Women Building Peace and Preventing Sexual Violence

WOMEN COUNT FOR PEACE
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Women Building Peace and Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict-affected contexts

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Executive summary

Context

Women's engagement in peacebuilding is recognized by many international institutions as a crucial element of recovery and conflict prevention—a fact reflected in Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), which commits the United Nations (UN) and its Member States to engaging women in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The serious threat of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) during and after armed conflict is also recognized by the UN, as well as at the national level through national plans of action on SGBV.

However, despite elaborate international and national policy frameworks, women around the world face enormous challenges to their participation in peacebuilding processes and in translating legal instruments into real rights and concrete change. Furthermore, women's ability to effectively influence peacebuilding processes is often compromised by the threat or the actual experience of SGBV, which commonly escalates during and after armed conflicts. These experiences suggest that, while normative frameworks are crucial, resolution 1325 (2000) cannot be fully and effectively implemented without attention to action at the community level. It is therefore important to recognize that women are in fact already engaging in community-based initiatives relevant to resolution 1325 (2000), and that these need to be better understood so that they can be supported more effectively.

The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) has been directly tackling the challenge of implementing resolution 1325 (2000) at the community level in order to build women's engagement in peacebuilding and public decision-making, and to protect women and children in communities around the world. The present paper is a background review of community-based peacebuilding initiatives. It is intended to inform UNIFEM's programme 'Supporting Women's Engagement in Peacebuilding and Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict: Community-Led Approaches.' This programme is supported by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) with the aim of supporting initiatives like the ones described below in six very different contexts: the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Republic of Haiti, the Republic of Liberia, the Republic of Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste and the Republic of Uganda. UNIFEM and its partners hope that this programme will help identify effective means of addressing the array of challenges faced by women at the community level, and of discovering some of the successful strategies that can embrace women's engagement in peacebuilding and protect women's rights in different post-conflict contexts.

Each of the following thematic sections examines the barriers women face and highlights examples of women's successful engagement in peacebuilding that were selected on the basis of being simple, yet innovative and explicitly community-based:

1. **Peacebuilding and conflict-resolution initiatives:** At the community level, women face significant obstacles to engagement in peacebuilding processes, including exclusion from male-dominated decision-making forums, lack of funding, exclusion from formal peacebuilding processes, resistance to initiatives that challenge cultural traditions, and security risks. Successful approaches implemented by women include coalition-building, promoting the use of digital technologies and new funding mechanisms, and efforts that combine traditional and modern conflict resolution approaches and strive to facilitate women's participation in local decision-making processes.

2. **Reconciliation mechanisms:** Reconciliation mechanisms often function in parallel to other peacebuilding processes, combining an emphasis on justice with a process of healing, respect and creating a longer-term culture of peace among parties in conflict. Barriers to reconciliation include the erosion of social capital and a lack of trust within and among communities. Women have used community-based initiatives to create new 'social contracts,' facilitate community exchanges and engage in public advocacy for peace.

3. **Increasing access to justice:** Women commonly face barriers in their access to justice in the after-math of armed conflict. This may be because legal services have simply not yet been restored; be-because patriarchal attitudes and structures actively exclude women from traditional justice systems; or due to a lack of basic services accessible to women. Successful community-based initiatives include making traditional justice mechanisms more gender sensitive, providing community-based legal support, and working with the police.

4. **Access to support services:** In post-conflict settings, women's access to support services can be severely constrained. The infrastructure of health clinics may have been destroyed; personnel may have been displaced; and materials may have been lost. Women are affected by multiple issues: both armed conflict and SGBV affect women's physical and psychological health, their legal rights and their capacity to earn an income. As such, many initiatives that aim to increase women's access to support services need to use a multisectoral approach.

5. **Awareness-raising and attitudinal change:** Two key challenges to gender-sensitive conflict resolution are the lack of access to information and entrenched social attitudes and gender biases. Community members may be unaware of the gender dimensions of conflict, of women's human rights and SGBV violations, or of the presence of conflict-prevention activities. This lack of awareness is linked to attitudes that enable both conflict and SGBV.

6. **Conflict-monitoring systems:** Signs of serious inequalities in gender relations—including SGBV—are not considered to be important warning signs of conflict. Nor are women's perceptions of subtle changes in community relations, the flow of arms or the numbers of disaffected youth in communities recorded in conflict-analysis processes. However, conflict analysis, monitoring and early warning are all significantly enhanced with a gender-sensitive approach: aspects of conflict that might not otherwise be detected are exposed when women's experience of conflict is addressed.

7. **Making communities safer:** Some features of the physical environment of communities can make women more vulnerable to violence. For example, the design of the physical space can make activities such as using latrines or walking after dark unsafe for women. Changes in the security environment

of communities—caused, for instance, by the proliferation of small arms—also compromise women's safety. Effective means of making communities safer include enabling women to better protect themselves from violence and reducing the opportunities for perpetrators to commit acts of violence against women.

Conclusions

A number of common threads emerge throughout the cases discussed in this paper. In some cases, women's initiatives are challenging and transforming the nature of dominant institutions and identities. Many of the case studies demonstrate a strategic use of gender roles, with women often choosing to use approaches that are readily accessible to them in their daily lives and capitalizing on the commonly-held images of women as peacemakers. The approaches accessible to women are, in most cases, small-scale and informal, and, as the examples below illustrate, women must act carefully to avoid community backlash. Yet, notwithstanding these significant obstacles, the successful strategies highlighted in this paper underscore the importance of community-based initiatives in implementing resolution 1325 (2000) and creating a lasting peace.

Perhaps most of all, however, the examples documented here suggest that the long-term effectiveness of community-based approaches to bringing peace and security for women and men, girls and boys, cannot be isolated from national-level and international efforts to implement resolution 1325 (2000).

National and international mechanisms to ensure accountability for implementing this binding resolution are needed in order to reinforce the impact of community-level work. For instance, monitoring and reporting systems are needed to ensure that all relevant actors are translating resolution 1325 (2000) into concrete efforts to prevent violence against women, ensure women's participation in peacebuilding and post-conflict governance, and ensure a gender perspective in national, regional and international development and security planning. The role of these mechanisms must be to ensure that existing international and national policy frameworks translate into real change in women's lives, and that women's efforts at the community level are recognized and supported at both national and international levels.

While community-based approaches play an essential part in peacebuilding efforts, they cannot on their own stem the overwhelming tide of sexual violence in conflict, nor stop the systematic use of sexual violence as a weapon of war. The effectiveness of community-based approaches ultimately depends on a broader recognition of the ways in which violence against women undermines both peacebuilding efforts at the national level and international security more generally. As the examples in the following report illustrate, peacebuilding begins at the community level, but it cannot end there.

Introduction

Women's engagement in peacebuilding processes is recognized by many international security and governance institutions as a crucial element of long-term recovery and conflict prevention—a fact reflected in Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), passed in October 2000,[1] **which commits the United Nations (UN) and its Member States to engaging women in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.** The serious threat of sexual gender-based violence (SGBV) during and after armed conflict is also recognized by the UN—for example through the Stop Rape Now campaign[2]—as well as at the national level through national action plans on SGBV.

However, despite widespread recognition of their contributions, women around the world face enormous challenges to their participation in peacebuilding processes, whether at the local, national or international levels. One of the most important challenges is the social resistance women face when attempting to take on new public roles. Furthermore, their ability effectively to influence peacebuilding processes can be compromised by the threat or the actual experience of SGBV, which commonly escalates during and after armed conflicts.

While there are many cases where women's rights and priorities have been incorporated both into peace agreements and into post-conflict legal and political reforms, changes in policy and legislation at the national level have not necessarily translated into better access to decision-making processes for women, nor have they ensured that women enjoy increased protection from violence. International and national changes in legislaton and policy are often not reflected in women's daily lives.

There are even more significant challenges associated with women's empowerment and their ability to engage in peacebuilding processes at the community level. Women may face resistance to their engagement in decision-making from formal and informal sources, including community members and their own families; in many cases it is extremely difficult to go against traditional practices without inspiring backlash and outright obstruction. Furthermore, challenges are often compounded by women's lack of access to justice mechanisms and support services for survivors of SGBV.

Community-based initiatives are often overlooked or ignored in favour of international and national-level work on resolution 1325 (2000). While this high-profile work is crucial, resolution 1325 (2000) cannot be fully and effectively implemented without attention to action at the community level. It is therefore important to recognize that women are in fact already engaging in community-based initiatives relevant to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), and that these need to be better understood so that they can be supported more effectively.

Table 1. Obstacles and solutions to women's engagement in community-led peacebuilding and prevention of SGBV

Obstacles faced by women	Innovative solutions
Divergence of opinion among diverse groups of women	Building united networks and coalitions
Exclusion from formal peacebuilding processes	Innovation in informal peacebuilding
Exclusion from male-dominated decision-making forums	Innovative efforts to facilitate women's participation in local decision-making
Lack of sustained funding	- Funding mechanisms for small grants - Using new low-cost digital technologies
Resistance to challenging women's exclusion from traditional dispute	Combining traditional and modern mediation techniques
Risks to physical safety	- Reducing the proliferation of small arms - Changing the physical environment
Eroded trust and social capital	- New 'social contracts'
Fear and/or hatred of 'the other'	Community exchanges
Community voices excluded from the public sphere	Public advocacy for peace
Lack of general knowledge about legal rights	Legal aid programmes
Unwillingness to report SGBV to police	Specialized SGBV police units
Patriarchal and non-gender sensitive traditional justice mechanisms	Transforming traditional justice mechanisms
Lack of access to support services for victims of conflict and of SGBV	Multisectoral support services
Gender roles that encourage male violence and enforce patriarchal attitudes	Challenging existing gender roles and patriarchal power structures
Lack of access to information	Communication through radio and theatre
Women and gender issues excluded from conflict monitoring	Gender-sensitive conflict monitoring systems

How can some of these obstacles be overcome? What are practical ways of promoting women's peacebuilding and SGBV prevention at the community level, and how can these be better supportted? The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) is addressing this issue through a programme entitled 'Supporting Women's Engagement in Peacebuilding and Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict: Community-Led Approaches', a two-year initiative, launched in April 2007 and funded through a $6.5 million grant from the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID).

This paper provides a review of successful approaches to women's engagement in peacebuilding and preventing SGBV in conflict-affected communities around the world. Each section and issue begins with an analysis of the relevant obstacles faced by women, which is followed by one or two case studies relating either to peacebuilding or to the prevention of SGBV (see Table 1).

The examples of women's engagement in conflict resolution or the prevention of SGBV examined in this paper have been selected on the basis of being simple yet innovative, and because they are explicitly community-based. There are relatively few case studies available that fulfill these criteria—and even fewer data on the impact of such initiatives—which is another reason why UNIFEM has undertaken to address these issues in a systematic way. The case studies here are drawn from both a desk review and field visits. They include peacebuilding and conflict-resolution initiatives; reconciliation mechanisms; studies focusing on access to justice and support services; awareness-raising and attitudinal change campaigns; conflict-monitoring systems; and initiatives aimed at making communities safer.

1. Peacebuilding and conflict-resolution initiatives

At the community level, women are often very active in peacebuilding processes such as mediation and conflict transformation—mostly on a voluntary basis. They usually face enormous challenges to their engagement, including a lack of consensus among diverse groups of women; exclusion from male-dominated decision-making forums; lack of funding; exclusion from formal peacebuilding processes; resistance to changing cultural traditions; and ongoing security risks.

Important approaches implemented by women in this area include coalition-building, promoting the use of new digital technologies, identifying new funding mechanisms, combining traditional and modern approaches, and innovative efforts to facilitate women's participation in local decision-making processes.

Building successful coalitions
Women peacebuilders hold multiple perspectives and ideologies. There are many civil society orga-

nizations (CSOs) working at the community and national levels, each with different constituents, objectives and interests, and at times representing different sides of the conflict; uniting these organizations into coordinated networks can be challenging. At the same time, it can also be a very empowering process for women to engage in peacebuilding as part of a coordinated movement.

One example of successful coalition-building is the 'Women's Initiatives for Peace' project in Colombia. The aim of the project was to create a women's agenda for peace, which could contribute to the national peace agenda. To achieve this aim, the project developed a methodology for reaching consensus and creating a 'women's movement for peace' that brought together 22 CSOs and trade unions between 2002 and 2004, with financial support from the Swedish International Development Agency.[6] The women's diverse political, ideological and experiential perspectives made this a challenging task, but the consensus-building methodology relied on participatory tools across two distinct, interlinked stages: consensus was first reached within small groups, either by general verbal agreement or by brainstorming and ranking key issues. Small-group decisions were then taken to the plenary where the entire group voted. Two analytical concepts were critical: first, there was collective agreement that the basic issue uniting all Colombian women was their 'exclusion.' Second, a distinction was made between a 'basic agenda' around which all Colombian women could rally, and a 'maximum agenda' that provides space for diversity on the basis of issues such as ethnicity, race, class or age.

The success of this methodology is illustrated by the fact that at a national meeting of 300 women, the participants were able to select twelve basic agenda points from an initial 600 proposals. These included the need to establish public policy on women's human rights in order to promote a culture of non-violence and respect for diversity; democratic agrarian reform with an ethnic and gender perspective; and the direct and autonomous participation of women's organizations in national and local political dialogue around conflict. The 12 proposals were signed in the National Senate by representatives of the 22 organizations that were part of the movement.

Definitions

Peacebuilding involves a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development. Peacebuilding strategies must be coherent and tailored to the specific needs of the country concerned; must be based on national ownership; and should comprise a carefully prioritized, sequenced and therefore relatively narrow set of activities aimed at achieving the above objectives.[3]

In its article 1, CEDAW provides a definition of discrimination against women which includes "**gender-based violence**, that is, violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately."[4] There are many types of GBV, such as rape, torture, murder, beating, sexual exploitation, abuse by an intimate partner, forced marriage, forced prostitution and trafficking. GBV may be physical, psychological, and sexual. According to UNIFEM, **sexual gender-based violence** may be defined as "violent behaviour that is linked to sex, whose compelling forces are related to family, economic, social, and cultural precedents that encourage unequal power relationships between men and women, conferring an attitude of superiority and domination on the perpetrator and an attitude of subordination on the victim."[5]

Participating in local decision-making processes

Women often face obstacles to gathering and collectively deliberating about their concerns and problems. These obstacles are further compounded when women attempt to present their views in local decision-making forums, especially at the community level, where local councils are dominated by local male elites. During the post-conflict period, however, when processes of democratic governance are being rebuilt, or in many cases established for the first time, it is particularly important for women to be part of the dialogue.

Efforts to increase women's participation in decision-making processes have focused on establishing forums for deliberation among women, as well as channels to relay women's views and concerns to decision-making bodies. One such initiative in Bosnia and Herzegovina facilitates open meetings between a women's centre and the municipality. Called 'Coffees with the Mayor,' the weekly meetings have been facilitated by the organization *Lara* since 2001, and involve inviting representatives from the municipality to come to the women's centre to answer questions from women and listen to their concerns.[7] Initially, the meetings took place on Wednesdays: Wednesdays were 'sports evenings' for men, which gave women the time and space to gather. The meetings have given women a chance not only to speak directly to politicians and government representatives, but also to feel that they can hold their elected officials to account through regular face-to-face meetings.

Several campaigns and protests have taken place as a result of these meetings. In addition, the dialogues have become such an important platform for citizen mobilization that municipal politicians themselves seek out the opportunity to participate. This level of attention is a sign of how significant women have become to community decision-making and conflict-resolution, and it would not have been possible without the structured—yet informal—access to local decision-makers that was facilitated by *Lara*. Unfortunately, the precise impact of this programme remains difficult to assess in the absence of evaluation data.

Funding mechanisms

One of the fundamental obstacles to women's involvement in peacebuilding is the lack of sustained funding sources for women's community-based organizations. In the immediate aftermath of conflict, there may be an influx of donor funds (in such cases the competition among local

Literacy class graduation for internally displaced women and girls in Afghanistan. The classes are provided by a local women's NGO, supported by UNIFEM. (Photo: Annalise Moser/UNIFEM)

organizations vying for support can be fierce). However, these funding sources typically dry up once the initial reconstruction phase has passed, often leaving women's peacebuilding efforts with no support, or forcing them constantly to focus on finding alternative and short-term funding options. A longer-term mechanism for funding women's community-based initiatives is crucial to women's peacebuilding efforts.

To address this challenge, in Afghanistan and Haiti, UNIFEM has established funding mechanisms to provide small grants to women's community-based organizations. In Haiti, the Small Grants Mechanism is to provide grants of $5,000 to $20,000 to support both women's organizations and human rights organizations working at the community-level (particularly in rural areas) to provide critical services to women and children who are victims of violence, as well as community-based efforts to increase security and engage in conflict prevention (particularly in the areas of justice and security sector reform).[8] In Afghanistan, the Fund for Community-Based Responses to SGBV[9] supports grassroots CSOs in their efforts to promote community reconciliation, including participation in the peace *jirgas;* build women's capacities to take part in community decisions; prevent SGBV; and encourage respect for human rights (for instance, in customary dispute adjudication).

UNIFEM expects that the availability of financing for these community-level activities in Haiti and Afghanistan will reduce competition among women's CSOs; allow local organizations to access resources through a participatory and flexible funding mechanism; build capacity; and establish networks that promote collaboration among organizations working towards similar goals.

There are several key challenges to the effective implementation of small grants mechanisms. For example, it is necessary to balance the need for very small grants, on the one hand, with the as-

Women's Peace Huts in Liberia

The Women's Peace Huts in Liberia are community-led peacebuilding groups, established by the Women in Peace Building Network and supported by UNIFEM.[11] The Peace Huts' success lies in their role in facilitating community mediation. The women meet on Thursday mornings, during which time they share information about problems and issues they have heard about in the community and plan actions to further investigate, publicize or resolve these issues. Community members come to the Peace Huts with problems to be solved, including difficult issues such as rape, as well as those related to land, religious differences and tribalism. The Peace Huts can serve as a refuge for women experiencing domestic violence, who can 'run to the Peace Huts' for safety. The women then bring together the husband and wife, and sometimes their families, to discuss the problem and find a solution.

Despite the innovations and successes of the Peace Huts, they do face a number of constraints. The extent to which the women engage in community decision-making and with local authorities varies. In one community, although the women repeatedly invited local leaders to join their weekly meetings, they never received a reply, and none of the leaders attended a meeting. Elsewhere, however, leaders came to the Peace Hut regularly and also called on the women to help mediate when there was a conflict in the community.

sociated high transaction costs, on the other. The process of identifying and vetting the right organizations and activities is crucial, as is providing both adequate support and monitoring and evaluation. These problems are not unfamiliar to organizations working to provide small grants to women's groups, like the Global Fund for Women, which has awarded over $58 million to 3,450 women's organizations around the world since 1987.[10]

Innovative women's organizations working to build peace

While women commonly lack access to formal peacebuilding processes, there are many examples of women working informally within their communities to resolve conflict and build peace. Such initiatives owe much of their effectiveness to their ability to gain respect among male and female community members, as well as to the innovations of local women's organizations.

The capacity of the women to respond appropriately to problems, their knowledge of women's human rights and their conflict resolution skills also vary considerably. Finally, the Peace Huts' minimal financial resources constrain their activities and create resistance within the women's own families, because they work without getting paid and go home without food for their children.

In Nepal, networks of district- and village-level peace volunteers—largely women coordinated by the Institute of Human Rights Communications (IHRICON)[12]—work with village groups, monitoring incidents of human rights abuse, confronting the perpetrators and publicizing these incidents through 'wall newspapers' (bulletins of hand-written local news appended in a public place). Village volunteers also raise funds and support people's income-generating projects.

IHRICON's women's programme is focused on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), and the women organize discussions about its implications in Nepal. To achieve this effectively, IHIRICON has adapted resolution 1325 (2000) for discussion within the village context, ensuring that the text incorporates simple and familiar language.

Incorporating traditional mediation practices

During periods of upheaval and unrest, communities can be especially resistant to changing traditional practices. Introducing innovative approaches to peacebuilding can be particularly challenging for women, as cultural traditions are often strongly defended by traditional leaders, who are frequently male. Incorporating traditional elements into a balanced and inclusive approach to mediation can therefore offer a non-threatening way to introduce change and innovation into communities.

The Peace and Democracy Foundation in Timor-Leste, for example, implements an innovative mediation programme that is grounded in traditional Timorese mediation practices.[13] Traditionally, community leaders coming together for conflict-resolution sessions are all men, but in the model launched by the Peace and Democracy Foundation, women leaders are included among the mediators. Traditional practices such as drinking wine or chewing betel nut are incorporated in the opening and closing sessions, where for example the parties whose conflict is being mediated may drink or eat together as a symbolic gesture. The actual mediation proceedings follow a balanced and inclusive approach wherein all parties are given equal time to present their perspectives. This model has been piloted in three districts, and women have been very active mediators, often being approached by community members to mediate disputes. Having women among the mediators results in more gender-sensitive rulings and appropriate outcomes for women. It is also possible that the use of traditional elements helps legitimize women's participation in the process.

Using digital technologies

Digital technologies provide an unconventional but highly effective means of communication that can be employed by women working to end violence against women, build peace and prevent conflict. They are especially useful because they enable women to overcome obstacles such as lack of funds, security risks to activists and limited physical mobility owing to their domestic obligations.

Useful technologies include the Internet (web-

sites, chat rooms, blogs, Internet radio streaming, video streaming and podcasting technology), email and mobile phones. These are quick and relatively cost-effective ways of exchanging written, visual and audio information, organizing, networking, mobilizing and facilitating dialogue. They are particularly useful media for those women whose mobility is restricted or for communication with organizations outside of affected areas. Mailing lists and similar tools can create a 'safe' space for individuals to organize around an issue that might be 'risky' in physical spaces, as well as being simple and usually cost-free.

For example, in Kuwait and the Gulf States, new technologies have made it possible for women to mobilize their networks at a moment's notice when the government denies access to a certain area. Kuwaiti women organizing demonstrations to demand voting rights were more effective in 2005 than during a similar campaign five years before because text messaging allowed them to reach more women to take part in the protests.[14]

Text messaging also allows women to "build unofficial membership lists, spread news about detained activists, encourage voter turnout, schedule meetings and rallies, and develop new issue campaigns—all while avoiding government-censored newspapers, television stations and websites."[15]

2. Reconciliation mechanisms

Reconciliation mechanisms run parallel to other peacebuilding processes, combining an emphasis on the search for justice with the process of healing, respect and creating a longer-term culture of peace among conflicting parties. Barriers to reconciliation include the erosion of social capital and a lack of trust within and among communities. Types of women's community-led initiatives around these issues include creating 'social contracts,' community exchanges and public advocacy for peace.

'Social contracts' among conflicting parties

In countries affected by armed conflict, one of the longest-lasting legacies is the undermining of social capital—that is, of the relationships and networks that enable trust and cooperation among people. Conflict-affected communities face the challenges of strengthening social cohesion, rebuilding relationships and re-establishing trust. An increasing amount of evidence shows that the process of rebuilding social capital within communities can also be an effective method of challenging the constraints women face in participating in local decision-making structures: when women are involved in reconciliation mechanisms, they are playing an important role within the community and can ensure that these processes reflect women's concerns.[16]

Women's involvement in the creation and signing of so-called social contracts is one way of promoting social capital and reconciliation. Community-based social contracts are agreements among community members to abide by a set of mutually identified rights and duties.

An initiative by the Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development in Burundi, for example, focuses on reconciliation and conflict prevention through community negotiations, which are followed by the signing of social contracts in the presence of the community, local authorities and external witnesses.[17] A gender-specific approach is fully integrated within the initiative to ensure that women participate in equal numbers and with equal decision-making opportunities in the process. At the onset of the community social contract process, an in-depth analysis of the causes and impacts of the conflict is conducted, as well as an analysis of existing traditional responses to conflict. The community dialogue and negotiations bring community members of different ethnicities and groups together to talk through the issue in question and listen to

testimonies, allowing people to admit to their wrongdoing and ask for forgiveness. Upon mutual agreement within the community, social contracts are developed and signed and a peace committee is elected to ensure that the social contract is respected.

The peace committees in Burundi are democratically elected and include both Hutus and Tutsis, women and men, young people and older community members. 'Peace projects' are identified with the objective of benefiting the whole community and contributing to solidarity. The projects are related either to post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation or to conflict prevention. The whole community is expected to take part in the implementation of each project, and each project is expected to have a rapid and lasting impact: the reconstruction of a bridge, the opening of a school or local road, or the construction of a common mill, grinding or storage facility. The pilot phase of the initiative, which began in 2002, involved almost 200,000 people.

Community exchanges

Fear of 'the other' can be a key barrier to reconciliation among conflicting parties. Negative stereotypes and assumptions—and lack of knowledge or understanding about different groups of people—often foster fear, especially in a context where 'the other' is also 'the enemy.' Therefore, another approach women have used to promote reconciliation among belligerent parties is to promote greater understanding and compassion through community exchange, and thus reduce fear of 'the other.'

For example, in the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians there is fear of 'the other' on both sides. The Israeli organization Coalition of Women for Peace arranged what they call 'Reality Tours' geared toward Israelis (women and men) who are willing to travel to the occupied Palestinian territory and meet Palestinians.[18] Led by trained guides, the tours introduce participants to the social, economic, political and environmental realities of the conflict: checkpoints, refugee camps, the recently erected security barrier. The tour

Rwandan women's group members weaving baskets for income generation, with support from UNIFEM. Recently returned from Tanzania, the former refugees are working to reintegrate into Rwandan society. (Photo: Annalise Moser/UNIFEM)

exposes participants to a reality that most have never witnessed before. Approximately 1,500 Israelis participated in these tours in 2004. In several cases, participants became directly involved in peace activism following the tour, and almost all send friends and family to participate.

Similarly, while tensions were still running high in Georgia, the *Fund Sukhumi* women's organization and the Association of Women of Abkhazia brought women together to talk about security. The events were taped, and videos of the discussions were exchanged over the border. The aim was to get the women to meet, if only virtually, 'the other'—the supposed enemy—in an attempt to reduce tension and fear. Through the exchange of tapes, women from both sides had a chance to 'see' each other and talk about their fears.

UNIFEM supports Women's Peace Caravan in Uganda

In 2006 UNIFEM supported the Women's Peace Coalition to implement a Women's Peace Caravan, carrying the African Women's Peace Torch as part of women's advocacy for peace.[19] The Torch arrived in Kampala and was received by the Speaker and Deputy Speakers of the Ugandan Parliament as a sign of solidarity and commitment to peace. The Women's Peace Caravan then traveled from Kampala to Kitgum, joined in solidarity by women from the region.

Public advocacy for peace

Even as women's voices have frequently been excluded from the public sphere, women's community-based organizations have been extremely successful in challenging this state of affairs and reclaiming public spaces to advocate for peace. Women's networks use public expressions of support for peace to draw attention to important and often neglected aspects of a conflict, and to advocate for conflict prevention or conflict resolution. These initiatives often take the form of regular public events, such as women's peace vigils.

The Blue Ribbon Peace Vigil in Fiji, for example, began in response to the 2000 coup, when the Fiji National Council of Women mobilized a network of women's groups in Suva to gather for a peace and prayer vigil.[20] The peace vigil became a daily, then weekly, event bringing together a multi-ethnic group of women from a variety of CSOs. It supported and strengthened women's roles in mediating between conflicting parties, in communicating and advocating with security forces, and in bringing different communities and groups together to pray for peace and unity in the country.

3. Increasing access to justice

Women often face enormous barriers to accessing justice in the aftermath of armed conflict. This may be because legal services have simply not yet been restored; because patriarchal attitudes and structures actively exclude women from traditional justice systems; or due to a lack of women-friendly legal services. Successful community-based initiatives that have facilitated women's access to justice in post-conflict settings include gender-sensitizing traditional justice mechanisms, providing community-based legal support, and working with the police at the community level.

Traditional justice systems

Women are often excluded from traditional justice systems. This is because in many communities women have both historically been excluded from traditional decision-making structures in general and faced discrimination in the context of traditional justice mechanisms in particular. As a result, traditional justice mechanisms may hinder women from testifying or may not recognize crimes of gender-based violence as punishable offenses.

Rwandan *Gacaca* courts represent an important traditional dispute-resolution and reconciliation mechanism, and significant support has been devoted to empowering women to contribute to this mechanism.[21] The *Gacaca* courts are community-level courts where victims, perpetrators and the public gather to hear testimony concerning crimes committed during the genocide of 1994. They have proved to be an effective tool within the context of a justice system overwhelmed by the scale and enormity of the crimes committed during the Rwandan genocide. UNI-

FEM and the Rwandan women's organization Pro-Femmes/*Twese Hamwe*, have supported efforts to maximize women's participation through advocacy regarding the integration of a gender perspective in implementating *Gacaca* law; awareness-raising sessions for 100,000 women leaders, local government representatives and persons in prisons; and training sessions for female judges. These efforts have yielded notable results, with women participating meaningfully in the *Gacaca* process as judges (over 30 per cent of elected judges in the *Gacaca* courts are women,)[22] as well as witnesses testifying during *Gacaca* hearings.

There are, however, a number of challenges associated with the *Gacaca* system. While rape and sexual torture are classified as 'category one' crimes, to be dealt with by the regular courts, in order for a case to be categorized, the accusation must be brought before a public hearing. However, women understandably find it difficult to give testimony in public, especially around

GBV crimes. In response to this obstacle, the *Gacaca* law was revised in 2004, so that victims of sexual crimes can present their case in front of one judge, rather than the entire community; it remains to be seen to what extent this provision is implemented in practice.[23] In addition, while women comprise the majority of witnesses for other types of genocide-related crimes, the obligation to testify can be a source of tension. For example, if a woman's husband committed a crime during the genocide, the wife may be exposed to strong pressure from her in-laws not to testify. This pressure is often compounded by the fact that in many cases women are dependent on their husband's family for economic support.[24]

Community-based legal support

In many cases, the reason for impunity for violent crimes against women is not a lack of laws that address SGBV, but rather the failure to implement those laws. The failure of implementation is linked to barriers such as legal institutions' resistance to prosecuting SGBV cases and lack of knowledge about legal rights.

A particularly innovative approach to address these issues is that of the American Refugee Committee (ARC) Legal Aid Programme in Guinea, which operates a legal aid clinic.[25] The clinic runs an education programme targeting refugees, community leaders, government and non-governmental aid workers, as well as United Nations employees, physical and mental health care providers, bar owners, hotel owners, video club owners, law enforcement personnel and Guinean officials charged with the responsibility to protect. The programme disseminates information about the clinic's services, the substance of the laws regarding SGBV and the penalties associated with violation of these laws. The programme also strives to educate refugees on their rights while aiming to deter would-be offenders. Among the services provided by the clinic are legal advice and representation to survivors of violence, which enables:

» Punishment of those who engage in criminal activities;

» Protection and restitution for survivors;

» Deterrence of others who might engage in similar acts; and

» A visible, reliable and effective avenue of recourse for women.

By filing cases, the clinic promotes the enforcement and rule of law within the Guinean legal system.

Women's group in northern Uganda. Their village is the site of a massacre that killed many community and family members. (Photo: Annalise Moser/UNIFEM)

Working with the police

Frequently, women survivors of SGBV are unwilling and unable to report the crimes to the police. One initiative aiming to overcome this barrier has been the establishment of specialized police units to deal with SGBV.

The Sierra Leone Police, for example, have established Family Support Units (FSU) with specially trained male and female officers dedicated to working with survivors of rape, sexual abuse, domestic violence and trafficking.[26] Located in the main police stations across the country, the FSUs are supposed to provide compassionate, humane, and appropriate assistance. The FSUs have established referral services for free medical care and legal assistance and engage in extensive public awareness-raising efforts, especially on the topics of sexual violence, domestic violence, HIV/AIDS, trafficking and female genital mutilation.

In the past, Sierra Leonean women rarely reported such crimes to the police. The FSUs, however, have been effective in enabling and encouraging women to report cases of SGBV. In 2003, FSUs received and investigated 3,121 reports of sexual and physical violence, a significant increase over reporting in previous years. This rise in the number of reported cases is seen as a result of increased public awareness and public confidence in the FSUs.[27] Furthermore, an assessment of the FSUs by the United Nations Children's Fund found that the stigma associated with sexual exploitation and abuse has diminished, and people are more aware of the support services available.

4. Access to support services

In post-conflict settings, women's access to support services can be severely constrained. The health infrastructure of a country, including health clinics, may have been destroyed; personnel may have been displaced; and materials may have been lost. The lack of access to services is often exacerbated by the fact that women have significant needs for support as a consequence of their experiences during armed conflict—especially with regard to sexual violence. At the same time, women are affected by multiple issues: Both armed conflict and SGBV affect women's physical and psychological health, their legal rights and their capacity to earn an income. In response to these challenges, many initiatives that aim to increase women's access to support services use a multisectoral approach; the innovations are in the particular combinations of services and sectors.

Multisectoral support to women in post-conflict contexts

Female-headed households face particular challenges. One support-services programme targets widows in conflict-affected regions of Nigeria. The Women for Women International programme enrolls widows in a one-year holistic programme, during which they receive psychological counselling, financial assistance (which gives them the freedom to purchase basic goods, start a small business or send their children to school) and job skills training. Rights awareness and leadership education classes are given once a week. The skills and awareness that women have learned in these sessions have led to strong women's networks and increased participation in political advocacy, including the successful contesting, via traditional rulers, of local inheritance customs that discriminate against widows. The programme also engages men—notably traditional rulers, government officials, religious leaders and businessmen—in gender-sensitivity workshops. There is evidence that many of these men now not only advocate to bring an end to gender discrimination in their own homes, but also share what they have learned with other community members. These combined approaches contribute to improved peacebuilding capacity for women.[28]

Multisectoral support to survivors of SGBV

Many programmes that increase access to support for survivors of SGBV combine the elements of medical services, psychosocial counselling and legal support. The ARC Community Safety Initiative in Guinea uses a comprehensive multisectoral approach in its efforts to prevent and respond to gender-based violence among Albadaria refugees.[31] Components include:

» Skills-building and income-generation activities, which aim to minimize women's vulnerability to exploitation by promoting economic self-sufficiency;

» Training grants, which provide vocational training and life skills classes on leadership, decision-making and basic health, while

academic scholarships are provided to girls who are attending school but are at particular risk of dropping out;

» 'Entrepreneurial assistance,' which provides training in business management along with a package of materials given at the close of training so that beneficiaries are enabled to start up a business using their new skills;

» Alternatives for commercial sex workers, which include vocational skills training and a monthly stipend to allow participants to focus on their training and not have to seek alternative income sources, along with reproductive health education and medical testing. Upon graduation, participants receive a package of materials with which to start their own businesses;

» Medical case management, which aims to increase the access and quality of care available to survivors of SGBV and other highly vulnerable women, providing advocacy and support for them within the health system;

» SGBV awareness trainings tailored to specific groups—such as security forces, male NGO workers, drivers, health workers, teenage boys and vulnerable girls and women— which increase the ability of these groups to respond appropriately to SGBV cases and prevent sexual exploitation;

» 'Prevention Grants,' which are in-kind grants awarded to grassroots community groups committed to addressing SGBV issues through culturally appropriate means, such as drama, dance, music and debates; and

» The distribution of kerosene lanterns to refugee households and booths that house new arrivals, as one way to address security concerns.

A comprehensive manual describing multisectoral approaches to prevention and response to SGBV is available.[32]

5. Awareness raising and attitudinal change

Two important challenges to gender-sensitive conflict resolution are the lack of access to information and entrenched gender biases in social attitudes. Many community members—both men and women—may be unaware of the gender dimensions of conflict, women's human rights and SGBV violations, or may be unaware that they have access to conflict-prevention activities. This lack of awareness can contribute to attitudes that enable both conflict and SGBV.

A safe house, home to six women and girls in Timor Leste. (Annalise Moser/UNIFEM)

Increasing access to information and changing attitudes

Communication initiatives are often among the most effective ways to enhance access to information and to change attitudes and behaviours towards gender-sensitive conflict resolution and combating SGBV. While radio and theatre have been used to this end for several years, new and innovative uses for these media are currently being explored. Incorporating listening groups or feedback discussions, for example, is crucial for reinforcing messages and actively involving the community, enabling participants to represent their views, identify common concerns and seek solutions that emerge from within the community. Women often have even more difficulty than men in gaining access to what little information there is about peacebuilding and security.

Radio has proved to be an effective communication method for reaching women, especially among illiterate audiences. In Nepal, for example, Equal Access, in partnership with General Welfare Prathistan, trained rural women as community radio reporters. As reporters, these women collected stories from other rural women to create a radio programme entitled 'Changing our World,' covered issues relating to women's human rights, peacebuilding, and violence against women and reached two million listeners. As part of this project, 60 community listener groups were set up to encourage grassroots leadership and changes in attitudes and behavior.

The project not only increased the awareness of community members regarding violence against women, but also served as a catalyst for actual changes in attitudes and behaviours: after the programmes aired, there was a reduction of incidents of domestic violence in the communities and an increased reporting of incidents of violence to authorities. The project also created a pool of qualified and motivated women reporters.[34]

Community involvement can improve support service programmes

The extent of community involvement in a project has a critical impact on its success. One multisectoral project on SGBV within refugee camps in Tanzania found that success in fighting SGBV depended on the degree to which both men and women participated in the design and implementation of the programme.[29] Similarly, in its implementation of a project to support girls and women in Sierra Leone, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) found that extending the benefits of a project to the community and involving them in planning and implementation increased local support for the project and encouraged its sustainability.[30] Host communities were sensitized to issues such as gender equality, and they were involved in project planning and implementation: for example, community members contributed local building materials for project structures, distributed condoms and served as peer mobilizers in discouraging violence against women, child abuse and commercial sex. Free health and education services for the host community also encouraged their support of the project.

Similarly, supported by the International Women's Development Agency, Women's Action for Change in Fiji uses theatre as a tool in challenging sexist attitudes and violence against women, against the backdrop of ethnic tensions of Fiji.[35] The play *Another Way*, for example, concerns a young couple: Priya, from a working class Indo-Fijian family and Jerry, an indigenous Fijian.

Priya's family expects her to marry an Indian man they have chosen, and the pressure and violence that accompany the resulting family conflict eventually lead her to end her life. The play was performed from 2005 to 2006 for approximately 2,000 people, in secondary schools and community centers in marginalized regions. Following each performance, the 'playback' method was used to explore issues raised in the play, inviting the audience to discuss alternate responses and to see that there is indeed 'another way.' Select male and female audience members

then took part in further theatre workshops and received training in non-violent conflict-resolution skills. The aim was to develop networks of diverse young men and women who have the skills and confidence to become community leaders. Indeed, several of the young people involved have since become involved in conflict mediation in their families and communities.[36]

Challenging local power structures and men's behaviors

Even when women face considerable social exclusion at the community level, they can be successful in challenging local power structures and men's behaviors to prevent SGBV.

The women's anti-alcohol movement in Andhra Pradesh, India, was started and sustained by poor, low-caste, often agricultural working women in response to the violence experienced at the hands of alcoholic men. Men's drinking also exacerbated family poverty through the squandering of male earnings on alcohol.[37] The women invoked the support of priests, pressuring men into taking an oath of abstinence at the temples and involving the temples in monitoring alcohol abuse. Women also prevented the men in the community from consuming alcohol by using community-based sanctions on men who drank, including strategies such as parad-

ing the drunk men around the community, refusing to give them food, and shaving off their hair. They stopped liquor sales by destroying shops and dens; countered the joint attacks of drunken men, police and thugs; and demanded an end to the practice of paying male labour in the form of liquor. The movement was successful in forcing the Andhra Pradesh state government to ban the sale of arrack (liquor) in October 1993 (this prohibition was subsequently revoked).

Another example is the 'Imam Initiative' of the Noor Education Centre, an NGO in Jalalabad, Afghanistan. The initiative addresses religion, custom and culture as tools for attitudinal change.[38] Discussions are held with religious leaders on issues such as women and Islam, sharia law and the Koran. Human rights issues are subsequently introduced. This initiative has seen some success in changing ideas through religion, especially, when imams use Friday prayers as a venue to discuss women's issues.
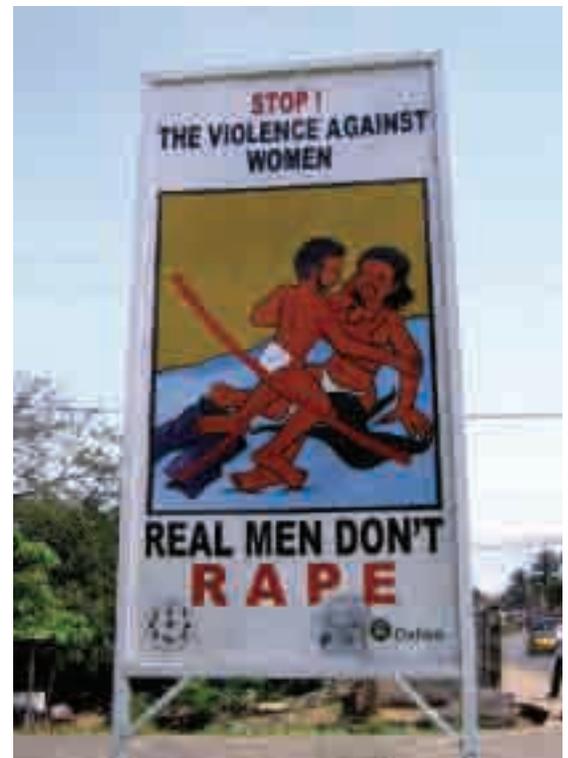
Communications materials addressing violence against women, such as this billboard, are common in Liberia. (Photo: Annalise Moser/UNIFEM)

6. Conflict-monitoring systems

Frequently, gender issues including SGBV are not considered to be important warning signs of conflict, and women are often excluded from participating in community-based decision-making around peacebuilding processes. However, initiatives that use a gender-sensitive approach in early warning and monitoring of conflict can also contribute to SGBV prevention and women's peacebuilding. Conflict analysis, monitoring, and early warning and response are all significantly enhanced when a gender-sensitive approach is applied, because aspects of conflict that might not otherwise be detected are exposed when women's experience of conflict is addressed. In particular, it is crucial to consider the ways in which information about both men and women, as well as information from both men and women can be used to prevent conflict and build peace in a gender-sensitive way.

In 2004-2006, UNIFEM conducted three pilot projects on gender-sensitive conflict monitoring, in Colombia, the Ferghana Valley, and the Solomon Islands[39].

In the Solomon Islands, UNIFEM:[40]

» Trained 20 male and female volunteers from five conflict-prone communities;

» Developed a set of gender-sensitive indicators of conflict and peace;

» Collected data at the community and national levels; and

» Disseminated the data among communities, civil society, Government and donors.

The system became a social resource for the prevention of conflict. The use of gender-sensitive indicators (such as levels of domestic violence and rape, and women's levels of fear in going to markets) served to legitimize attention to gender issues and SGBV as signals of impending conflict and social dislocation. This combined with working with women and men from the communities themselves empowered women to engage—and be seen as legitimate—in community decision-making, as well as discussion and planning around community conflict prevention and peacebuilding strategies. It also proved successful as a means of involving men and raising their awareness of the consequences of SGBV; as a result, several male participants became strong community advocates for women in SGVB cases.

7. Making communities safer

The physical environment of communities can, sometimes unintentionally, make women more vulnerable to violence. For example, the design of the physical space can make activities such as using latrines or walking after dark unsafe for women. Aspects of community life, such as the proliferation of small arms in communities in the aftermath of conflict, can again compromise women's safety. Effective means of making communities safer include enabling women to better protect themselves from violence and reducing the opportunities for perpetrators to commit acts of violence against women.

Reducing small arms and light weapons (SALW)

The proliferation of small arms in communities renders both public and private space unsafe for women. Small arms and light weapons facilitate sexual violence against women during times of armed conflict, and their widespread presence even after a ceasefire or peace agreement has been put in place continues to make women more vulnerable to rape and domestic violence.[41] Effective disarmament strategies at the community level are therefore crucial for improving women's physical security.

One successful documented case of women's role in disarmament is the 'Weapons for Development' programme initiated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs (DDA) in Albania.[42] Women went door-to-door in their communities to raise awareness about the danger of small arms; at the same time, they collected survey information on disarmament, large numbers of weapons and a great deal of ammunition.

Women's safety audits

UN-Habitat's Safer Cities programme uses 'Women's Safety Audits' to identify spaces where women feel unsafe. This information is incorporated into recommendations to address the problems identified and thereby increase women's safety.[43]

In Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, community members used the audit to develop and implement an environment cleaning scheme, where women participate in cutting hedges and clearing open spaces, cemetery sites and footpaths to reduce the number of places where criminals might be able to hide.

In addition, they implemented a campaign to promote better lighting of public spaces, encouraging each household to put up a bulb outside their verandas to light the surroundings. Similar lighting campaigns have been directed towards industry owners.

The programme comprised:

» A workshop on women's role in weapons collection, providing training to NGOs and political representatives to develop strategies for weapons collection;

» Capacity-building workshops for civil society leaders;

» A conference bringing together 200 women from the community around the theme, 'Women of Diber Say No to the Guns, Yes to Life and Development'; and

» Posters and radio programmes raising awareness of women's roles in disarmament.

Community safety initiatives

Women's safety and, conversely, their vulnerability to violence are often determined by the physical environment where they live, which determines the extent to which women can move about and actively engage in the daily life of their communities outside the home.

In the South African township of Khayelitsha, the German Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the City of Cape Town have designed an innovative project entitled 'Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading.' This project found that women were particularly vulnerable to high levels of violence in open fields, narrow lanes, empty market stalls and communal toilets.[44] In response, the following strategies for reducing violence against women were identified:

» Improved street lighting and visibility;

» A more widespread and functional telephone system;

» Market stalls locked at night;

» More visible police patrolling and neighborhood watches;

» Sewers installed and outdoor toilets phased out;

» Communal sanitary facilities supervised.

Conclusion

Through the diverse examples of women's action in communities discussed in this paper, a number of common threads emerge. In some cases, women's initiatives are challenging and transforming the nature of dominant institutions and identities. In India, women's resistance challenged men's authority and caused a shift in the culture of violent masculinities. Traditional (and often patriarchal) justice mechanisms were transformed in the gender-sensitization of the Gacaca courts in Rwanda, as was the police with the strengthening of the Family Support Units in Sierra Leone. In Burundi, the very nature of the community itself was re-cast through the 'social contracts' initiative: it was no longer defined along ethnic divisions.

Many of the case studies demonstrate a strategic use of stereotyped gender roles. Women in communities choose to use strategies that are readily accessible to them in their daily lives: being present, using silence, public shaming, holding coffee meetings. They also capitalize on the commonly held images of women as peacemakers, as mothers who are both nurturers and arbitrators. In this way, women themselves are appropriating stereotypical gender roles and using them to empower themselves and to strengthen their organizations at the community level.

One salient characteristic of the approaches accessible to women is their informality: many initiatives are small-scale and rely on physical presence or face-to-face contact to build peace and prevent SGBV. Raising awareness and increasing access to information through theatre or community exchanges, making spaces safer through door-to-door neighborhood maintenance programmes or resolving conflict through women's 'peace huts' all illustrate the effectiveness of informal community-led approaches used by women. A related issue is that much of

women's contribution to peace and the prevention of SGBV within communities stems from women's frequent roles as informal community mobilizers and managers. This role is re-cast to focus on peacebuilding and violence reduction within the community.

A final similarity among the examples in this paper is the effort to avoid backlash. Women activists are vulnerable to hostility, especially within the context of patriarchal societies or sensitive post-conflict settings. Various strategies are used to avoid or mitigate potential backlash from community members, from using a poverty reduction justification among the anti-alcohol advocates in India, to incorporating traditional mediation practices in Timor-Leste; and from benefiting the whole community in community safety initiatives, to standing behind traditional gender roles as mothers and peacemakers to gain a legitimate role in local decision-making.

These issues and strategies employed by women point back to the significant obstacles women face when working at the community

level. In many ways, these common threads are direct responses to the need to overcome multiple constraints in order to work effectively. It is crucial not to underestimate the intensity of patriarchy at local levels. Beyond this, other key obstacles involve exclusion from decision-making, lack of access to information, justice and basic services, lack of technical skills, constraints to mobility, risks to physical safety, social resistance and backlash.

Ultimately, women face enormous challenges in translating national and international legal instruments into real rights and concrete changes in their lives at home and in the community. Such national and international agreements filter down to communities only very slowly, but it is vital that they do filter down. Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) has been subject to critiques—particularly with regard to delays in implementation and the ability of information and impact to reach women at the community level. Despite these impediments, women and men in communities do rely on international policy instruments like resolution 1325 (2000). In order for the resolution to be an effective instrument, however, it is vital that women and men work at the community level to build peace and prevent SGBV.

With its mandate to implement resolution 1325 (2000), UNIFEM is directly tackling this challenge as it works to apply the resolution to everyday lives in communities around the world. The DFID-funded 'Supporting Women's Engagement in Peacebuilding and Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict: Community-Led Approaches' programme is supporting initiatives like the ones described in this paper, across the six very different contexts of Afghanistan, Haiti, Liberia, Rwanda, Timor-Leste and Uganda. The programme has a number of key elements which are common to all six countries, as well as context-specific elements responding to particular circumstances, as outlined in Table 2.

This programme is inspired in part by the types of initiatives presented in this paper, and by the conviction that change must happen at the community level. UNIFEM and its partners hope that this programme will help identify effective means of addressing the array of challenges faced by women at the community level, and discover some of the successful strategies that can embrace women's engagement and protect women's rights in different post-conflict contexts.

Table 2. Initiatives supported by the DFID-funded UNIFEM programme, 'Supporting Women's Engagement in Peacebuilding and Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict,' by location

Type of initiative	Location
Consultations with women at community level on issues of peace consolidation, disarmament, peacebuilding, and preventing SGBV	All project countries
Working to make community-based peacebuilding institutions and local authorities	All project countries
Supporting the police and members of the judicial system to better prevent and respond to SGBV, including improved access to justice, reporting, recording and prosecution of cases	All project countries
Improving support services for women survivors of SGBV, through access to referral systems, medical and psychosocial, or access to protected spaces such as transitional houses and shelters	All project countries
Awareness-raising on women's rights in relation to SGBV, national SGBV legislation, and access to support services for survivors	All project countries
Support for efforts to ensure that sexual violence is recognized as a crime in post-conflict justice and reconciliation mechanisms	Afghanistan, Liberia, Uganda
Training women in gender analysis of conflict and peace and in negotiation and communication skills so as to improve their impact on peace and conflict mitigation	Afghanistan, Haiti, Timor Leste, Uganda
Training members of customary institutions to apply international human rights standards to SGBV cases	Liberia, Rwanda, Uganda
Supporting land management and administrative institutions to ensure a gender perspective in restitution of property rights and compensation	Timor Leste, Uganda
Supporting the emergence of peaceful expressions of masculinity	Afghanistan, Haiti
Supporting livelihood programmes for women survivors of SGBV to reduce their vulnerability and break the cycle of violence	Timor Leste
Supporting the engagement of women from communities in formal peace negotiations	Afghanistan, Uganda
Establishing Trust Funds to provide small grants to innovative community-led peacebuilding and SGBV prevention initiatives	Afghanistan, Haiti
Promoting women's engagement in reconciliation mechanisms, as well as ensuring those mechanisms are responsive to women's concerns	Liberia, Rwanda

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