2003) reviews two international interventions in Guatemala and Somalia in order to analyze whether the inclusion of women in peace negotiations made for better outcomes in gender equality. Using a qualitative approach, Nakaya analyses the circumstances around the parties involved in peace negotiations, such as the inclusion of women-led civil society groups. Secondly, she evaluates if provisions in the peace agreements were implemented in the years following the negotiations. Specifically, Nakaya observes structural barriers that may have prevented the full execution of gender equality initiatives. The first case study is about the UN Human Rights Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA), and the second case study looks at United Nations Operation in Somalia I and II (UNOSOM I and II), both UN peacekeeping missions in Somalia. In Guatemala, during negotiations between the government and the Guatemala National Revolutionary Unity (URNG), women participated through civil society groups facilitated largely by grassroots activism of Catholic churches. Women organized through churches, and also later on in refugee camps. A prominent group in particular, Mama Maquin, made important recommendations to URNG on women's property rights and repatriation (Nakaya, 2003, p. 464). In the Somali case, after many failed attempts to create peace, women were first included in negotiations in 1998. Somali women played an important role in giving shelter and medical care to combatants, supplying clean water in communities, and reconstructing damaged school infrastructure (Nakaya, 2003, p. 467).

Westendorf (2018), in a discussion of the quality and durability of peace in Southern Sudan following the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) representing the Southern region, analyses women's exclusion from peace negotiations in a state where there is a powerful exclusionary political marketplace of male elites. Her qualitative study is compiled from an analysis of secondary sources about the dynamics of conflict in the lead-up to the peace negotiations, supplemented by personal accounts of women who were present at, but not full participants in, the peace negotiations.

According to Westendorf (2018), women's rights were previously secured in the former country of Sudan through a provision in the Addis Ababa Agreement that guaranteed equal citizenship rights for all. Following the agreement, women were able to play a significant role in politics, and two women became clan leaders. During the many years of conflict prior to the 2005 CPA, they played a major role in peacemaking, facilitating local peace negotiations, and in subsequent peacebuilding.

Despite their contributions to peacemaking, women were sidelined in the negotiations for the CPA. Resolution of the conflict was under the control of male elites from the warring groups who sought to divide power and resources between them. As a concession to women's groups, three women from women's peace organisations in Southern Sudan were included in the CPA negotiations. Although nominally negotiators, they were relegated by the male participants to the status of observers. Their exclusion was not because they lacked relevant knowledge or skills, or lack of status in their communities, but was indicative of the much broader exclusivity of this peace process (Westendorf, 2018).

Women's exclusion from peace negotiations would normally be considered the comparator, but in this case, their full *inclusion* in negotiations, and with an opportunity to contribute to post-conflict state-building, is the hypothetical comparator. Westendorf's (2018) account, in the manner of a thought experiment, analyses the outcomes and consequences of their exclusion. Her core proposition is that the exclusion of women from the peace negotiations and the consolidation of the peace process in the Southern Sudan Autonomous Region reflects the tendency of peace processes to reinforce existing power structures and dynamics, which hinders broader societal engagement and results in entrenched conflict and instability. She believes that increasing women's participation in the formal peace process would therefore have been unlikely to have influenced the nature and outcomes of the process.

Outcomes

As reported above, Krause et al. (2018) find that female signatories, together with higher GDP per capita and higher level of democratic institutions increase the durability of peace. The study also suggests that women's participation in peace negotiations resulted in "better accord content and higher agreement implementation rates". The accompanying qualitative studies provide evidence for political linkages between women civil society groups and women delegates, using examples from peace negotiations in El Salvador, Guatemala, UK/Northern Ireland, Papua New Guinea, DRC, and Liberia. These linkages account for the inclusion of social issues related to gender equality and security in peace negotiations. In the case of Liberia, women civil society groups that engaged in disarmament initiatives also later played an essential role in mobilizing other women to vote for Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf as president. Women's actions and advocacy in Liberia resulted in a higher, more sustainable quality of peace. It should be noted that these findings are based on a sample of 82 peace agreements, of which only 13 had women signatories. These 13 agreements stem from six peace processes. This is a very small sample size, and results should be treated with some caution.

Stone's (2014) results are inconclusive, but largely suggest that neither women's participation nor women's inclusion, the two main explanatory variables, are associated with durability of peace in robust ways. In a simple model without controls, women's participation reaches statistical significance only for the one-year period, but not for the longer five-year period. Women's inclusion is not significant for the short or the long period. Once a selection of control variables are introduced, women's participation is not significant for the five-year period. Results for one year are not given. Women's inclusion is significant for the five-year period, but remains insignificant for peace agreements that ended before the five-year threshold. Once the full list of control variables is introduced, neither women's participation nor women's inclusion reach statistical significance. Taken together, the study finds no robust association between women's participation band and inclusion and peace duration. However, there is an association between democracy and

gender quotas in parliament or executive, and the durability of peace, suggesting that peace agreement in more democratic and more gender equal societies may be more durable.

Stone (2014) also notes that although the main variable, women's participation, is not significant, "its predicted probability reveals that increasing women's participation could increase the probability of violence ending within one year by 24.9%" (p. 28). This interpretation may be misleading, since a prediction based on a non-significant variable cannot be used to reject the null hypothesis. We still report this interpretation, since it has been frequently cited - wrongly so - as evidence for a positive effect of women's inclusion of peace durability in a number of highly visible policy outlets, among them UN Women.[10]

Nakaya (2003), shows that the effect of women signatories was limited in affecting structural changes. In Guatemala significant progress had been made in accounting for gender equality, largely due to the impacts of the single female advisor to the URNG, Luz Méndes. The URNG accepted many recommendations put forward by Mama Maquin at the request of Méndes. Nakaya makes a similar observation to Krause et al. (2018) in that the linkage between women's civil society groups and women delegates could have an impact on the types of provisions included in peace agreements. Several accords were put forward by various groups between 1994 and 1997, including initiatives for addressing the needs of Indigenous Maya women. In actuality, these accords failed to be implemented due to a lack of structural changes in the country's institutions, such as amending the 1985 constitution. No changes were made to the existing political structure, and while the congress ratified the implementation of the accords a year and a half after 1996, no efforts were made to include URNG. It was not until 1999 that constitutional reforms were put forward to the public, although anti-Mayan sentiment quickly eliminated the possibility for ratification (Nakaya, 2003, p. 465). After 1999, women's involvement in politics was considerably reduced despite developments made during peace negotiations.

In the case of Somalia, clan association was extremely integral to the social fabric of Somali society and therefore critical to peace movements. For women, while they maintained close associations with their fathers' clans, they also established connections with their husbands' clans. Thus, women leveraged their existing roles in clans to influence the peace process (Nakaya, 2003, p. 467). The first major agreement resulted in a power-sharing model between clans through the Transitional National Charter (TNC), within the Transitional National Assembly (TNA). Women lobbied for the fulfillment of the 12 percent quota in the TNA with the hosting negotiator and were successful. The TNC and TNA, however, decentralized power, and therefore gender equality was not achieved in patrilineal localities (Nakaya, 2003, p. 468). UNOSOM I and II were both missions largely interested in decentralization which seemed to encourage the diminishing of women's participation in political matters. Nakaya (2003) makes it a point to state that many Somali

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[10] for a detailed discussion of the surprising "career" of this - in our view - misleading claim, see Zuercher, Christoph. 2018. Tangible Evidence or Wishful Thinking? CIPS blog, available at https://www.cips-cepi.ca/2018/08/20/tangible-evidence-or-wishful-thinking/ (accessed May 10, 2021).

women endorse the application of religious laws in localities, and thus the absence of structural change in society is consequential to reducing opportunities for gender equality.

In Sudan, the peace process treated women as victims of war, and negotiations were based on the assumption that conflict resolution involved the division of power and resources along political, geographical, and ethnic lines. Elites from the Dinka and Nuer ethnic groups captured the peace process for the Southern side as a result of their power in the political marketplace (Westendorf, 2018). The political marketplace is a system of governance whereby politics is conducted through the exchange of political services or loyalty for payment (de Waal, 2016). Elites consolidate power by developing patronage networks, which provide them with support and cooperation through either negotiation or coercion. Minority groups and women are excluded from the marketplace. Control of the 2005 peace negotiations enabled the elites to arrange the structures of the post-war state for their own benefit, facilitate access to oil and other valuable resources, and thus to extend their patronage networks and their personal power.

The exclusion of women and minority ethnic groups from the negotiations led not to peace but to the perpetuation of tribal rivalries, increased insecurity, widespread violence, and repeated outbreaks of civil war across Southern Sudan. According to Westendorf (2018), the failure of the CPA was not due to the exclusion of women from negotiations; greater participation of women would not have influenced their nature or outcome, due to the negotiations being under the control of all-powerful male elites. The exclusion of women and minority groups was, rather, a product of elite ownership of the peace process and a tactic to enable the elites to manage power distribution in the new state. Had women been included in the negotiations, their presence would, according to Westendorf (2018), have simply made this less apparent; it would not have influenced the outcome.

Following the peace agreement, a non-inclusive government was installed by the SPLM, and power remained with the male elites of the Dinka and Nuer. The CPA was gender-blind, which resulted in women's further marginalisation and exclusion from formal peacebuilding and statebuilding processes in the new Southern Sudan Autonomous Region. Exclusion from state processes and cultural norms in rural areas limited women's participation in decision-making, thus contributing to a reversal of the gains women had made prior to the CPA (Westendorf, 2018).

Opportunities and constraints

There are several opportunities and constraints observed by Krause et al. (2018) in the participation of women in peace negotiations. This particular study was interested in observing when and how local women are included in peace agreements, and what potential long-term effects this had on the durability of peace. Krause et. al. state in their conclusion that the reality is that very few women were provided access to peace negotiations between 1989 and 2011. For this study, they excluded agreements with women from international third parties as the investigation was primarily focused on

"country-level women" who were influencing peace durability (Krause et. al., 2018. p. 993). Thus, the resulting pool of evidence only amounted to 13 agreements in 6 processes (Krause et. al., 2018, p. 1006). The number of female signatories is dwindling despite UNSC Resolution 1325.

In terms of opportunities, qualitative evidence from the Krause et al. (2018) study indicates that women-led civil society groups play an important role in solidifying peace and ensuring it is sustained in the long term. Both the quantitative and qualitative evidence also support claims that women are more likely to bring attention to gender equality and broader social development issues. There are opportunities to grow the impact of women by encouraging and supporting collaboration between women delegates and civil society groups. Secondly, the study equally demonstrates how the mere addition of more gender equality terms in the agreements' texts cannot and will not equate the effect of direct involvement of women delegates. Assuring women's participation with voice is a core argument made by Krause et. al.

Stone's (2014) inclusion of women's third-party participation in the peace process opens the possibility to explore the impact of women's third-party organizations in the peace process. However, Stone cautions that the results from this study show that it is unlikely that these groups help in the peace process (Stone, 2014, p. 30).

A second opportunity identified in Stone's research is that gender quotas can be useful and beneficial (Stone, 2014, p. 31). Gender quotas could be a useful predictor for the durability of a peace agreement. Stone's study could also be a rationale for gender quotas to expand the frame to gender equality. It is not clear from Stone's analysis how these opposing findings can coexist.

Nakaya's (2003) analysis of two case studies concludes that while women's participation can increase the opportunity for gender equality, these proposed reforms are unlikely to be implemented in the long term without overhauling structural inequalities in institutions. In both the Guatemalan and Somali cases, women were able to participate in negotiations or discussions at some point, but overall, in the long term, their situation remained unchanged. The reforms proposed by these women were rejected by voters, politicians, or local groups in the following years.

In 2013, when South Sudanese women once again affirmed their rights and demanded their involvement in the country's peace processes (Westendorf, 2018), they recalled the critical role that women had played throughout the wars leading up to the CPA negotiations and in the recent independence referendum:

> "We affirm our rights as women to be included, consulted, and informed of decision-making processes that impact our lives. We decry the exclusive nature of the negotiations and especially the absence of women" (Coalition of Women Leaders of Sudan and South Sudan, 2013).

In 2005, the international community had focused on obtaining a peace agreement between Sudan and Southern Sudan (Westendorf, 2018), and gave little attention to the dynamics

of local conflict and ongoing tribal hostility within Southern Sudan that left the region in a state of disunity and at risk of further civil war. International acquiescence to the exclusivity of the peace negotiations allowed the elites to retain their power and neglected the rights of minorities and women. Despite its support for UN Resolution 1325 (2000), the international community appears not to have challenged the relegation of women to observer status in the peace negotiations, nor used its leverage to prevent their effective exclusion from post-conflict statebuilding.

Other countries where a post-civil-war peace settlement has been exclusionary also appear likely to face ongoing violence and recurring civil war (Westendorf, 2018). Based on the experiences of Southern Sudan, the international community could in the future use its leverage to prevent elite capture of the peace agreement and its implementation, seek the inclusion of representatives of minority groups, and engage with all on the desirability of women's inclusion, whether on rights-based or on instrumental grounds.

Summary

We identified four studies related to peace negotiations. Two of them primarily investigate the impact of women's inclusion on peace duration. The results are inconclusive. Krause et al (2018) find that female signatories, together with higher GDP per capita and higher level of democratic institutions increase the durability of peace. By contrast, Stone (2014) suggests that neither women's participation nor women's inclusion, are associated with durability of peace in robust ways.

Two case studies (one on Guatemala and one on South Sudan) suggest that women signatories to peace agreements have little impact on subsequent structural changes. The findings from these two case studies should not be generalized. However, the two cases suggest that the outcome of the peace process may often reinforce existing power structures and dynamics. If these structures are not conducive to gender equality, then including female signatories may have little impact on subsequent structural changes.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The most important - and unexpected - finding from this systematic review is the glaring lack of evidence for the three instrumentalist claims. Since its adoption in 2000, the UNSC Resolution 1325 has become an important point of reference for international security policies. Yet, there is no evidence base for these instrumentalist claims.

Had we applied the usual standards for methodological rigor for causal inferences, we would have ended with a final sample of just two studies (Karim 2017 and Krause et al.

2018). In order to increase our sample, we lowered the methodological threshold and included studies that contain some original empirical data (without necessarily making a rigorous attempt at inferring causality), increasing our sample to 16 studies. While these 16 studies provide interesting insights (see below), they collectively fall short of providing evidence that including women in peacekeeping missions increases operational effectiveness, that including women in formal peace agreements increases the durability of peace, and that women peacebuilding movements have comparative advantages.

A second important theme that emerges from this review is that women's peacebuilding efforts are very often constrained by traditional societal values and institutional barriers, which limit women's full participation in the public realm. As a result of societal constraints, women's peacebuilding engagement was often limited to the household or community level, as examples from Nepal, Kenya, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Afghanistan show (see Justino, Mitchell, and Müller 2018, Mueller-Hirth 2019). Even in contexts where women were less constrained, for example in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Liberia or Bosnia-Herzegovina, these constraints still proved strong enough to prevent women from participating in meaningful ways in formal peace negotiations, thus limiting women's peacebuilding activities to the informal sector.

In some contexts, women did have some comparative advantages over men. There is some evidence from Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands that women in some instances could more freely move across enemy lines because they were less at risk of being killed, which enabled them to become more effective at emergency service delivery in times of war. Yet, in cases of protracted ethnic conflict, women, just like men, could not easily transcend ethnic boundaries and reach out to the other side, as examples from ethnic conflicts in North India show (Bhattacharya 2010). By and large, we find little evidence for the claim that women peacebuilders were more effective than other civil society peacebuilding organizations.

A third theme is that many of the activities in which women peacebuilders engaged are best characterized as service delivery, such as providing support for victims of domestic violence (Justino, Mitchell, and Müller, 2018); educational programs to promote literacy (Justino, Mitchell, and Müller, 2018), providing employment skills (Cross Riddle, 2017; Mueller-Hirth, 2019); organization of prayer groups, fundraising, and provision of food (Mason, 2013; Cross Riddle, 2017). This then begs the question of why service delivery is often branded as peacebuilding, both by the women's organizations and by foreign donors. One answer is that foreign donors have created a demand for women's peacebuilding organizations, which encourages women's grassroots organizations to rebrand their activities as peacebuilding. As a result, there is a conceptual mismatch between what both donors and grassroots organizations say they are doing (namely peacebuilding), and what local organizations actually do (namely service delivery). One implication of this mismatch is that the activities of such organizations, when assessed against the proclaimed objective (peacebuilding) are seen as ineffective, whereas results in other fields (service delivery) are not assessed. This is problematic since it carries the risk that in the long term women's grassroots organizations may become discredited as ineffective peacebuilders.

The fourth important theme is that context greatly matters. In societies where women traditionally do not participate in public life, it is not surprising to see that the predominant experience of women peacebuilders is one of marginalization and exclusion. This not only made their peacebuilding activities difficult, but it also explains why women peacebuilders were nowhere able to transcend boundaries and become involved in the formal peace processes. Likewise, in these societies, it is to be expected that women peacekeepers find it difficult to interact with the local population, since contacts between "our own" and "foreigners" are limited. In addition to the culturally limited opportunities for interaction, a lack of basic security often limited the contacts between the local population and peacekeepers. In such contexts, the assumption that female peacekeepers interacting with the local population increases operational effectiveness is a false start, since the opportunities for interactions are very limited to begin with. Clearly, traditional societal values and institutions which constrain the public role of women in general also constrain their role in the field of peace and security. Conversely, when societal structures enable participation in public life, women peacebuilders found more space and had more opportunities to contribute to building peace. Many of these pre-existing organizations and traditional discourses are rooted in traditional ideas about gender roles. As George (2011), Garap (2004), and Manson (2013) show for Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, women peacebuilders relied on the Church, on customary institutions and on value systems related to matrilineality for organizing peacebuilding activities. Women peacebuilders also relied on pre-existing traditional gender roles, such as being mothers of the land, for legitimizing their peacebuilding efforts. In Afghanistan, religious women peacebuilders could increase their space by virtue of their knowledge of Islamic law. Women in Bosnia-Herzegovina used images of traditional gender roles as an enabling tool for their peacebuilding activities. As Helms (2003) reports, this was supported by the international donor community who was keen on supporting women peacebuilders. But paradoxically, the use of traditional gender roles, while creating some space for local peacebuilding activities, at the same time also limited the meaningful inclusion of women in formal peace politics, since such an engagement did not conform with traditional imagery of women's roles.

Confronted with the lack of evidence for the three instrumentalist claims, a question which arises is whether the lack of evidence is mostly a methodological issue, or whether it points to a problem with the underlying theoretical assumptions. As mentioned before, the available literature on instrumentalist approaches to WPS is mostly normative and descriptive, and rarely empirical and analytical. Most studies are predominantly interested in making visible the involvement of women in issues of peace and security (which too often goes unnoticed), but do not engage with the question of effectiveness in a methodologically appropriate way. This then begs the question of whether we would find more and better evidence if the literature used more appropriate tools.

This is a speculative question, and our answer depends on whether we think that causal assumptions that underlie the three claims are plausible or not. As noted before, the included studies are mostly descriptive and rarely specify and test causal mechanisms. Implicitly, however, the alleged effects of women's inclusion are often linked to what Jennings (2011), in her study on female peacekeepers, has named "affirmative gender

essentialism", that is, a belief that women are naturally more caring, more inclined towards peace, less aggressive, more consensus-oriented, etc. In short, it is the belief or assumption that women have traits that are "often associated with that most typical of womanly acts, mothering" (Jennings 2011:8). These traits are then used to explain why women peacekeepers may do better than male peacekeepers in certain situations. In this view, operational effectiveness is increased not because of what women do, but because of who women are. But as opponents of gender essentialism argue, the behaviour of women may be driven more by social and professional roles than by gender essentialism. This means that women in uniform act according to their role, which is being soldiers, and not according to an intrinsic quality linked to biological sex. Likewise, it is possible that the local population, when meeting female peacekeepers, will see them firstly as foreign soldiers, rather than as women. In sum, it may be problematic to base causal mechanisms for instrumentalist claims on gender essentialism.

But even if one accepts the assumption that gender essentialism is one among other factors determining the impact of female peacekeepers, it is hard to imagine that gender essentialism would play a more significant role than factors such as language and cultural competence, situational awareness, cultural similarity, information gathering skills, training in crowd control etc., all of which is unrelated to biological sex but depends on training, practice, and assigned roles in a hierarchical organization.

Not every outcome is theoretically linked to gender essentialism. With regard to the impact of women's inclusions on the durability of peace, the (only) causal mechanism that is specified in the studies included in our sample, builds on political linkages between women signatories of peace accords and women's civil society organizations (Krause et al. 2018). When women are signatories for a peace deal, they act as representatives and amplifiers of women civil society organizations. Because of such linkages, argue Krause et al. (2018), there is a higher probability that provisions for gender equality are included in the peace accords and implemented. However, this alleged causal mechanism still remains underspecified. While it may explain why women's rights provisions are included in peace treaties, it is not clear how such provisions would translate to longer-lasting peace. One possibility (which is not entertained by Krause et al., 2018), would be that the inclusion of women's civil society organizations signals in general a broader, more inclusive peace process supported by a broad coalition of all kinds of civil society organizations. As Nilsson (2012) argues, peace accords with broad involvement from civil society actors and political parties in combination are more likely to see peace prevail, especially so in nondemocratic societies. In the absence of a strong civil society and institutions that enable meaningful participation of civil society organizations in the political process, women's inclusion in peace negotiations is unlikely to have an impact on peace outcomes, as Nakaya (2003) shows for Guatemala and Somalia and Westendorf (2018) for South Sudan. In other words, "including women" will not have an effect, unless there are institutions in place through which women can influence societal processes. If this is true, then the causal chain linking women's inclusions in peace negotiation to durable peace would run through "broader societal participation", but not necessarily through broader women's participation.

This brief discussion shows that the causal mechanism which could link women's participation to better outcomes is for now both underspecified and not entirely plausible. If this observation is correct, then it is unlikely that future research will provide more evidence.

This then leads us to a final question. Given the lack of evidence, and the lack of sound theory, is it actually fair and appropriate to apply an instrumentalist framework in the first place, or should we instead focus on rights-based approaches?

Nina Wilén, writing about the expectations for increased operational effectiveness of female peacekeepers, has argued that "the discussion about female peacekeepers added value is both unrealistic and unfair" (Wilén, 2020). According to Wilén, it is unrealistic, because there are so few female peacekeepers that we should not expect to find an impact. It is unfair "because the 'added value' risks becoming an 'added burden' which is carried by female peacekeepers alone and not by their male counterparts, who so far have escaped any demand for providing 'added value' — in spite of the fact that they constitute the large majority of military peacekeepers" (Wilén 2020: 1586).

These are valid points, but we do not think that the only possible consequence is to drop research on instrumentalist claims altogether. While it is true that the number of female peacekeepers is still extremely low, 5.4% in 2020, with data from SIPRI 2020, this does not preclude an empirical test of some of the claims made by proponents of the operational effectiveness claims. One outstanding example of such a test is Karim (2017).

Generally speaking, a low number of cases of female peacekeepers will reduce external validity, but it is still possible to test causal claims in a particular setting. Likewise, there are no theoretical, conceptual or practical reasons which might prevent research on women's grassroots peacebuilding movements moving from mainly descriptive-normative approaches to empirical-analytical approaches.

The claim which is perhaps most difficult to test is the "formal peace negotiation" claim, simply because peace negotiations are rare events, context-dependent, and the number of other factors which may drive peace outcomes is very large. However, solid case studies would be able to shed more light on the impact of meaningful inclusion of women in peace negotiations on peace.

In sum, while there are significant challenges in testing these three causal claims, the scholarly literature on the subject can and should do better. As long as policymakers continue to prominently use instrumentalist claims for justifying a public policy approach, it is both fair and necessary that social scientists seek to prove these claims.

This, however, does not preclude that a rights-based approach is also applied. In fact, when rallying political support for the WPS agenda, policymakers usually employ both instrumentalist arguments and arguments centering on rights. While instrumentalist arguments claim that the inclusion of women can lead to better outcomes, rights-based arguments posit on normative grounds that the meaningful inclusion of women in issues of peace and security is both just and rightful on its own. It does not require further

justification by claims about added effectiveness. In the absence of solid evidence for instrumentalist arguments, the rights-based approach may become even more important. It is therefore worth briefly discussing the implications of a rights-based approach for public policy.

For female peacekeeping, the implications are straightforward. A rights-based approach would free female peacekeepers from the burden of having to prove that they increase operational effectiveness. Instead, the goal would be to ensure that women who wish to serve as peacekeepers can do so in a meaningful way and at all ranks. Donors pursuing a rights-based approach would focus on practical steps making the working environment in which female military peacekeepers are to be integrated more attractive. That would include initiatives such as providing the appropriate training, infrastructure, and equipment for female peacekeepers, as well as removing barriers that hinder the advancement of women in military careers in their domestic military forces and in the UN peacekeeping structures.

Regarding the inclusion of women into formal peace negotiations, perhaps the best avenue for a rights-based approach would be to argue that peace negotiations can offer an opportunity to introduce provisions fostering gender equality in the postwar society. Anderson (2016) shows how women's organizations in Burundi, Northern Ireland, and Macedonia effectively bargained to get women's rights inserted into the peace agreement, thus using peace negotiations as catalysts for changes to gender roles in the postwar societies. Supporting such efforts may be a worthwhile endeavor for donors.

It should be noted, however, that in some contexts, attempts at transforming traditional gender roles may be seen by some segments of society as a threat to traditional norms and values. As a result, a peace deal that includes the strengthening of women's rights may be rejected by one party, or may even lose societal support. This is especially so when gender equality is perceived by segments of society as an unwelcome "Westernization", promoted by external donors. Afghanistan is a case in point. For the Western countries, one of the main objectives in the peace negotiation between the government and the Taliban is to protect the hard-won rights of women. For the Taliban, as well as for broad segments of the Afghan society, gender equality is to be rejected as something "Western" and un-Islamic. As a result, pushing for women's rights may reduce the prospect for peace. The objectives of getting to peace and of protecting women's rights may contradict each other. This is a difficult dilemma to navigate for Western donors who wish to support both a peace agreement and women's rights, and donors are well-advised to acknowledge the existence of such dilemmas. Nevertheless, rights-based arguments can guide donor policies with regard to peacekeeping and formal peace negotiations.

The situation is less straightforward with regards to a rights-based approach to peacebuilding. One could argue that a rights-based approach would be to posit that women have the right to engage in meaningful ways in local peacebuilding activities. But as the studies in our sample demonstrate, in societies which constrain the involvement of women in public affairs, there is not much space for effective women peacebuilding activities. Grassroots peace organizations in such a context are not very effective at

building peace, because they are constrained by deeply entrenched societal institutions. Donor support to organisations which operate in such environments is unlikely to change this. Taken seriously, a rights-based approach to peacebuilding would therefore have to target constraining institutions, rather than providing support to organizations which are most likely ineffective. This is indeed what Nakaya (2003) has in mind when she suggests that effectively supporting women peacebuilding would mean that international assistance should be targeted at "institutional frameworks and the structural base of power," which requires "long-term commitment to technical and operational assistance, cross-sectoral partnerships, outreach, and advocacy" (Nakaya 2003: 472). In other words, the best and perhaps the only way to make women's peacebuilding more effective is to provide sustained, patient support in fields such as access to education, access to justice, more gender-equal property and heritage rights, or constitutionally embedded rights for women. Changes in these fields will translate, in the long run, to more opportunities and larger spaces for peacebuilding at the local level.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Sample Search Protocol

	Search Strategy
1	MAINSUBJECT.EXACT.EXPLODE("Women in Politics" OR "Womens Roles" OR "Females" OR "Womens Rights" OR "Womens Groups")
2	MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Womens Studies" OR "Womens Studies" OR "Women in Politics" OR "Gender Studies")
3	ti,ab((women OR fem* OR girl) NEAR/3 (participat* OR inclus* OR agen* OR access OR involv* OR influenc* OR representat* OR role* OR implicat* OR empower* OR power* OR engag* OR negotiat* OR dialogue OR talk* OR voice* OR contribut* OR incorporat* OR activ* OR lead* OR delegat* OR politi* OR govern* OR status OR organi?ation* OR group* OR movement* OR network*))
4	ti,ab(gender* NEAR/3 (equity OR equality OR inequality OR stereotype* OR difference* OR gap* OR power OR role* OR relation* OR hierarch* OR behav* OR inclus* OR exclu*))
5	ti,ab(feminis* OR sexis* OR patriarch*)
6	or/1-5
7	MAINSUBJECT.EXACT.EXPLODE("Peacekeeping Forces" OR "Peace Movements" OR "Peace" OR "Peace Research" OR "Peaceful Coexistence" OR "Peacekeeping" OR "International Conflict" OR "Conflict" OR "Conflict Resolution" OR "Social Conflict" OR "Ethnic Conflict" OR "Cultural Conflict" OR "War" OR "Civil War" OR)
8	MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Peace Treaties")
9	ti,ab(peace* OR pacif* OR cooperation OR reconciliation OR ceasefire* OR disarmament OR demobilization OR arbitration OR post*conflict OR non*violent OR diplomacy OR grassroot*)
10	ti,ab(conflict* OR escalation OR dispute OR war OR violen* OR bellicos* OR hostil* OR crisis OR combat* OR insurgenc* OR insurrection* OR instability OR militarism)
11	or/7-10
12	6 AND 11
13	Limit to English

14	Limit to 2001-2021
15	Limit to Articles

Appendix 2: Overview of reviewed studies and data extraction

This appendix is available on request from the author. Please contact christoph.zuercher@uottawa.ca