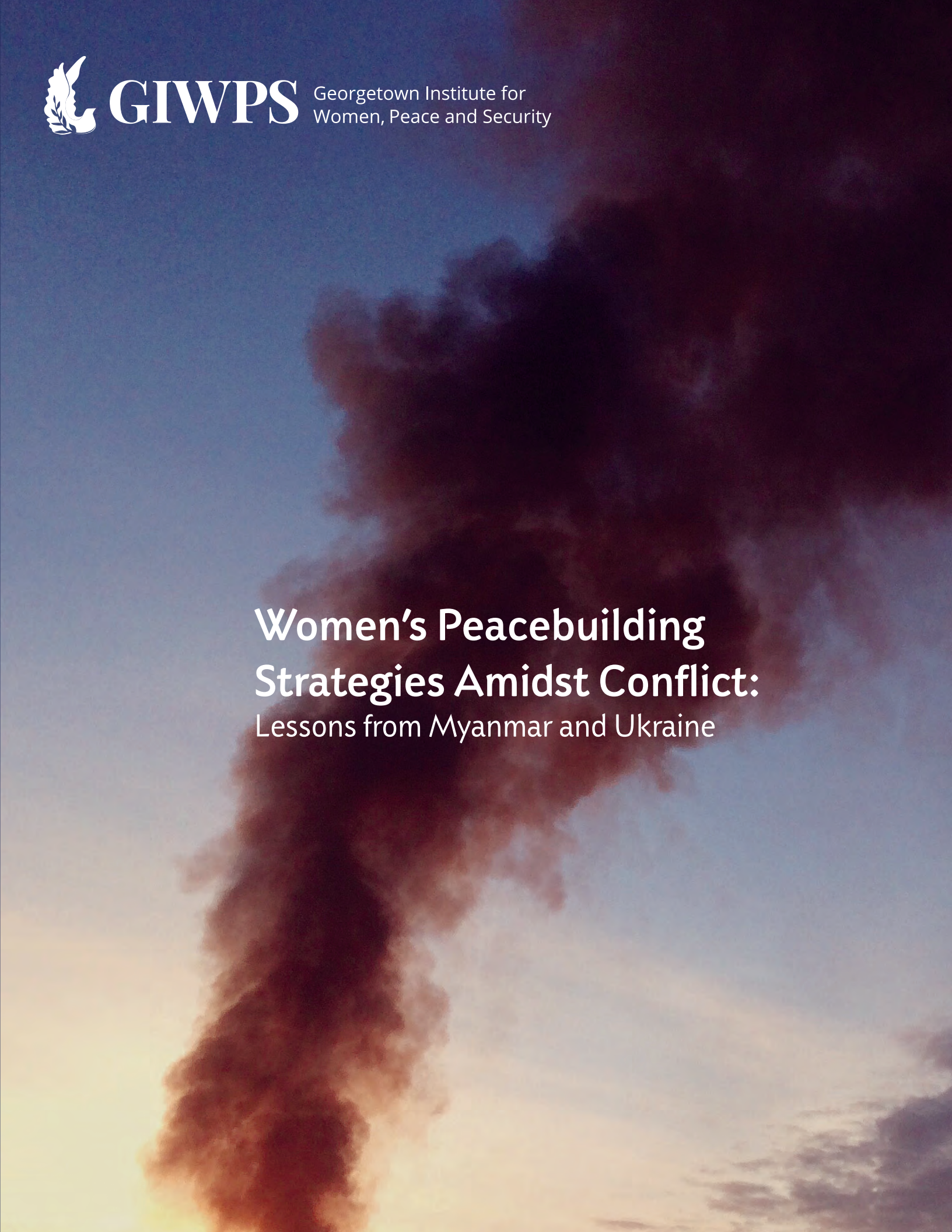

GIWPS Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security

Women's Peacebuilding Strategies Amidst Conflict:

Lessons from Myanmar and Ukraine

Authors

Roslyn Warren (Research Partnerships Manager, GIWPS)
Anna Applebaum (Hillary Rodham Clinton Research Fellow, GIWPS)
Holly Fuhrman (Hillary Rodham Clinton Law Fellow, GIWPS)
Briana Mawby (Hillary Rodham Clinton Research Fellow, GIWPS)

Expert Advisers

Ambassador Melanne Verveer (Executive Director, GIWPS)
Dr. Jeni Klugman (Managing Director, GIWPS)

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The Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security

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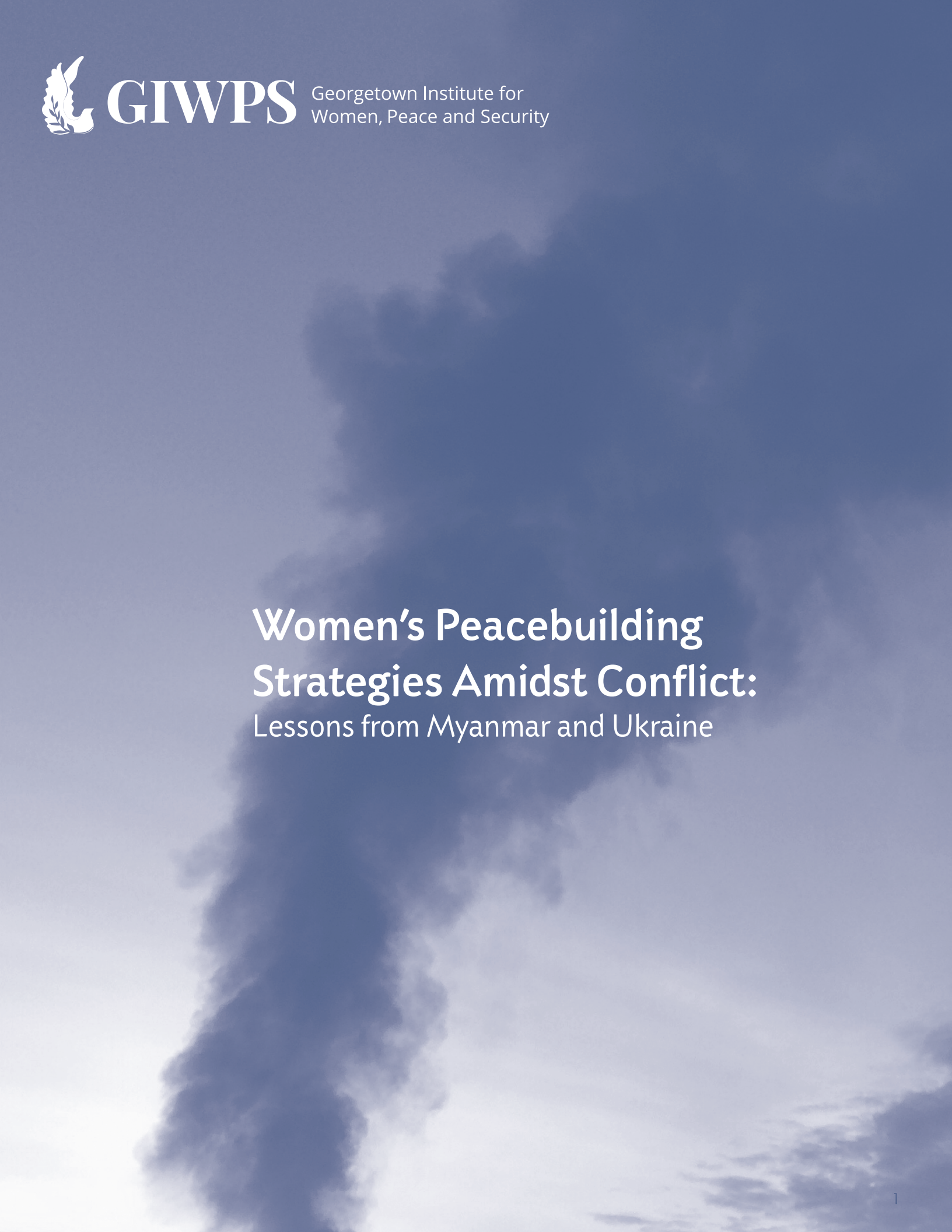

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List of Acronyms

All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF)

Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process (AGIPP)

CEDAW Action Myanmar (CAM)

CEDAW General Recommendation 30 (GR30)

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

Department of Social Welfare (DSW)

Donetsk People's Republic (DPR)

EAO Non-Signatories (EAO-NS)

EAO Signatories (EAO-S)

Equal Opportunities Caucus (EOC, or Caucus)

Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs)

European Union (EU)

Gender Equality Network (GEN)

Internally Displaced Person (IDP)

International Criminal Court (ICC)

Joint Conference Organizing Committee (JCOC)

Joint Implementation Coordination Meeting (JICM)

Joint Monitoring Committee at the local-level (JMC-L)

Joint Monitoring Committee at the state-level (JMC-S)

Joint Monitoring Committee at the union-level (JMC-U)

Joint Monitoring Committees (JMCs)

Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP)

Karenni National Union (KNU)

Karenni National Women's Organization (KNWO)

Kuki Women's Human Rights Organization (KWHRO)

Luhansk People's Republic (LPR)

Myanmar Institute for Gender Studies (MIGS)

Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs (MNCWA)

National Action Plans (NAPs)

National League for Democracy (NLD)

National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (NSPAW)

Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA)

Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

Prevention and Protection of Violence Against Women (PoVAW)

Public Council on Gender (PCG)

Sex- and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)

Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN)

Tavoyan Women's Union (TWU)

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Ukraine Crisis Media Center (UCMC)

Ukraine Women's Fund (UWF)

Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC)

Union Peacemaking Working Committee (UPWC)

United Nations (UN)

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR)

Women, Peace and Security (WPS)

Women and Peace Action Network (WAPAN)

Women's Initiative Network for Peace (WIN-PEACE)

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)

Women's League of Burma (WLB)

Women's Organization Network (WON)

Foreword

The ethnic conflicts in Myanmar and the war in the Donetsk region of Ukraine continue to take a toll on the people of both countries as we publish this report.

Myanmar is home to half a century of internal fighting between the government and multiple armed ethnic groups. Ukraine has faced several years of fighting between Russian supported separatist rebels and government forces. In both Myanmar and Ukraine, violence continues and efforts to negotiate a peace remain difficult.

Women's participation is critical to achieving sustainable peace, and yet women remain underrepresented in peacemaking. This report, made possible through the generosity of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, is a real time analysis of the role of women and women's civil society organizations in building peace in Myanmar and Ukraine. The report's focus is on the approaches that women are using to advance peace and security—as well as women's rights. In particular, it assesses national action plans on women, peace, and security and their utility in these contexts.

Our hope is that this report will illuminate the strategies that have proven most useful to the courageous women and civil society organizations working to build peace amidst conflict. If we know what tools are best advancing women's meaningful participation in peacemaking from experiences in Myanmar and Ukraine, we can apply these lessons without borders, helping to end conflict and build sustainable peace in other cases.

Ambassador Melanne Verveer
Executive Director
Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security

Executive Summary

The women, peace, and security agenda, first articulated in United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 in 2000, seeks to elevate the role of women in conflict management, conflict resolution, and sustainable peace. The agenda can be promoted in various ways, including National Action Plans (NAPs) on women, peace, and security. Almost two decades later, however, women remain grossly underrepresented in peacemaking around the world – the latest United Nations (UN) estimates suggest that between 1992 and 2011, fewer than one in twenty signatories to peace agreements and fewer than one in ten negotiators at peace tables were women. This stands in contrast to the evidence that women's inclusion boosts the probability of an agreement lasting at least two years by 20 percent, and the probability of an agreement lasting at least 15 years by more than one-third.

Based on field interviews with civil society leaders and government officials in Myanmar and Ukraine and a review of the literature, this study examines how women are building peace amidst ongoing conflicts in those countries, with a focus on whether and how they use national plans to advance women's rights. Ukraine adopted its NAP in February 2016. Myanmar does not have a NAP but has the National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (NSPAW), which was adopted in 2013 and is rooted in the 1995 Beijing Platform. Both plans represent a national commitment to advance women and each is grounded in international frameworks.

The study finds that, in both countries, women use a variety of strategies to advance peace and security. While national plans and formal peace processes have had mixed results for women, alternative steps – notably including informal relationships and utilizing other international frameworks and norms – can be highly effective for advancing women's interests. By employing instruments and approaches aligned with their strengths, resources, and goals, women in Myanmar and Ukraine are beginning to overcome their traditional exclusion from decision-making processes. However, much more needs to be done.

Myanmar: Women's Use of International Frameworks to Build Peace

The year 2015 saw a cease-fire between the Myanmar government and multiple armed groups, as well as the rise to power of famed opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, signaling a potential end to a half-century of conflict and dictatorship. The subsequent political dialogue convened divergent stakeholders, including some women and women's civil society organizations (CSOs), who discussed principles to guide Myanmar forward. Yet conflict continues unabated in the northern regions of the country, and cease-fire negotiations have stalled. Most tragically, persecution of the Muslim Rohingya minority has escalated: there have been widespread reports of crimes against humanity – including mass killings, gang rapes, and disappearances – and well over half a million Rohingya have fled Myanmar. Amidst this conflict, women are seeking to overcome barriers to their participation in public life and to address women's needs.

A number of women in Myanmar are active peacebuilders. Many women's CSOs emerged from societal uprisings against the military regime and in areas affected by the conflict. These organizations have since played a direct role in the country's peace process, helping to negotiate some cease-fires, monitoring cease-fire implementation, engaging in political dialogue, and advising peace process stakeholders. Their contributions have led to the inclusion of several gender-friendly provisions in peace-process frameworks, including a 30 percent quota for women's participation in the

political dialogue. In spite of this provision, women's participation has not yet reached this threshold.

Some women have used Myanmar's national plan, known as the NSPAW, to advocate for women's participation in the peace process and advance women's rights. In general, however, women's use of the NSPAW in the context of peace and security has been limited, and the government has not allocated sufficient financial and human resources to implementation. Perhaps unsurprisingly, women at the grassroots level feel disconnected from the NSPAW: Few are aware that it exists, and even fewer were involved in its drafting. Several interviewees expressed the view that the NSPAW is "only on paper." Myanmar's women's movement is diverse in its political and ethnic affiliations, and many activists remain wary of the government while working in their ethnic areas, limiting the attraction of official plans.

More useful to women and women's CSOs are international frameworks, such as the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and UNSCR 1325. CEDAW has provided a platform for women from diverse backgrounds to collaborate on issues common to them, such as safeguarding women against conflict-related sexual violence. Women have also successfully used international and regional norms in their advocacy efforts, appealing to stakeholders' desire to gain allies in the international community or to improve their international reputation.

Women in Myanmar have used back-channel discussions and personal relationships to elevate the voices of other women in the formal peace process. Though still underrepresented, they have made substantial gains in the Civil Society Forum and in social sector discussions of the Panglong Peace Conference, and some women play key advising roles to the ethnic armed organizations that are negotiating peace. Women who are engaged in the formal peace process share information to women in CSOs, enabling them to stay abreast of peace dynamics and to effectively mobilize for women's participation. As Nang Phyu Phyu Linn, secretariat of the Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process (AGIPP), explains, these relationships are crucial to gaining the trust necessary to become part of the peace process. "If we don't know each other, it's very easy to refute our argument. If you have the contact or a good relationship, at least they'll respect us."

Women in Myanmar are engaged in substantial peacebuilding efforts beyond the confines of the formal cease-fire process. Large umbrella organizations, such as AGIPP, monitor women's participation in official peace mechanisms and track discussions with gender implications. Women's CSOs have long collected local data to document the conflict's impact on women and to identify women's needs. For instance, the Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN) uncovered numerous incidents of sexual assault committed by Burmese army troops in Shan State, detailed in the organization's 2002 landmark report, *License to Rape.* Women's CSOs are also engaged in programs to build the capacity of individual women and women's organizations, including educating women about the peace process, strengthening women's negotiation skills, and empowering them to be their own advocates.

Ukraine: Women's Approaches to Peacemaking Beyond the Formal Process

Ukraine has faced conflict since 2013, when massive protests, called the Euromaidan, erupted over the government's rejection of a European Union (EU) trade agreement and concerns of corruption and weakening ties to Europe, which prompted president Viktor Yanukovich to flee. Shortly thereafter, Russia seized the Crimean Peninsula, and a Russia-backed uprising broke out in the eastern Donbas region. During the Euromaidan revolution and the subsequent fighting, women made some notable gains in the political sphere and security sector; however, many problems faced by women – including sexual and gender-based violence and economic insecurity – have been exacerbated by the conflict and subsequent displacement.

Women helped lead the Euromaidan, and their participation in the revolution opened the door for more women in the national

parliament. The Equal Opportunities Caucus (EOC) – a parliamentary working group that advocates for gender equality through legislative reform – has provided a cross-party platform for women's CSOs to amplify their voices and has created opportunities for collaboration between government and CSOs. Most notable is the adoption of Ukraine's NAP in 2016, the first such NAP to be adopted in the midst of armed conflict.

Ukraine's NAP has been a useful tool for cooperation between the government and civil society. Women use the NAP to advocate for women's participation in political and security institutions. The NAP's most frequently cited success has been the opening of military positions to women, and government officials have used the NAP to inform such activities as collecting data on violence against women, providing gender-related training, and launching public information campaigns about gender equality. The NAP has also been used to guide the creation of more detailed plans for women, peace, and security in the Ministries, particularly in Defense and Internal Affairs, as well as in local administrations in conflict areas. Advocates are working to ensure more effective coordination of the NAP within and among the Ministries.

Despite these gains, however, it can be challenging to utilize the NAP. The costs of the conflict have squeezed government funding for other activities, including NAP implementation. Therefore, women in Ukraine use a broader range of tools to advance their goals of participation and protection. In particular, women's groups have leveraged the government's desire to integrate with the EU to advocate for standards in line with European gender equality policies. Women have championed national frameworks that support human rights, including the National Human Rights Strategy and accompanying Action Plan, which are better known than the NAP and have led women activists to collaborate with a larger spectrum of civil society groups. And women have been pushing parliament to ratify the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, though without success to date.

The official peace process lacks a formal mechanism for civil society participation, and women's access to the process is limited. Nevertheless, women in Ukraine have led several informal peacebuilding efforts, hosting and participating in dialogues at the local, national, and international levels. For example, the Regional Women's Dialogue Platform on UNSCR 1325 brings together women civil society leaders in Ukraine and Russia, as well as other countries in the region, which seek to bridge cultural divides between east and west while creating platforms to exchange peacebuilding practices.

Women's CSOs have been working to relieve the immediate effects of conflict on women in the country. Some organizations have collected data related to women's needs in conflict, including around sexual and gender-based violence and internal displacement, thereby informing policymakers and service providers on critical needs. Women are also leading humanitarian aid and longer-term service provision in conflict areas, stepping up to help while state resources are diverted to the war effort. As Kateryna Levchenko, director of La Strada notes: The role of women in conflict resolution has been instrumental for more effective conflict resolution."

Broader Implications of the Findings

In both Myanmar and Ukraine, broad-based and inclusive peace is still a work in progress. Amidst these challenges, women are developing effective strategies to participate in peace and security mechanisms and to advance women's rights.

Several findings emerge from both Myanmar and Ukraine, though the conflicts are very different, that have broader relevance for policymakers and practitioners seeking to advance women's rights amidst ongoing conflict:

1. **Women can leverage regional and international standards and norms to advocate for women's rights and peace.** This is evident in Myanmar, where women promote frameworks such as CEDAW, UNSCR 1325, and the Beijing Platform for Action. In Ukraine, women additionally promote standards in line with EU gender quality policies as a way for peace process stakeholders to improve their international reputation.

2. **Women's formal inclusion in peace and political processes can create broader opportunities for women's civil society organizations to amplify their voices in the midst of conflict.** In both Myanmar and Ukraine, women insiders – those involved in official government roles or formal peace processes – provide an agenda for women's civil society organizations.

3. **National plans to advance gender equality need to be better grounded in the decentralized nature of governance, including the delegation of responsibilities, resourcing, and accountability arrangements.** Decentralization can be a way to more effectively manage tensions and advance peace while creating opportunities for women at the grassroots level.

Overall, women's efforts to advance peace amidst conflict in Myanmar and Ukraine face the systemic challenges that women commonly face around the world. Globally, women are underrepresented in formal peace processes, and countries face major resource constraints in implementing national plans on women's advancement. Yet women's experiences in these two countries reveal new insights into the ways that women have adapted their strategies to advance peace and gender equality, as well as the ways in which the international community might more effectively support their work.

Introduction and Motivation

Women play important roles in building peace and advancing security, yet they remain underrepresented in official peacemaking processes.[1] This report offers a unique look into how women build peace amidst armed conflict. It builds on Institute research, *Women Leading Peace*, and investigates two cases – Myanmar and Ukraine – where conflict is ongoing and peace is currently being negotiated.[2]

This study illuminates strategies to advance women's rights in the context of conflict, with a focus on national plans. Based on a review of the literature and field research conducted in late 2016, the two case studies illustrate both the potential and barriers to utilizing national plans, and the other types of tools women's groups use to promote the same goals. This allows lessons to be drawn more broadly for supporting women building peace in conflict settings.

The ongoing conflicts in Myanmar and Ukraine are both distinct and complex. The conflict in eastern Ukraine has generated a major humanitarian crisis and disrupted the functioning of the state; a foreign-occupied peninsula further threatens the country's sovereignty. After decades of military rule, Myanmar's government faces the challenge of unifying dozens of ethnic groups, 16 of which have associated armed organizations seeking varied levels of autonomy from the state. A confluence of actors – including the military, the government, ethnic armed organizations (EAOs), and the international community – has yielded a web of intersecting peace dialogues, while the conflict intensifies in the northern region.

Governments around the world have long committed to safeguarding and promoting women's rights. Three international frameworks are especially relevant to this goal. In 1979 the United Nations General Assembly adopted CEDAW, which established a global bill of rights for women and an agenda to guarantee the exercise of those rights.[3] In 1995, at the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace, 189 states signed the Beijing Platform for Action and committed to empower women and address their needs across 12 critical areas of concern,[4] including armed conflict.[5]

In 2000, UNSCR 1325 and several subsequent resolutions[6] on women, peace and security (WPS) articulated the importance of incorporating women and their experiences in prevention, participation, protection, and relief and recovery,[7] and in all areas of decision-making, including local, state, regional, and international levels. Many states – 67 to date[8] – have created 1,325 NAPs to articulate their commitment and to implement corresponding policy and programming at national and local levels.[9]

Both Myanmar and Ukraine have national plans to advance women. Ukraine adopted its NAP in February 2016. Myanmar does not have a NAP; however, the NSPAW, adopted in 2013, is rooted in the 1995 Beijing Platform. These plans represent a national commitment to advance women, and each is grounded in international frameworks.

This study is structured as follows. Section 2 lays out the study's approach and methods, followed by a review of key findings of literature in section 3. Sections 4 and 5 investigate the cases of Myanmar and Ukraine in detail, and the final section concludes.

Approach and Methods

In the context of ongoing conflicts in Myanmar and Ukraine, this study addresses three broad questions: How do women seek to contribute to peace? How do they use national plans, and what are the barriers to doing so? What other tools do they use for women's advancement in the context of conflict?

The four-step research process is outlined below, with details in the appendix.[10]

A comprehensive literature review analyzed 144 sources identified using Boolean search terms (in English), selected on the basis of relevance and methodological rigor.

Participant mapping used search terms in international and national news sources, international think tank and NGO reports, as well as consultations with subject matter experts. An effort was made to include women from diverse social, ethnic, and political groups in both contexts.

The research team conducted semistructured interviews in Kyiv, Ukraine (November 2016), and Yangon, Myanmar (December 2016). During the two-week field visits, 50 individuals were interviewed in Ukraine and 33 in Myanmar. In around 10 cases, interviews were conducted via phone or Skype to reach participants in areas where the team could not travel.

A grounded coding methodology was used to analyze the primary data collected. Codes were drawn directly from each interview transcript, from which key themes emerged.

Literature Review: National Plans and Women's Peacebuilding

The literature generally evaluates the success of individual NAPs in post-conflict settings, determined by whether the NAP meets or falls short of its target indicators in the midst of building or sustaining peace. The majority of studies has focused on stable or post-conflict settings,[11] rather than places where conflict is ongoing.[12] Studies addressing NAPs in conflict contexts, such as the Colombia and Israel-Palestinian conflicts, highlight the challenges that instability and insecurity pose for women participating in decision-making processes, accessing resources, and making their voices heard.[13]

The authors identified 144 studies that have specifically reviewed NAPs as well as their implementation (see appendix A.1). These include content analyses of the plans[14] as well as reviews of government actions to operationalize the plans' commitments.[15]

Generally, NAPs fall into two broad categories: internally or externally facing. The former includes such actions as reforming military recruitment or developing inclusive mechanisms and tend to characterize NAPs in conflict-affected states, like Colombia, the Philippines, Liberia, and Nigeria.[16] The latter has been adopted by developed countries such as Sweden, Finland, and the United States.[17]

Nearly two decades after the adoption of UNSCR 1325, the literature has shifted from *why* such a resolution matters[18] to *how* it should be implemented.[19] Topics that have been addressed include implementing gender-sensitive policy and programming,[20] budgeting,[21] and evaluation and monitoring mechanisms.[22] Popovic, for example, examines resource needs for national implementation, finding that the Philippines was the only developing country that had identified internal resources for NAP implementation.[23] Odanovic analyzes monitoring mechanisms for CSOs in European countries, including the United Kingdom, Finland, and Serbia, and concludes that meaningful CSO consultations with government are virtually nonexistent.[24] Studies that focus on NAPs have reviewed legislation, participation numbers, programmatic efforts, and surveys to measure state effectiveness.[25] These studies have been focused on specific national issues with 1325 and NAP implementation. For instance, Jovanović, Subotić, Zeba, and Beloś highlight the challenges that the lack of democratic continuity in Serbia creates for NAP implementation,[26] Hinds and McMinn highlight the need for accountability in Ireland,[27] and Dhlamini, Carmichael, and Croll note the roles that government, civil society, and private-sector actors must play in collaboration for successful implementation in South Africa.[28] Few studies rely on in-depth interviews to inform readings.

Much of the literature promotes civil society involvement in creating, implementing, and evaluating national plans as a best practice,[29] recommending such actions as designating a point person to facilitate communication between government and civil society.[30] The few studies that have focused specifically on how women in civil society participate in high-level peacemaking argue that more powerful policy tools and monitoring and evaluation are necessary for effective gender mainstreaming.[31] With some notable exceptions, such as Amling and O'Reilly's review of four NAP development processes,[32] few studies have included perspectives from women in civil society.[33]

Studies that have quantitatively evaluated progress in implementation typically measure women's participation in various government departments, the security sector, peacekeeping, and/or peacebuilding; the number of gender-sensitive laws adopted or trainings conducted; rates of reporting and investigation for sex- and gender-based violence (SGBV) cases; the number of CSOs working with UNSCR 1325 committees; and gender-based analyses of government program financing.[34] These studies usefully evaluate the progress (or lack thereof) of individual NAPs based on NAP indicators. However, these studies generally do not examine factors enabling or blocking implementation.

Several studies, including Anderlini, the Australian National University Gender Institute, Lippai and Young, and Cabrera-Balleza, recommend specific measures to improve women's participation in peace processes, CSO monitoring practices, or other efforts to support the WPS agenda.[35] Bjelos and Skrozza recommend actions specifically for Serbia's NAP, including the development of plans to operationalize the NAP in each government ministry.[36] The Irish Joint Consortium on Gender-Based Violence, Steinberg, and the Civil Society Advisory Group to the UN on WPS make several general recommendations for creating effective national plans, namely, creating comprehensive NAPs that address a full range of women's concerns, prioritizing protection from sexual violence, providing flexible funding, encouraging partnerships and comparisons between countries implementing NAPs, and creating supportive national policies.[37]

The current study adds to the existing literature through in-depth interviews that cast light on how women contribute to peace while advancing women's rights in Myanmar and Ukraine, two countries experiencing ongoing conflict. Focusing on the extent to which national plans help to meet women's needs and what other tools women find effective to advancing women's rights, the case studies illustrate the utility of national plans to women working in conflict settings. In answering these questions, this study aims to provide useful guidance for policymakers and practitioners who seek to advance women's peacebuilding efforts in conflict settings.

Myanmar: Women's Use of International Frameworks to Build Peace

Myanmar is in the midst of transition. The rise to power of the National League for Democracy (NLD) opposition group and its leader Aung San Suu Kyi – followed by a cease-fire between the government and several ethnic armed groups – marked the easing of tensions in a nation that had been closed off from the world for half a century. Amidst these changes, women in Myanmar seek to play a role in building peace.

Women in Myanmar have participated directly in various peace mechanisms, albeit in small numbers; they have collected and disseminated information on the peace process and the conflict's effects on women; they are engaged in efforts to build the capacity of women leaders; and advocated for women's participation in the peace process and for the protection of women in conflict. Women find the National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (NSPAW) helpful to mobilize for women's participation in the peace process and to advocate for women's rights. However, women's use of the NSPAW has otherwise been limited. Barriers include the disconnect between the plan and grassroots women's organizations, and the splintered nature of the women's movement. The field interviews suggest that women utilize other tools that they find to be more effective – in particular leveraging international frameworks and norms, gender quotas, and interpersonal relationships – to boost women's participation in the peace process and to promote gender-sensitive policies.

Conflict Analysis: Myanmar's Multi-pronged Civil War

The Myanmar military is in conflict with multiple ethnic armed groups, one of the world's longest-running civil wars. For decades, the many ethnic groups[38] in Myanmar have resisted or been excluded from a singular national identity. Reforms over the past decade have opened the possibility for a resolution – including the state's transition from military junta rule to democracy and the rise to power of Myanmar's most famous opposition leader, Aung San Suu Kyi. Yet, the cease-fire ceasefire is only partial, and the conflict continues unabated in several states, with a significant and recent worsening in the north.

The conflict began in 1947 after the assassination of Aung San – a military hero from the country's fight for independence – unraveled an uneasy union agreed to during the Panglong Conference that year.[39] Several armed political groups emerged, including a communist insurgency.[40] These ethno-nationalist struggles intensified after the 1962 military coup.[41] Fighting continued for decades between the government's military (the Tatmadaw) and the ethnic armed organizations (EAOs). Shifting alliances among the numerous EAOs and rivalries also led to fighting among ethnic groups as well as against the Tatmadaw.[42]

Map 1: Myanmar

While the majority population is Bamar, approximately one-third of the population consists of minority ethnic groups with distinct languages and cultures,[43] mostly residing in seven resource-rich border states (see map 1). The conflict has been concentrated in these areas.[44]

In 2008 Myanmar's military junta announced a public referendum on a new constitution,[45] followed by multiparty elections in 2010.[46] Several economic and political factors led to this transition. In 2007 mass protests over fuel price spikes signaled new citizen activism. That same year, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations declared Myanmar's chairmanship contingent on a democratic transition. In 2008 Cyclone Nargis caused significant human and financial loss, as well as mass public resentment against the country's ban on international humanitarian aid.

Myanmar's 2010 elections were not free and fair, not least because the junta selected the incoming president, Thein Sein, and appointed military officials as the top ministers.[47] The elections also cemented the military's 25 percent quota in the parliament.[48] However, in 2012 the NLD, a longtime political opposition group led by Aung San Suu Kyi,[49] participated in special elections, winning 44 out of 440 seats.

During this time, Thein Sein embarked on an agenda of economic and political reform[50] and began cease-fire talks with most EAOs. In October 2015, the government[51] signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) with eight EAOs,[52] though another eight of the 16 EAOs[53] involved in the negotiations did not sign the cease-fire and two other groups[54] boycotted the talks, including the most powerful armed group, the United Wa State Army.[55] While the NCA signing initiated formal peace talks through political dialogue, fighting continued.[56]

A month later, the NLD swept national elections as Bamar and ethnic minorities alike voted for large-scale reform, winning more than 80 percent of contested seats and control over both chambers of parliament.[57] Htin Kyaw of the NLD was elected president[58] and the position of state counselor was created for Suu Kyi, who was expressly forbidden from the presidency by the 2008 constitution. She has become Myanmar's de facto leader, including power to decide foreign policy and coordinate with parliament.[59] While this marked a stunning shift toward democratization, ethnic minority-based political parties remained without meaningful power or representation and military initiatives continued in the ethnic states.[60] The civilian-led government remains constrained by the significant continued power of the military, which has undergone only minimal reform.

The Rohingya: A Persecuted Minority

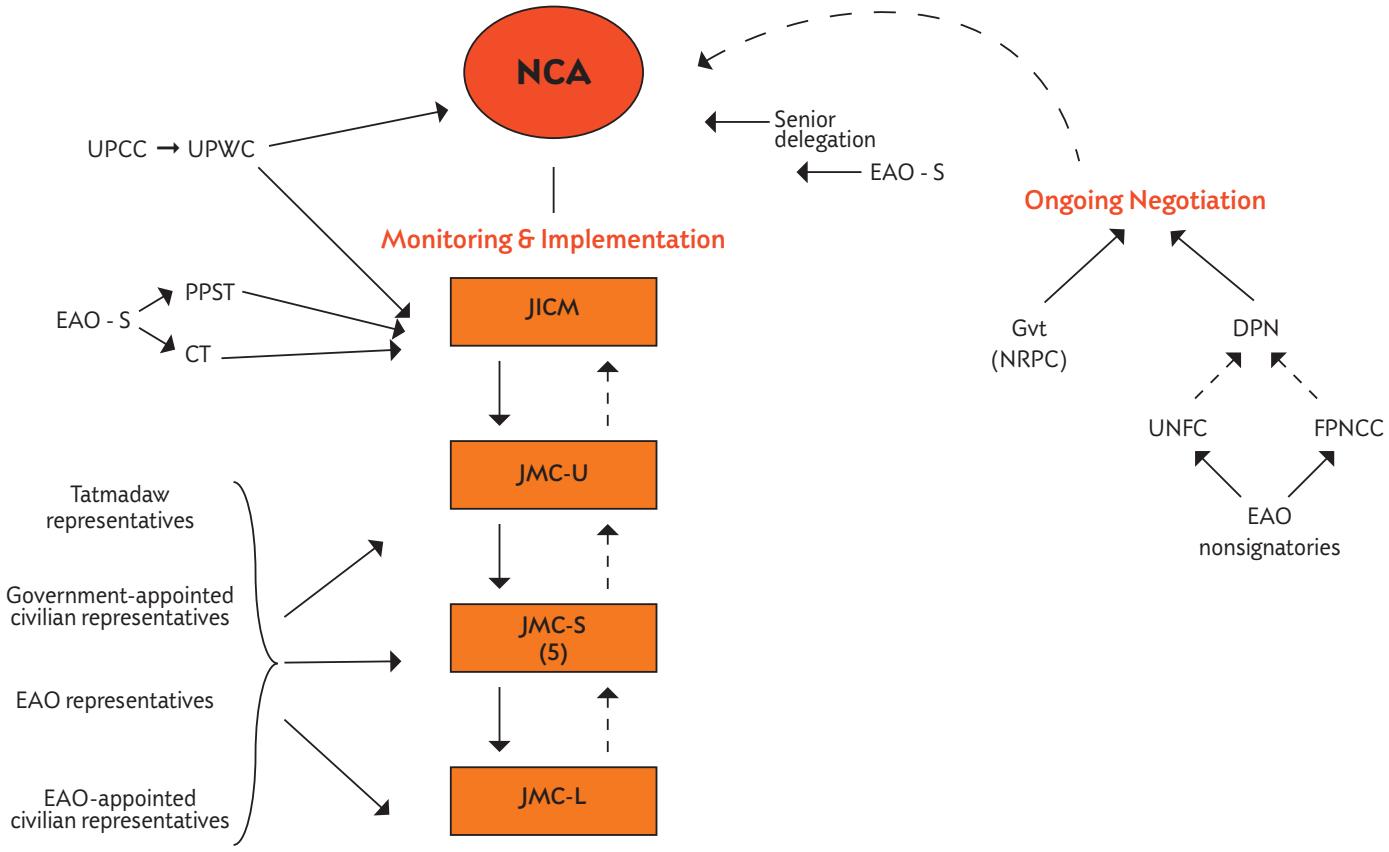
The Rohingya are a Muslim group that have resided for several centuries in Rakhine State, an impoverished area bordering Bangladesh. Rakhine is also home to many Buddhists, who represent a majority of the local population and are considered ethnically Rakhine.[61] Since at least 1962, the Rohingya have experienced persecution and discrimination.[62] This has roots in the anti-Indian sentiment of the British colonial period and was later intensified by fear of the spread of Islam.[63] State-sanctioned oppression began under Myanmar's 1982 citizenship law,[64] which failed to recognize the Rohingya as an ethnic group or as Burmese citizens, resulting in statelessness for most Rohingya.[65]

Today, human right abuses endured by the Rohingya population include lack of freedom of movement, forced labor (including child labor), restrictions on marriage and child bearing, and denial of due process.[66] In 2012 anti-Muslim hate speech by local monks and politicians fueled a violent campaign that demolished Rohingya communities and displaced over 140,000 people. Rohingya internally displaced people (IDPs) were deprived of humanitarian aid,[67] do not have access to basic education and healthcare,[68] and cannot leave IDP camps. Burmese officials have installed barbed wire and barricades to imprison thousands of Rohingya in their communities, denying them freedom of movement and the prospect of pursuing livelihoods.[69] In August 2017, responding to several attacks on police stations by militant groups, the military escalated retaliation against the Rohingya.[70] There have been widespread reports of crimes against humanity, including mass killings, gang rapes, and disappearances,[71] and over half a million Rohingya have fled into neighboring Bangladesh.[72] The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein, has described the situation as "a textbook example of ethnic cleansing."[73]

A highly critical report from a fact-finding commission led by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan documents the "ongoing atrocities" and offers recommends to ending enforced segregation of Rohingya Muslims, ensuring full humanitarian access to the state, addressing Rohingya statelessness, and holding perpetrators of human rights violations accountable, among others. [74] Suu Kyi had pledged to abide by the commission's findings but has not acknowledged reports of military abuse against the Rohingya.[75] While Suu Kyi is the de facto leader of the country, the current situation suggests that the civilian-led government retains little to no control over the military

As of September 2017, the Myanmar government has not responded to international condemnation of actions against the Rohingya.[76]

Myanmar Peace Process: Cease-fire



A preliminary road to peace following the political transition

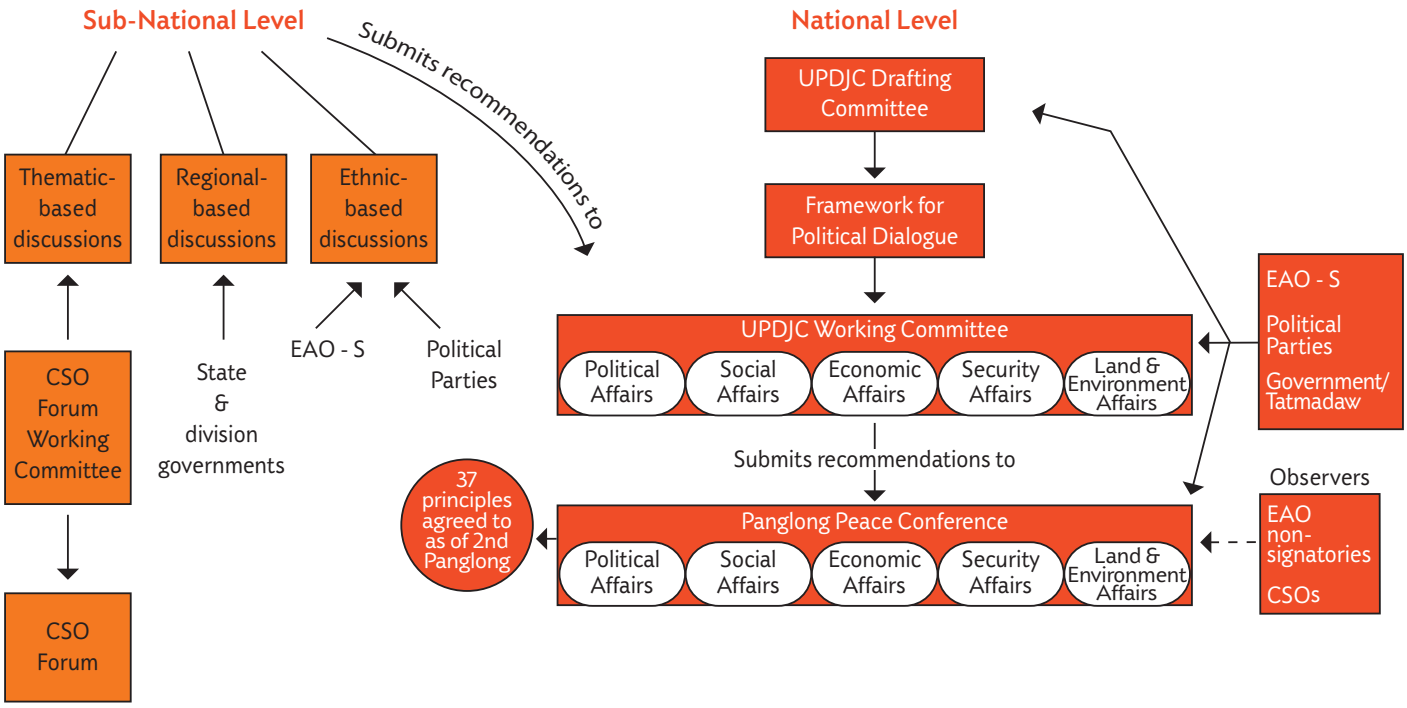
The NCA cease-fire monitoring and political dialogue has three mechanisms:

- The Joint Implementation Coordination Meeting (JICM), which works to implement the terms of the NCA and includes government, Tatmadaw, and EAO representatives;
- Joint Monitoring Committees (JMCs), which monitor the cease-fire at the union-level (JMC-U), state-level (JMC-S), and local-level (JMC-L),[77] with government, Tatmadaw, EAO, and civilian representatives; and
- The Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC), the platform for political dialogue between NCA signatories, including representatives from the government, the Tatmadaw, political parties, and EAOs. The UPDJC has five subcommittees, each of which discusses policy proposals within a particular thematic area.[78]

Suu Kyi has built on Thein Sein's first peace forum, the Union Peace Conference, by announcing the 21st Century Panglong Peace Conference (hereinafter Panglong). A symbolic reference to the 1947 conference, the new Panglong is the public face of the ongoing political dialogue, where delegates are supposed to meet every six months to vote on policy proposals submitted by the UPDJC, although subsequent meetings have been significantly delayed.[79] The first session in August 2016, with hundreds of government and EAO representatives in attendance, was nationally televised.[80] A second Panglong in May 2017 yielded an agreement on 37 principles for a future peace agreement between the government, the Tatmadaw, and EAO signatories (EAO-S) to the NCA.

Beyond the Rohingya tragedy, the Panglong mechanism faces several criticisms, most notably the exclusion of EAO non-signatories (EAO-NS), CSOs, and women beyond an observation role.[81] Efforts to make the process more inclusive include the creation of subnational dialogues and the Civil Society Forum to discuss and submit policy proposals to the UPDJC.

Myanmar Peace Process: Political Dialogue



The status of women in Myanmar

Years of structural exclusion and cultural barriers have constrained women's participation in Burmese public life. While women's labor force participation rate is 75 percent,[82] they have limited access to powerful economic or political positions. Beyond Suu Kyi, few other women participate actively in formal politics. During the junta, strict rules barring women from military roles (other than as secretaries, nurses, and support staff), limited their leadership opportunities and ability to advance as public figures. Only four women have ever become ministers at the national level,[83] and fewer than 6 percent of MPs were women before 2015.[84] This surged to 15 percent after the election but remains low by regional and global standards. The 2008 constitution codifies discrimination against women by stating that certain public posts are "suitable only for men";[85] meanwhile, cultural norms emphasize women's traditional roles as caretakers.[86]

At the same time, women have assumed influence in civil society. Women human rights defenders and students were key actors during a 1988 uprising against the junta, and many were forced to flee during the subsequent crackdown.[87] Many remained active in exile, raising awareness and spreading news about the situation inside the closed state. In 1999 several exiled ethnic-based women's groups came together to form the Women's League of Burma (WLB), a network that has shone a spotlight on human rights violations in Myanmar.[88] A WLB member organization, the Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN), issued the groundbreaking *License to Rape* report in 2002, which ultimately led to a UN General Assembly resolution calling for an independent investigation into rape perpetrated by Burmese armed forces.[89] Inside Myanmar, women's CSOs such as the Gender Equality Network (GEN) and Women's Organization Network (WON) have been at the forefront of advocacy efforts. In 2014 multiple women's organizations formed the umbrella Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process (AGIPP). AGIPP seeks to mobilize decision-makers to increase women's participation in various peace mechanisms and to include gender perspectives in all peace agreements and implementation strategies.

All armed actors, especially the Tatmadaw, have used sexual violence as a tool against women and their communities, and the trafficking and exploitation of displaced women have risen significantly in recent years.[90]

Women have been represented in formal peace negotiations at the national level – estimates suggest a high point of 20 percent women at the Panglong conference in May 2017.[91] As discussed below, there have been some notable gains in the social sector dialogues of both Panglong and the UPDJC, the Civil Society Forum, and in advising EAOs.[92]

The National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women

In 2013 the government adopted the NSPAW. The 12-point document is based on the priorities of the Beijing Platform and was drafted and adopted by Thein Sein's government via the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. Women's CSOs were consulted during the process, though not those most affected by the conflict or those in exile.

The NSPAW does not explicitly refer to women and girls in conflict – despite language to that effect in the Beijing Platform. It does discuss the status of women in emergencies.[93] Some activists have called for developing a NAP to explicitly state a focus on advancing women in armed conflict.[94]

NSPAW progress stalled soon after adoption, with little funding earmarked for implementation.[95] In late 2016 the government transferred responsibility for the NSPAW to the newly reconfigured Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs (MNCWA).[96] The MNCWA plans to form technical working groups to spearhead implementation of the NSPAW and other women-centered policies.[97]

Women's Contributions to Peace

Women in Myanmar have been active in building peace and in advancing women's rights for some time. This report focuses on four avenues of engagement – via official peace processes, addressing data gaps, building capacity, and advocacy – that are addressed in turn below.

Engaging in official peace process

A number of women have been playing direct, albeit limited, roles in the nation's official peace process. Several women helped negotiate the NCA. Women in civil society, including members of the Women's League of Burma, were formal observers to the NCA signing.[98] Very few women ultimately participated as signatories to the cease-fire: only one of ten government signatories, one in 24 EAO signatories, and two of 21 witness signatories were women.[99]

More specifically:

- Leading up to the signing of the NCA in 2015, two women served as officials in the 15 member Senior Delegation, the negotiation team for the EAOs: Saw Mra Raza Lin, a member of the Arakan Liberation Party, and Naw Zipporah Sein, former vice chair of the Karenni National Union (KNU). Naw Zipporah Sein was later appointed lead negotiator.[100] Two additional women, Ja Nan Lahtaw and Nang Raw Zakhung of the Nyein (Shalom) Foundation (hereinafter Shalom), served as technical advisors to the Senior Delegation.[101]
- Two women, both MPs, served on the Union Peacemaking Working Committee (UPWC), the government's negotiating body: Daw Doi Bu Nbrang and Daw Mi Yin Chan.[102] According to some experts, these women lacked seniority and their participation was limited.[103]
- Several women monitor NCA implementation through JMCs. While there are no women on the union-level JMC-U, several women are represented on state-level JMC-S.[104] In southern

Women's Participation in Myanmar's Official Peace Mechanisms

Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement		
	Female	Total
EAO	2	15
UPCC	0	11
UPWC	2	52
Total	4	78

Civil Society Forum**		
	Female	Total
Working Committee	10	43
Day 1	223	620
Day 2	204	542

Joint Monitoring Committee*		
	Female	Total
JMC-U	0	26
JMC-S, Mon State	2	14
JMC-S, Karen State	2	16
JMC-S, Shan State	3	14
JMC-S, Tanintharyi Division	1	14
Total	8	84

Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee		
	Female	Total
Political Affairs	0	15
Social Affairs	4	15
Security Affairs	1	15
Economics	2	15
Land & Environment	1	15
Total	8	75

Union and Panglong Peace Conferences		
January 2016	August 2016	May 2017
8%	13%	20%

*No data on Bago Division
**Accurate total figures are not available as many participants attended both days of the conference

Shan State, three out of fourteen JMC members are women – a high point for women's representation at this level.[105] While several local level JMC-Ls have been set up, and the JMC Terms of Reference (ToR) provides that "both parties shall do their best to include the participation of women in the JMC-L,"[106] it is unclear whether there has been any effort to include women in these committees.

- Women are directly involved in the ongoing political dialogue – both the UPDJC and Panglong – though they have been mostly relegated to discussions on social issues. Women have made the largest gains in the Civil Society Forum, in which they submit policy recommendations to the UPDJC, and as official and unofficial advisors to EAOs.

More specifically:

- Women make up ten out of 43 members of the CSO Forum Working Committee, which hosts the Forum and selects its participants.[107] Some members, including Soe Soe Nwe of the Tavoyan Women's Union (TWU) and Mie Mie from the Karenni National Women's Organization (KNWO), represent the WLB.[108]

- At the first CSO Forum in February 2017, women made up almost 37 percent of representatives.[109] However many women expressed concern that the UPDJC's ToR limits the CSO Forum to discussion of certain economic, social, and land/environmental issues,[110] which led various organizations to facilitate a three-day Pre-CSO Forum to discuss the ToR's limitations and strategies for improvement.[111] A majority – 36 of 50 – facilitators[112] were representatives from women's network organizations, and women made up 40 percent of total participants.[113]

- Eight [114] of the 75 members of the UPDJC Working Committee are women, half of whom serve on the Social Sector Sub-Committee.[115] The Working Committee submitted several gender-inclusive proposals to Panglong in May 2017, most notably that men and women should have equal rights to land ownership.[116] AGIPP, however, noted that the UPDJC's proposals did not include any references to violence against women in conflict.[117]

- Women observed, facilitated, and participated as delegates in the January 2016 Union Peace Conference and in both recent Panglongs. Specifically:

- An increasing number of women have participated as delegates: from eight percent of total conference participants in January 2016[118] to 13 percent in August 2016, [119] to a little under 20 percent in May 2017.[120]

- Nine of 21 facilitators at the May 2017 Panglong were women,[121] up slightly from seven at the August 2016 conference. [122]

- While data for the May 2017 conference are not disaggregated by representative party, AGIPP data from the August 2016 conference suggest that most women delegates are from EAOs,[123] and that women represent less than one percent of all Tatmadaw delegates.[124]

- At the 2017 Panglong, women were best represented in social sector discussions, comprising one-third of all social sector delegates. According to AGIPP, these women frequently brought up women's concerns related to a variety of social issues.[125]

- Of the 37 policies ultimately agreed to at Panglong,[126] seven directly or indirectly concern women,[127] most notably a gender equitable land ownership policy[128] and a social policy to "defend the fundamental rights of . . . women . . . and to work for the development of their social life."[129]

The Joint Conference Organizing Committee (JCOC), the organizing committee for Panglong, designated ten slots for women to participate as observers in the August 2016 conference,[130] including members of AGIPP.[131]

Some of these women believe their presence at Panglong, even as observers, conferred multiple benefits.[132] Thin Thin Aung, founder of the Women's Rights and Welfare Association of Burma and cofounder of WLB, felt that attending Panglong enabled a better understanding of the extent to which women are currently participating in the peace process, the gender perspectives brought to the process, and the political stances of various individuals, which she communicates to other members of WLB to help inform their advocacy.[133] Others maintain that women's presence at Panglong helped familiarize peace process stakeholders with women's organizations, a starting point for women's advocacy.[134] Still, some women do not see their engagement in Panglong as meaningful as it lacks substantive dialogue;[135] one woman even claimed that Panglong is a "waste of time" for women.[136]

What difference has women's participation made? The interviews uncovered several examples.

- In June 2015, when a coalition of EAOs reviewed the draft NCA, ten WLB members suggested amendments, specifically to alter Article 23 to mandate 30 percent women's participation in the political dialogue.[137] While the provision did not end up in the final version of the NCA – Article 23 only mentions a "reasonable number/ratio of women representatives"[138] – the EAO Senior Delegation, led by Zipporah Sein, submitted WLB's suggestion to government delegates.[139]

- Women's advice also led to joint decision-making provisions in the JMC ToR, which requires that all decisions related to JMC implementation be made jointly between the government and EAO signatories.[140]

- In January 2016, prior to the Union Peace Conference, Mar Mar Cho of the Myanmar Institute for Gender Studies (MIGS) – among others – advised the EAO Senior Delegation on the Framework for Political Dialogue, suggesting the delegation include a 30 percent gender quota. Though it is difficult to measure the impact of Mar Mar Cho's advocacy,[141] the framework now holds as a basic principle that UPDJC members will "strive to achieve 30 percent women's participation in the political dialogue."[142] Thus, while women's participation in official peace mechanisms has made modest progress, women still directly influence peace process stakeholders through advisor roles.

- Women's groups also draft legislation, albeit outside the peace process. May Sabe Phyu, director of GEN, worked with government officials to draft the Prevention and Protection of Violence Against Women bill (PoVAW),[143] which recognized the need to protect women from all forms of violence but never passed.[144]

Advocating for women's advancement and needs

Women have lobbied peace process stakeholders to increase women's participation and attention to gendered policy considerations. Women leaders – in international organizations, women's networks, and formal peace mechanisms – have served as conduits between women on the ground and officials. They have documented women's experiences and submitted proposals to make the peace process more inclusive. Women's CSOs also sponsor women's forums to consolidate voices and communicate them to EAO and officials in the peace process.[145] Some examples:

- In September 2016 the KNWO invited grassroots women, along with members of the Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP), to the Karenni State Women's Voice Conference.[146] At this conference, women discussed the thematic areas of the political dialogue, and KNWO compiled the recommendations into a policy paper to lobby the KNPP after the conference.[147]

- Women advocated for a 30 percent women's quota in the Framework for Political Dialogue.[148] According to Jean D'Cunha, head of UN Women in Myanmar, this effort helped lead to the inclusion of three gender-friendly clauses[149] in

the final Framework, although the language in these clauses "encourages" rather than mandates.

Some women "insiders" – those with official roles in formal peace mechanisms or who advise peace process stakeholders in an official capacity – have championed women's participation and inclusion. Insiders created openings for women to participate in formal mechanisms or back-channeled with women civil society organizations, providing opportunities for targeted advocacy. For example:

- Both women on the Senior Delegation of the NCA – Saw Mra Raza Lin and Naw Zipporah Sein – are former leaders in their respective communities prior to their roles with the NCA.[150]
- As advisors to the EAO Senior Delegation, Ja Nan Lahtaw and Nang Raw Zakhung – both directors of Shalom, a member of the AGIPP – communicate key information about the peace process to AGIPP's Steering Committee, such as deadlines for submitting comments on the Political Dialogue ToR.[151] This provided AGIPP with enough time to officially request a 30 percent women's quota and that each dialogue topic be reviewed from a gender perspective.[152] As of July 2017, however, there are no gender-friendly provisions in the ToR.
- Mi Sue Pwint, Central Leading Committee Member of the All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF) and one of eight women on the UPDJC, ensures that CSOs such as AGIPP and WLB are invited to training sessions sponsored by the UPDJC's Social Sector Committee.[153] This establishes a semiformalized platform for these organizations to lobby for women's advancement.
- In other cases, women insiders advocate directly to their colleagues for women's inclusion.
- Mar Mar Cho, an informal advisor to the EAO-S, advocated for gender-friendly clauses in the Framework for Political Dialogue.
- Cate Buchanan, an international expert, Senior Peacebuilding Advisor at Shalom, and manager of a $10 million Joint Peace Fund grant to EAO-S of the NCA, persuaded the EAO-S to agree to several gender mainstreaming measures, including the establishment of a gender advisor position on the Peace Process Steering Team (the EAO-S body charged with helping implement the NCA) and an escalating quota policy,[154] which, if implemented, would set gradually increasing targets for women's participation in formal peace mechanisms.[155]

Women civil society leaders meet privately with representatives of the peace process, including EAO and government officials, to lobby for women's participation in the peace process.[156] WLB's Peace Mission Team, for instance, has secured meetings with EAO officials to advocate for the 30 percent quota and to share WLB's policy briefs.[157] WIN Peace holds private meetings with various MPs – particularly women MPs – to advocate for women's participation.[158]

Occasionally, women target specific individuals.[159] WIN Peace, for example, identifies the most progressive government officials and MPs – particularly women MPs – and targets these individuals to maximize their potential impact.[160] Other women strategically advocate for women's participation when attending events sponsored by peace process officials.[161] In June 2015, as observers at an EAO summit to review and revise the draft NCA, WLB members wore "No Women, No Peace" shirts and discussed the importance of women's participation with EAO officials during tea breaks.[162] Nang Phyu Phyu Linn, national consultant for and former chairperson of AGIPP, has advocated for the inclusion of gender perspectives during three state-level political dialogues,[163] identifying challenges for women in each thematic area and making recommendations.[164]

Women have advocated for stronger legal protections against SGBV, at least since the *License to Rape* report. The TWU lobbies police and village administrators in Tanintharyi region to prosecute sexual violence cases.[165] As noted below, WLB member organizations conduct and publish qualitative research documenting sexual violence and other human rights abuses against women in conflict areas, pressuring the government and the international community to take action.[166] In June 2017 – the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict – a number of Kachin CSOs submitted a statement demanding that the government create mechanisms to prevent and protect against sexual violence specifically in conflict areas, including a complaint center for victims.[167]

Some women have strategically appealed to the patriarchal notion of "women as victims." In meetings with peace process stakeholders, WLB members argue that the best way to ensure women's *protection* in conflict is to ensure women's *participation* in the peace process, and that women are best placed to advocate for clauses protecting women in later peace agreements.[168] This appears to have been an effective strategy with EAOs. For instance, Nang Pu, founder of the Kachin State Women's Network, utilizes ethnic politics, arguing that Kachin armed groups must protect Kachin women to maintain a strong ethnic nation and that Kachin women are best placed to advocate for their needs.[169] This approach can be more effective than demanding women's participation as a right; according to Thin Thin Aung, while EAO officials are reluctant to accept women as decision-makers, they readily acknowledge the need to protect women from conflict-related sexual violence.[170] Khin Soe Win agrees, sometimes lumping together women's and children's issues, which she sees as an effective strategy for engaging stakeholders with patriarchal attitudes.[171]

Addressing data gaps

Women's civil society organizations in Myanmar monitor participation in the official process and gender inclusive language in the political dialogue tracks.[172] AGIPP has done this and helped to inform

women's organizations seeking to target their advocacy. AGIPP members at Panglong reported on women's representation in August 2016 and issued a press statement denouncing the low number (13 percent) and advocating for a 30 percent quota of women at the next summit, which was later adopted.[173] At the 2017 Panglong, AGIPP tracked women's participation (about 20 percent) and the gender breakdown by thematic sector,[174] analyzed all UPDJC proposals submitted to Panglong from a gender perspective, tracked the proposals ultimately adopted at Panglong, and proposed several other gender-equitable policies.

At the local level, information has been collected to assess the conflict's impact on women and to identify women's needs.[175] WIN Peace holds stakeholder meetings with grassroots women's CSOs in different areas to identify women's region-specific concerns; they then use this data to inform their programming.[176]

Many women's CSOs collect data on SGBV, particularly as it relates to conflict.[177] Others, such as the TWU, have traced the impact of foreign direct investment and military land grabbing on women in their communities.[178] Often, women use this data to publish major reports, such as SWAN's *License to Rape*,[179] an early landmark report detailing sexual violence committed Burmese army troops in Shan State.[180]

Information is shared with peace process stakeholders and with national and international media outlets to spread awareness of the conflict's effects on women and to advocate for women's participation in the peace process.[181]

Building capacity

A number of women in Myanmar – at the international, national, and grassroots levels – are working to build the capacity of current and prospective women leaders. In doing so, they seek to empower these women to advocate for their own effective participation.

CSOs and international organizations have conducted training to build the capacity of women in government and in EAOs, officials in the peace process, and other women leaders. Shalom, for instance, hosts workshops for female MPs and for women in EAOs to strengthen their negotiation and public speaking skills, as well as their substantive knowledge of the peace process.[182] UN Women adopted and then expanded on Shalom's model, teaching women leaders about the technical components of cease-fires and peace agreements from around the world.[183]

Women's CSOs also build the capacity of individual women at the grassroots level. These organizations strengthen women's communication and negotiation skills,[184] educate women on the issues debated,[185] familiarize them with international gender frameworks,[186] and help cultivate conflict analysis skills.[187] Several women's CSOs host long-term training, lasting six months or more.[188] While most of the women attending training do not participate directly in the formal peace process, CSOs hope women can eventually use the skills they cultivate to participate in the ongoing political dialogue or in local negotiations.[189] The Kuki Women's Human Rights Organization (KWHRO) conducts short-term training on peacebuilding and designates women focal points who subsequently organize women's activities in their respective villages.[190] Grassroots women's groups that belong to larger women's networks benefit from support and training offered by their umbrella organizations like WLB and AGIPP.[191] Some training goes beyond building women's technical capacities, aiming to empower women to overcome deeply engrained gendered social norms and to believe in their own abilities, as well as encouraging the mobilization of women's grassroots organizations.[192]

National Plans: A Starting Point for Peace and Reform

Myanmar's NSPAW has been used to create space for women's participation in the peace process and to promote discussion of gender in the ongoing dialogue. Many women's organizations also believe the NSPAW can be a starting point to implement other gender-friendly provisions from international frameworks at the national level. This section examines how women have used the NSPAW to advocate for women's participation in the peace process and to initiate plans for other gender-sensitive policies.

National-level organizations, including WON, GEN, CEDAW Action Myanmar (CAM), AGIPP, Women's Initiative Network for Peace (WIN-PEACE), and MIGS, have reportedly referred to the NSPAW in meetings with peace process stakeholders, including EAOs and government.[193] As AGIPP urges in one of its policy briefs, the NSPAW "has the potential to address many of the major obstacles preventing the full participation of women in public life, including in the peace process."[194]

Particular subsections of the NSPAW – specifically the "Women and Decision-making" and "Violence Against Women" sections – have been used to advocate for women's participation in the peace process and for their protection.[195] Women participating in the subnational dialogues also rely on the NSPAW to integrate gender into various dialogue subthemes.[196] Thandar Oo, founder of New Generation Shan State and coordinator of the Women and Peace Action Network (WAPAN), commonly quotes the NSPAW's "Women and Health" and "Women and Education" provisions to promote the inclusion of gender in topics included on the agenda of the subnational dialogues.[197]

NSPAW is also seen by some as a tool to hold the government accountable for its international obligations under CEDAW. AGIPP believes the NSPAW's "Violence Against Women" section "offers a strong starting point for realizing . . . commitments" under CEDAW, including legislation to prevent and respond to SGBV.[198] It urged the government to use the NSPAW to guide any such legislation and to ensure its compliance with CEDAW General Recommendation 30 (GR30), which focuses on women in conflict

prevention, conflict, and post-conflict situations.[199] Women's CSOs have considered ways to utilize NSPAW to pressure the government to implement the concluding observations of the CEDAW Committee from July 2016.[200]

The NSPAW is considered by some stakeholders as a tool to guide the development of a future NAP based explicitly on UNSCR 1325. Mi Kun Chan Non, director of the Mon Women's Organization and Steering Committee Member of AGIPP, believes the NSPAW should be used to draft any future NAP and that the two documents should be synchronized to better coordinate women's efforts and advance their organizational goals.[201] Cherry Oon of WIN-PEACE, meanwhile, sees the NSPAW primarily as a useful tool to collect data on the status of women, which could inform the content of a NAP.[202]

National Plan Limitations

The NSPAW does not appear to be widely utilized in women's peacebuilding work.[203] Efforts to use the NSPAW are limited by lack of implementation of the plan, its disconnect with the grassroots women's movement, and the fragmented nature of the women's movement. This is associated with the lack of priority accorded by government: as one interviewee explained, "Women's rights are day two – not day one."[204]

Several interviewees expressed the view that the NSPAW is "only on paper."[205] This sentiment is partially due to a lack of government resourcing: there is no budget and there are few personnel with the capacity and mandate to implement the plan.[206] The government reportedly lacks expertise on women's issues.[207] The Department of Social Welfare (DSW), originally charged to implement NSPAW, acknowledges its lack of capacity and requested technical support from women's CSOs to host training sessions on gender issues.[208] Even so, the department has little authority to influence other ministries,[209] who were described as lacking interest and political will on this front.[210] Many women interviewed said the government views implementing the NSPAW – as well as women's issues more broadly – as a secondary concern that can only be attended to once the country achieves peace.

Frustration with the lack of NSPAW implementation may have further reduced any political momentum. As a donor representative noted, "The real challenge with NSPAW is that for a long time it was seen as a document gathering dust . . . it was a plan without any associated implementation strategy or dedicated budget."[211] Women's CSOs have limited resources and competing priorities, and must make strategic choices about the issues on which to focus their advocacy. For instance, many women's organizations' human and financial resources went into fighting Myanmar's controversial Population Control Health Care Bill,[212] while the NSPAW is seen as a less pressing concern.[213]

Some maintain women's CSOs need to be patient with the slow progress on the NSPAW and are more optimistic.[214] In 2016 the government transferred responsibility for implementing the NSPAW (as well as other women-centered policies) to the restructured MNCWA.[215] GEN and AGIPP are now official members of the MNCWA, and GEN director May Sabe Phyu hopes that, with civil society involvement and encouragement, NSPAW implementation can be pushed forward.[216] However, the NSPAW, as it stands, lacks a plan for operationalization and specific tangible targets. [217] Further, there is no mechanism to monitor implementation.

Interestingly, many of the interviewees did not connect the NSPAW to the WPS agenda. Some do not use the NPSAW or advocate for its implementation because the document itself lacks explicit WPS provisions; there is no reference to women's participation in the peace process or to sexual violence in conflict.[218] When drafting the NSPAW, the government resisted including WPS language; hence, GEN's proposed "Women in Conflict" provision was converted into a general "Women and Emergencies" section in the final version.[219] Some stakeholders feel that the NSPAW cannot be used to effectively implement the WPS agenda unless the document explicitly refers to the conflict and the peace process.[220]

Others see an opportunity in the NSPAW's ambiguity. According to an AGIPP policy brief,

> NSPAW has many areas of relevance to the WPS agenda, including: addressing violence against women (theme 4), women and emergencies (theme 5), women and decision-making (theme 7), institutional mechanisms (theme 8), and women and human rights (theme 9).[221]

To some, NSPAW's section on "Women and Decision-making" could encompass women's participation in the peace process; similarly, "Women and Emergencies" can include the conflict.[222] GEN, a member of the NSPAW drafting committee, purposely did not push back against the government's refusal to include WPS references in the final document.[223] According to GEN director May Sabe Phyu, "Words are important, but when you are working with people, it's really, really difficult to convince [them]. So, if you would like to stick with the words, it's very difficult to move on. What we are trying to focus on are the issues."[224]

While some have used the NSPAW to advocate for women's participation in the peace process, others find it unhelpful because it is not well known.[225] Khin Soe Win of WAPAN, for instance, does not find it useful to invoke the NSPAW in her advocacy work to peace process stakeholders; since she has precious little time in the meetings she manages to secure with them, introducing and explaining the NSPAW would take up too much time.[226]

At state and local levels, CSOs also appear to lack knowledge of the document.[227] Even some women's organizations and women leaders have not heard of the NSPAW.[228] When asked, one female

leader was unaware that Myanmar had such a document.[229] Another woman, who has worked in peace education for years, learned of the NSPAW in December 2016 – four years after the document was launched.[230] As Moon Nay Li of KWAT questioned, "If women's organizations working for women's rights do not know much about the NSPAW, how can we expect people on the ground to have awareness?"[231]

For some, the absence of an inclusive consultative process[232] while drafting the NSPAW contributes to the public's lack of awareness about the document.[233] While national-level women's CSOs such as GEN took part in its drafting, other women's groups, including the WLB and state and local organizations, had no role.[234] Many interviewees expressed concern that grassroots women's voices are not being heard, pointing to their absence on the NSPAW drafting committee and the international community's low engagement with women at the local level.[235] Since grassroots women's CSOs were not invited to participate, they tend to consider the NSPAW a "top-down policy framework"[236] disconnected from women's work on the ground. Many believe that for the NSPAW to effectively address the concerns of all women, the government must consult with grassroots women's CSOs in drafting revisions and during implementation.[237]

Finally, the diversity of the women's movement may prevent women from rallying behind national plans.[238] Several interviewees mentioned that the women's movement in Myanmar is uncoordinated and disorganized, which harms their advocacy efforts.[239] Some described women's CSOs as divided into "insider" groups (those established inside Myanmar) and "outsider" groups (established in exile during the junta years).[240] Women also prioritize different issues depending on the level at which they operate.[241] According to one interviewee, many grassroots women's organizations are concerned with lack of access to justice for sexual violence and land grabbing; meanwhile, women who work for or with international organizations are reluctant to raise these issues at the risk of alienating the government.[242]

While it is possible that AGIPP, as the first organization in Myanmar dedicated solely to women's involvement in the peace process, can serve as the advocacy hub for the WPS agenda in Myanmar,[243] some feel the alliance has yet to build effective coalitions and form coherent strategies.[244] WLB, a major multi-ethnic organization and founder of AGIPP, left the alliance in 2016.[245] Members of AGIPP maintain that WLB's departure does not undermine its advocacy efforts[246] and note that WLB now acts as AGIPP's partner, providing input on the alliance's policy briefs.[247] Further, AGIPP has sought to adapt its strategies, benchmarking more resources for ad hoc activities to meet rapidly changing needs in the conflict context.[248]

Women's identities and experiences during conflict shape their differing advocacy strategies. The WLB, for instance – composed of ethnic-based member organizations established in exile – have established connections with EAOs.[249] The WLB and member organizations thus target their advocacy toward EAO officials. Meanwhile, GEN – an "insider" organization – works more closely with government officials, an outgrowth of GEN's collaboration with the government during Cyclone Nargis.[250] While groups like GEN and AGIPP are willing to collaborate with the government to maintain productive working relationships, others like the WLB use international platforms to criticize the government and its human rights record on the international stage.[251] The fact that women's groups have different allies and strategies could work to their advantage: targeting different stakeholders may lead to more effective advocacy, and women's groups can share their successful strategies with one another to make progress for all women.[252]

In some cases, though, divergent strategies can lead to conflicting goals. Women's CSOs disagree on the best framework to advance women's participation in the peace process.[253] Some would like to develop a NAP based on UNSCR 1325,[254] believing it could increase the effectiveness of women's advocacy[255] and coordinate an explicit WPS agenda inside Myanmar.[256] Many of these women, who belong to previously exiled women's organizations, do not collaborate with the government, were not involved in the drafting of the NSPAW, and doubt the NSPAW's ability to advance an inclusive WPS agenda. Meanwhile, insider organizations such as GEN and WON – who helped draft the NSPAW – prefer to concentrate efforts on implementing the NSPAW and are skeptical about developing a NAP.[257]

AGIPP and GEN take a "NSPAW first" approach, insisting that "despite the value and utility of NAPs, implementing WPS standards does not start and end with them."[258] Several interviewees pointed out that a NAP would likely face the same implementation problems the NSPAW currently faces and could divert women's already stretched time and efforts.[259] According to Cate Buchanan, Senior Peacebuilding Advisor at Nyein (Shalom) Foundation,

> Given the intensity and the demands of the peace process, and how hard it is to get – and keep – women in that process, women with significant contributions to make could face challenges in developing a NAP. Their energy and resources may be better directed towards securing tangible gendered policy outcomes from the peace negotiations.[260]

Others, though, support both the NAP and the NSPAW, believing these frameworks can and should complement one another.[261]

Pressure from the international community can exacerbate these fissures.[262] According to some interviewees, some international donors have pushed for women's organizations to develop a NAP, without taking into consideration the priorities of women on the ground and the already stretched resources of women's organizations.[263] Several interviewees expressed concern that international researchers overlook the women whose daily lives are affected by

conflict, choosing instead to focus on the efforts of national women's organizations based in Yangon.[264] Meanwhile, international donors fund only a few women's CSOs – inevitably to the exclusion of others – creating competition over scarce resources.[265] These international pressures could damage the potential for a coordinated women's movement, particularly if donors advance conflicting or competing agendas.[266] As AGIPP points out in a policy brief, "While increased funding is welcome, this has the potential to increase duplication, division, and fracturing between women's rights and peace groups."[267]

CEDAW and UNSCR 1325: More Helpful International Frameworks

We found that tools other than the NSPAW are more often used to advance women's rights. Women's CSOs use international frameworks to raise awareness and mobilize support for women's rights, build their own programming, and collaborate with other women's CSOs. They work with international actors to compel a more equitable peace, and they constantly refer to the legislatively mandated gender quotas in their advocacy. Women also rely on relationships they have cultivated with peace process stakeholders and other important actors to influence the peace process. These strategies are reviewed in turn.

Leveraging international frameworks and support

A number of women rely on CEDAW and UNSCR 1325 to advance women's inclusion in the peace process, and generally find these frameworks more helpful than the NSPAW in doing so. CEDAW is the better known of the two[268] – the government has raised awareness via state-controlled television channels.[269] Interviewees mentioned that CEDAW is helpful because the CEDAW Committee can hold the government to its compulsory commitments,[270] and women in civil society can likewise monitor and provide feedback through CEDAW Shadow Reports.[271] According to some women interviewed, high-ranking EAO officials know about UNSCR 1325, and advocates generally feel more comfortable referencing UNSCR 1325 than NSPAW, perhaps because it has existed for longer.[272] Many women also utilize UNSCR 1325 (as opposed to the NSPAW) because it speaks directly to women's participation in the peace process.[273]

CEDAW and UNSCR 1325 have been used to inform the peacebuilding work of women's CSOs. For example:

- The Tavoyan Women's Union creates rural development plans pursuant to Article 7 of CEDAW concerning political and public life.[274]
- The KWHRO, which raises public awareness on women's rights, uses UNSCR 1325's four pillars – participation, prevention, protection, and relief and recovery – to build the curriculum for its trainings to women.[275]
- In 2015, when formulating the 15-point agenda of the Women and Peace Forum in Shan State, a convening for women to discuss their goals for the peace process, participants relied on the UNSCR 1325 framework.[276]

In addition to using CEDAW and 1325 to guide the substance of women's programming, women use both CEDAW and 1325 as normative and political frameworks to raise awareness among grassroots women and government officials.[277] This has been done on various occasions, including but not limited to:

- In training, Shalom references CEDAW and 1325 when training women MPs,[278] and TWU trains the Department of Social Welfare on the government's CEDAW obligations.[279]
- Nonviolent Peaceforce trains women civilian cease-fire monitors using UNSCR 1325, pointing out the resolution's affirmation of the importance of women in peacemaking, and showing them data suggesting that women's inclusion leads to more sustainable peace.[280] "I think we use [UNSCR 1325] to try to help women feel like they're part of something bigger," explained Jessica Work, project manager for Nonviolent Peaceforce. "There's a real reason why they need to participate . . . we actually need them to be involved in this process."[281]
- WLB spreads awareness to ethnic communities by translating UNSCR 1325 into an array of local languages.[282]

Women have used CEDAW and UNSCR 1325 to advocate for women's participation in the peace process.[283] Some examples:

- In July 2015, Nga Ngai from KWHRO met with MPs from Sagaing region, suggesting they put in place temporary special measures in accordance with CEDAW Article 7 to increase the number of women in formal peace mechanisms.[284]
- Mar Mar Cho references CEDAW when advising EAO officials.[285]
- In advocacy meetings with different stakeholders, the Mon Women's Organization emphasizes the participation pillar of UNSCR 1325 and its clause on women's "full involvement"[286] to call for women in leadership positions in various peace mechanisms.[287]

CEDAW appears to be a particularly useful tool through which women of diverse backgrounds collaborate to advocate for women's rights. Starting in 2015, the WLB – an organization composed of ethnic women and formed in exile – started collaborating with "insider" organizations such as GEN, WON, and CAM on CEDAW shadow reporting. When these CSOs jointly submitted recom-

mendations to the CEDAW Committee, they considered an array of women's viewpoints, creating a common agenda and a sense of unity among women previously divided by geography, ethnicity, and ideology.[288] As Tay Tay explained,

> Sometimes people feel that we are not representing the whole of Burma, but last time we all went together and lobbied, it's the whole of Burma women . . . our country has been divided by ideology and ethnicity. We don't trust each other, we don't talk to each other a lot. Now we women can come together to voice the same thing, as women.[289]

Referencing international frameworks is generally more effective with EAOs than with the government.[290] According to some interviewees, EAOs generally embrace these frameworks to gain allies in the international community.[291] The government and the Tatmadaw are generally more resistant to international norms.[292] In fact, when drafting the NCA, the government strategically omitted references to international frameworks to retain national ownership over the peace process.[293] In some cases, though, women have successfully appealed to the government's desire for good international standing to pass gender-sensitive legislation. GEN, for instance, persuaded the government to base the NSPAW on the Beijing Platform for Action, selling it as a way for the government to fulfill its commitments and thus improve its international reputation.[294]

When advocating for the PoVAW bill, women drew on ASEAN experiences to lobby the government. At first, the government claimed the existing penal code sufficiently protected women. GEN then contrasted Myanmar's penal code to VAW laws in the ten other ASEAN nations,[295] revealing gaps that led the government to draft the PoVAW bill.

Some CSOs bypass official stakeholders and advocate directly to international organizations, seeking international leverage for national negotiations.[296] GEN, for instance, implements a "No Woman, No Money" strategy, appealing to the Joint Peace Fund[297] to withhold money from EAOs and the government if they refuse to include more women in formal peace mechanisms.[298] The WLB asked the Olaf Center to compel the EAO-S to adhere to the 30 percent quota in the Framework for Political Dialogue.[299]

International actors have also supported women's participation. The UN encourages EAOs to include more women at all levels of the JMC, advising that instituting gender equitable policies would attract more international funding.[300] According to UN Peace and Development Advisor Peter Barwick, the UN's encouragement caused EAOs to slowly shift toward a policy calling for 50 percent women's participation in local JMCs. In December 2016, while working for the Paung Sie Facility (then known as the Peace Support Fund), Caitlin Williscroft successfully pushed for gender funding within her organization to prioritize women's CSOs at subnational levels.[301]

Despite these positive steps, international influence has its limits. The government generally resists external involvement in the peace process.[302] In December 2016, for instance, the government refused the Joint Peace Fund's allocation of funds for gender inclusion in the peace process, claiming it could not prioritize gender.[303]

According to several interviewees, many international donors fail to employ gender advisors who can strategize, push boundaries, and sustain the organizational momentum to compel gender mainstreaming.[304] This becomes apparent when donors fail to account for the concerns of women participating in the peace process, including childcare and security.[305]

Gender quotas

Nearly every interviewee referenced the 30 percent quota as a tool to advance women's participation in formal peace mechanisms.[306] The Framework for Political Dialogue states the selection process for Panglong shall "strive to achieve 30 percent women's participation"[307] and that "efforts shall be made to achieve 30 percent women's participation in the Working Committees" of the UPDJC.[308] Several national-level CSOs, including WLB and AGIPP, published policy briefs recommending adherence to the 30 percent quota in the political dialogue.[309]

Women also utilize the quota outside the political dialogue. The KNWO advocates for 30 percent women's representation on the Karenni National People Party's (KNPP) Central Committee.[310] Cheery Zahau, joint secretary of the Chin Progressive Party and cofounder of the Women's League of Chinland, works closely with two EAOs based in Chin State to secure 30 percent women's participation on the Chin National Council.[311]

While many women continue to advocate for the 30 percent quota, very few peace mechanisms have achieved it.[312] Women make up less than 17 percent of the UPDJC Working Committee, and while women's representation at Panglong is improving, it still hovers around 20 percent of total participants. Some suggest that peace process stakeholders lack the technical skills and political will to implement the quota.[313] Most EAOs and government ministries lack institutionalized policies and procedures to bring women into the peace process. According to KNWO general secretary Mie Mie, who surveyed the policies of all EAOs and their political parties, none of the EAO's political wings has policies to recruit women to leadership positions.[314]

Strategic relationship-building

Women peacebuilding experts seek to capitalize on their reputations and technical knowledge to participate in peace process meetings and advise stakeholders.[315] For example, because of her

established expertise on peace and international affairs, Mar Mar Cho, executive director of MIGs, was asked by EAO leaders to advise them during NCA negotiations.[316] According to WLB secretariat Julia Marip, WLB members were invited to the June 2015 Ethnic Summit to review the NCA single text draft because EAO leaders respect WLB as a politically savvy entity with technical knowledge outside the women's field.[317]

In some cases, women organizations' positive reputations create opportunities to collaborate with the government. After GEN led humanitarian relief efforts following Cyclone Nargis in 2008, government officials approached GEN to create a NAP on Women and Emergencies. GEN ultimately convinced the government to develop a broader plan to advance women: the NSPAW.[318] In other cases, women organizations' reputations bolster their advocacy. Cheery Zahau successfully advocated for women's participation on the Chin National Council because her organization, the Women's League of Chinland, is a well-known humanitarian aid provider across Chin State.[319]

Multiple women emphasized the importance of building trust with key stakeholders through personal relationships and collaboration.[320] To maintain a positive working relationship, AGIPP tends to take a constructive approach with government officials.[321] As AGIPP secretariat Nang Phyu Phyu Linn explained,

> If we don't know each other, it's very easy to refute our argument. If you have the contact or a good relationship, at least they'll respect us . . . we use critiques wisely. Here is the gap, here is the way you can fill the gap. With constructive feedback.[322]

These relationships create avenues through which women can influence and receive information from peace process officials. The WLB's Tay Tay relies on her ties to those inside the peace process to clarify official statements, to know what is going on behind the scenes, and to demand an increase in women's participation.[323] Backchannels, such as these, only materialize after years of trust-building.[324] Mar Mar Cho used the trust she earned with EAO leaders during NCA negotiations to advocate for women's participation in the peace process more broadly.[325] Na Sa Thyu, civilian ceasefire monitor for the JMC in Mon State, cultivated good relationships with KNU officials, which she says has been critical to ensuring that the NCA's civilian protection provisions are respected by both sides.[326]

Emerging Conclusions: Women's Strategic Advocacy Is More Useful than National Plans

Conditions in Myanmar are rapidly changing, and prospects for peace are far from guaranteed. Despite this, women in civil society maintain a continuous presence in public life, seeking to build peace, secure women's rights, and define the policies to govern a future nation.

Women have slowly gained some traction in official peace process mechanisms, particularly in the Civil Society Forum and in social sector dialogues. Female experts have served as trusted advisors to peace process officials, positions that enable them to directly influence gender-sensitive policies. Many more women, though, operate outside the official process. Some women's organizations, such as SWAN, collect and disseminate information regarding the conflict's effects on women, garnering international attention and informing advocacy on gender-equitable policies. Women's civil society organizations also build the capacity of women leaders seeking to enter public life. Throughout their activities, women mobilize to increase women's participation in the peace process and to promote policies for their protection in conflict. Women's CSOs have effectively liaised with women insiders, which has been essential for women in civil society to effectively advocate to individuals in the highest echelons of the peace process.

Some women in Myanmar utilize the NSPAW to help them achieve these goals. Several women interviewed find the NSPAW helpful to mobilize for women's participation in the peace process and to promote discussion of gender in the ongoing dialogue. Some also believe the NSPAW can be a starting point to implement other gender-friendly international frameworks at the national level. However, many women believe the NSPAW's usefulness is limited. They expressed frustration with the government's failure to put the NSPAW's policies into practice. Many government officials view implementing the NSPAW – and women-centered policies more generally – as secondary concerns that can only be attended to once the country achieves peace. Certain women's civil society organizations believe that the NSPAW is a top-down policy framework disconnected from women's work on the ground. Further, Myanmar's complex and diverse women's movement, and the international actors who support their work, may impede the ability of women's CSOs to effectively unite behind the NSPAW or any other similar document.

Recognizing the NSPAW's limitations, women's organizations in Myanmar are more likely to use other tools to advance their goals. Women's CSOs use international frameworks to raise awareness and mobilize support for women's rights, build their own programming, and collaborate with other women's CSOs. They also leverage gender quotas and interpersonal relationships to promote their objectives amidst conflict. Working strategically, women capitalize on the resources and tools available that best suit their resources, strategies, and Myanmar's dynamic conditions.

Ukraine: Women's Approach to Peacemaking Beyond the Formal Process

The conflict with Russia that erupted in 2014 has had widespread effects on Ukraine. The conflict also absorbs significant public resources.[327] In this context, we find that women have worked on the front lines to facilitate dialogue between antagonistic communities and advocate for policies that address women's needs, especially for women who are displaced or who have experienced interpersonal violence – and promoting women's participation in decision-making processes related to the conflict. Women have been powerful advocates for creating legislation that protects women's rights and for opening opportunities for women to serve in peace and security processes.

The field research suggests that the NAP has helped women advance their goals, functioning as a framework for CSO activities and government obligations, a strategic tool for advocacy, and a guide for extending the NAP's impact to the local level. However, as NAP implementation is partial, women's CSOs also use other international and national policies to make their voices heard. Women sought to leverage Ukraine's desire for European integration – and the associated reforms – to push for more gender-inclusive policies. Ukraine is embarking on a policy of decentralization, and this potentially provides greater opportunities for women to participate in decision-making, but ensuring resourcing for gender-related programming may be a challenge. A coalition of civil society leaders, parliamentarians, and growing number of women in government positions have advocated for and guided these changes, creating pressure on multiple fronts to bring Ukrainian women into peace and security processes.

Conflict Analysis: The War in Eastern Ukraine

In the decade following Ukraine's independence in 1991, oligarchs cemented their hold on the economy while political repression and corruption worsened.[328] The Soviet era left a highly centralized governing structure in the capital Kyiv, but little development in other regions. The Orange Revolution of 2004 demonstrated the strength of civil society and ushered in a brief reform period under Viktor Yushchenko,[329] but the global economic crisis of 2008 reversed this trend and deepened the divide between European-oriented western and central parts of the country, and Russian-oriented southern and eastern Ukraine.[330] A pro-Russia candidate, Viktor Yanukovich, won the 2010 presidential election and reverted to familiar patterns of corruption and financial and human rights abuses.[331]

In 2013, after months of negotiations on a trade agreement,[332] pressured by Moscow, President Yanukovich unexpectedly rejected closer political and economic ties with the European Union (EU). A few hundred student protesters gathered to object in Kyiv's

Map 2: Pre-conflict map of Ukraine

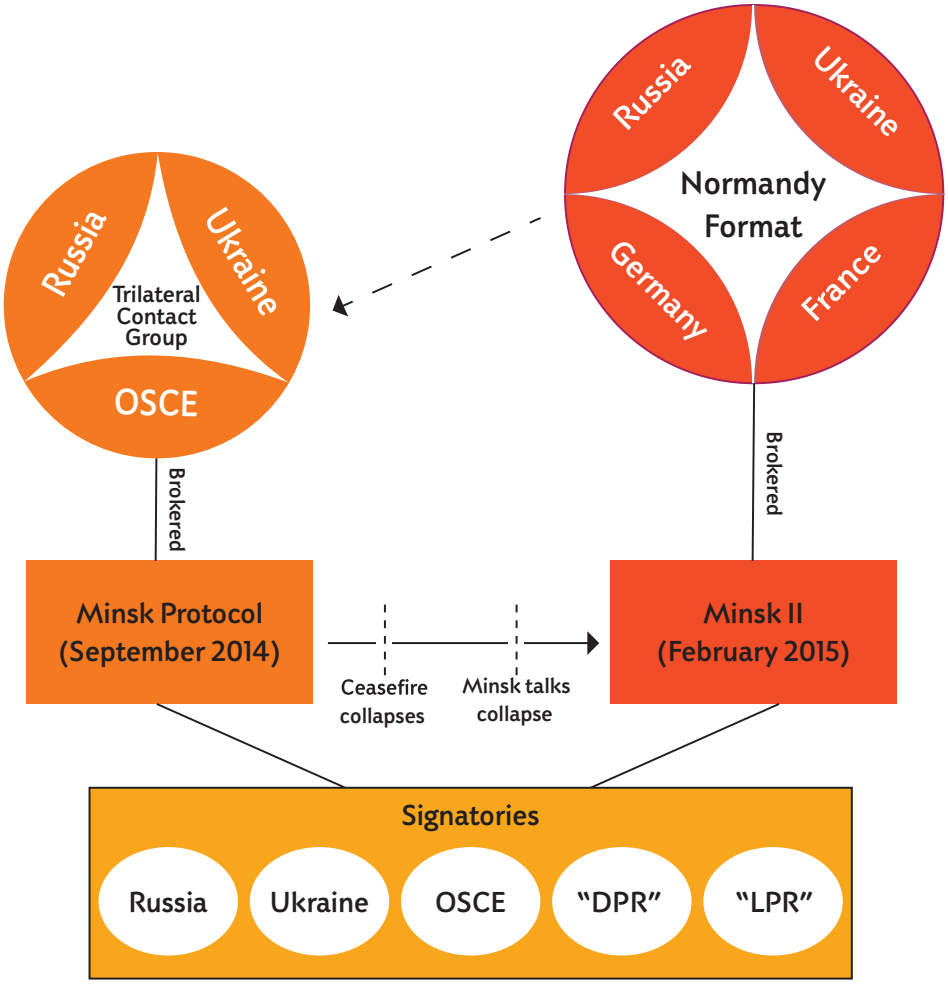
Maidan Nezalezhnosti (Independence Square). The protest gained momentum, eventually erupting after Ukraine's notorious Berkut special forces attacked the protesters. Months of protests – called Euromaidan – led to an encampment of thousands of citizens of all ages, including large numbers of women, who demonstrated for an end to corruption, closer ties to Europe, and to move away from Russia.[333] This came to a head in late February 2014, and Yanukovich and many of his ministers fled for Russia.[334] In May 2014 Petro Poroshenko was elected as president.

The annexation of Crimea and the eruption of conflict

Days before Yanukovich fled, Russian president Vladimir Putin ordered military drills on the Russia-Ukraine border that buttresses the Crimean peninsula, and around the same time, unaffiliated armed men – later confirmed to have weapons used only by Russian forces[335] – surrounded airports and government facilities in Crimea, including the regional parliament.[336] Two weeks later, the Crimean parliament voted to secede from Ukraine and join the Russian Federation; a sham public referendum – disputed by international watchdogs – confirmed the vote.[337] Putin and Crimean leaders subsequently signed a treaty admitting Crimea as a federal subject of Russia.[338] While pro-Russian Crimeans and Russians justified the annexation of Crimea as a long-delayed reunification[339] with the Russian motherland,[340] Ukrainians and the international community condemned it as a violation of Ukraine's sovereignty in breach of international law.[341]

Less than a month after the annexation, protests erupted in Ukraine's eastern oblasts[342] of Luhansk and Donetsk – part of the Donbas region. Pro-Russian separatists occupied government

The Minsk Process and Its Surrounding Mechanisms

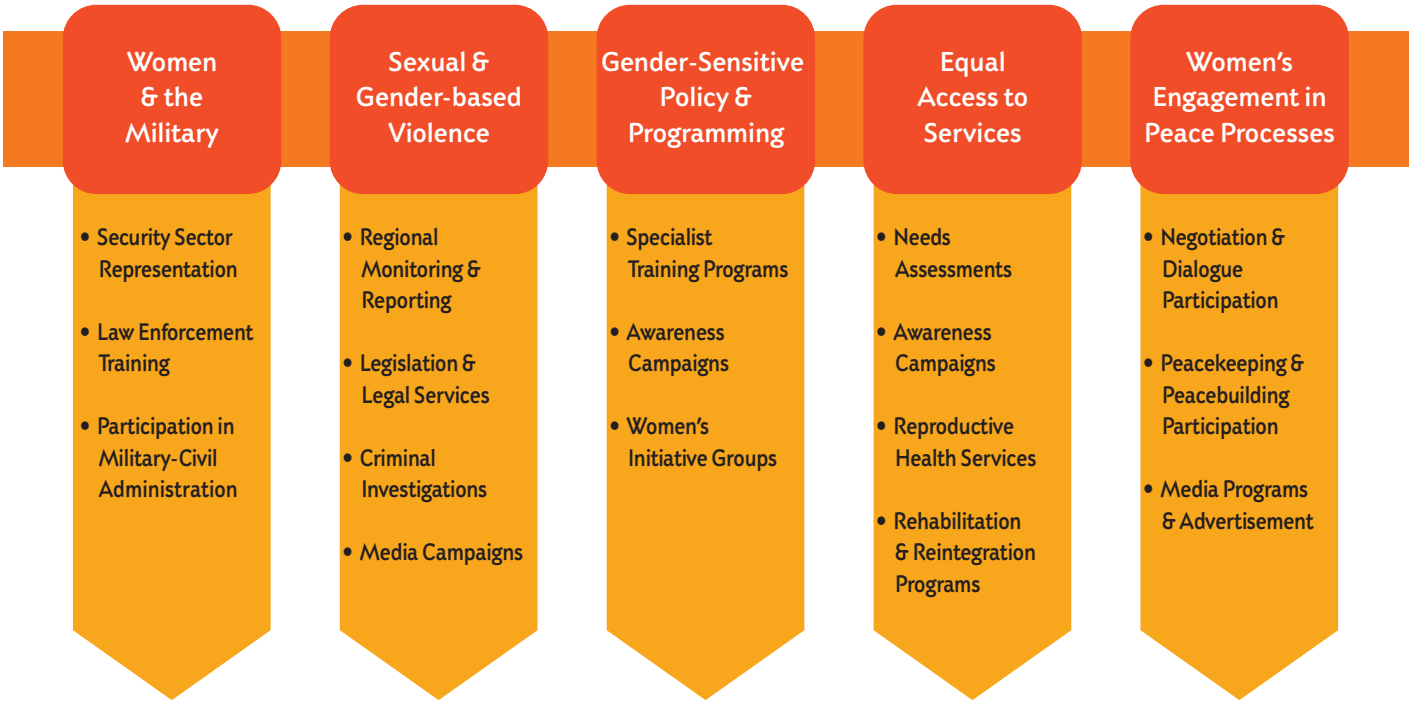


buildings and held referendums to grant autonomy to the eastern regions. Luhansk and Donetsk declared independence on May 12 after unauthorized referendums, which Ukraine and the international community do not recognize.[343] The Ukrainian government refused to accept the secession of the eastern regions,[344] and tensions quickly deteriorated into armed violence, with the government launching offensives to regain control of the eastern regions.[345] As the fighting continued between the Russian-armed separatists and Ukrainian soldiers, the rebel groups established interim governing authorities called the Luhansk People's Republic (LPR) and the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR), though these remain unrecognized by the international community.[346]

Since 2014, ongoing fighting has led to approximately ten thousand deaths,[347] and nearly two million people have been registered as internally displaced,[348] many of whom have fled into neighboring Luhansk and Donetsk.[349]

There have been several steps toward a diplomatic solution to the conflict. In June 2014 an informal meeting between representatives of Ukraine, Russia, France, and Germany led to the formation of a standing group known as the Normandy Format to facilitate dialogue between Ukraine and Russia.[350] These high-level meetings helped spur the creation of the Trilateral Contact Group, with representatives from Ukraine, Russia, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) working toward a diplomatic solution to the Donbas crisis.[351] In September 2014 representatives from Ukraine, Russia, and the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics signed the Minsk Protocol, a platform supported by the OSCE.[352] Known as Minsk I, the agreement included a short-lived cease-fire and an exchange of prisoners.[353] A second more robust cease-fire, known as Minsk II, came into effect in March 2015, with additional support from France and Germany.[354] Minsk II laid out a basic framework for moving beyond a cease-fire to a political agreement, including four

NAP Themes



working groups[355] to be overseen by the Trilateral Contact Group. There has been little further progress.

The fighting and loss of life continue. Discussions have stalled as the parties debate the order of talks on decentralization, local elections, and the guarantee of security. As a result, the talks have not yielded any movement toward a comprehensive peace deal.[356] The Minsk process is frozen at the political level while violence continues on the ground.

The status of women in Ukraine

Despite the patriarchal nature of Ukrainian society, Ukraine has made significant progress on gender equality – for example, over 90 percent of women have some secondary education and the country ranks 55 out of the 159 countries covered in the global Gender Inequality Index.[357] Yet there remain gaps between men and women, some of which have been exacerbated by the conflict. Only about half of women, compared to two-thirds of men, participate in the labor force.[358] Parliamentary representation is very low by global and regional standards – less than half the global mean.[359]

Some estimates indicate women made up nearly 45 percent of participants in Euromaidan,[360] playing key roles in organizing and managing months of protest. This was translated into some political gains; women won 11 percent of the seats in the Verkhovna Rada (Ukraine's parliament, or Rada)[361] in the October 2014 elections, an increase from the previous 8.6 percent.[362] The newly elected women politicians actively crafted and put forth legislation, including the passage of a gender quota of 30 percent for municipal elections.[363] In February 2016, Ukraine became the first country to adopt a National Action Plan on 1325 in the midst of an armed conflict. The plan lays out an agenda to increase women's participation in conflict-related processes and to address women's needs in the conflict.

Ukraine's NAP implementation has been stymied by low capacity, limited resources, poor coordination among ministries, and a lack of accountability mechanisms.[364] How to realize the NAP's potential to address women's needs in conflict settings – and which governmental office is best placed to do so – remains a pressing issue.

Women's activism also translated into institutional changes for the armed forces. Prior to Euromaidan, women were barred from serving in combat roles and held official positions as secretaries and cooks. However, a groundbreaking 2015 study by the Ukrainian Women's Fund, *Invisible Battalion*, found that women were operating weaponry on the front lines.[365] If they were injured, they were excluded from proper health benefits and compensation.[366] The military lifted restrictions on women's service in 2016, allowing them to serve in combat roles and receive military salaries and pensions for their service.[367]

Despite these gains, women face significant challenges. They are estimated to be the majority of Ukraine's growing IDP population.

Although sex-disaggregated data is not available,[368] some estimates suggest women comprise as many as two-thirds of IDPs.[369] Women IDPs often become the sole caretakers and financial providers of children and the elderly, as men stay behind in home communities to guard property or to fight.[370] Host communities are often wary of IDPs, including women IDPs, given the unknown allegiance of relatives who remain in the east.[371] Women are also uniquely affected in the conflict zone, with increasing reports of sexual violence in Crimea and Ukraine's eastern provinces.[372] Some hotlines have noted an increase in women reporting domestic violence from both returning fighters and men in the IDP community.[373]

Women's Contributions to Peace

Women are leading peacebuilding efforts in a range of capacities, despite being largely excluded from formal negotiations. Many women in government, including in several high-level positions, are advancing peacebuilding efforts in official legislative or military capacities. These women, particularly in the parliament, open opportunities for greater civil society engagement and for more women to have their voices heard by decision-makers.

Ukraine has a vibrant civil society sector, including many women's organizations. Many of the latter have shifted their focus to address women's conflict-related needs and to ensure that women have opportunities to participate in official security mechanisms. Outside official processes, many women are seeking to build peace by bringing together diverse communities through dialogues, media programming, and civil society partnerships across the country, including the war zones. In doing so, women facilitate trust between divergent groups – the starting point for reconciliation. Women and women's organizations have contributed to peace in various ways, as examined below.

Women are active and engaged agents in Ukraine's peace and conflict mechanisms. While few are involved in the Minsk process, many are active in the military, the police, and volunteer brigades on the front line. Women also served in important leadership roles at Euromaidan, and the legacy of this leadership continues through women's leadership at the national level.

Exclusion from peace process

The CEDAW Committee, in its 2017 review of Ukraine's policies and progress, expressed concern that women have been excluded from the peace process.[374] Only two women participate directly in the Minsk process as high-level participants. The first is Iryna Gerashchenko, first deputy chairman of the Rada and former co-chair of the Equal Opportunities Caucus (EOC), who serves as the president of Ukraine's humanitarian envoy in the Minsk process. She is seen as an important advocate for women's rights,[375] promoting the needs of wives and mothers of prisoners of war.[376] The second is Olga Ajvazovska, a civil society leader, who serves as an expert in the political subgroup of the Trilateral Contact Group.[377]

The Minsk process lacks an official mechanism for civil society participation, which limits women's access to the process.[378] Some CSOs have sought ways to access the formal process, not always with success.[379] The International Center for Policy Studies, for instance, convenes dialogues of women activists, including women from nongovernment-controlled areas, aiming to monitor the Minsk agreement and to open space for women's voices at the formal level.[380] The Ukraine Women's Fund (UWF) approached the French embassy, hoping to arrange a formal platform for civil society that runs parallel to Minsk, but the plan was not successful.[381] Natalia Karbowska, director of strategic development at UWF, sees a connection between UWF's local peacebuilding efforts and the Minsk process – given the common goals of peace and stability – but claims that those in the formal process do not see that connection.[382]

Women have worked as part of security forces, and many of the individuals the authors interviewed saw this as key to gender equality and crucial for building peace, especially in conflict-affected communities. A number of women are active in Ukraine's war effort, serving in the military, police, and volunteer brigades supporting the military, the National Guard, and volunteer battalions. More than sixteen thousand women serve in the military,[383] and they fight on the front lines as snipers, drive tanks, and provide intelligence.[384] According to an official in the National Police, women also make up about 21 percent of Ukraine's police force and 15 percent of patrol units.[385] Recruitment of women officers is part of a broader effort to build trust in the police force in keeping with Ukraine's slate of political and security reforms.[386] Women also organize and lead volunteer brigades that deliver supplies to soldiers in the East.[387] These volunteer brigades often accompany Ukrainian troops and support their operations on the front lines, and many of the volunteers reportedly also engage as combatants.[388]

Political activism

Ukrainian women helped lead the revolution and subsequent political transition. As noted above, there were many women protesters at Euromaidan, organizing and managing the protest at all levels,[389] often on the front lines[390] and subject to attack. Women helped to sustain the protest, serving food, providing medical care, documenting events, providing legal aid, and supporting protesters who were in danger of being kidnapped or harmed.[391] Their role challenged traditional conceptions about women's roles in the public sphere and created a platform to discuss societal reform. Eastern Europe scholar Sarah Phillips argues,

> Maidan was a productive space for Ukraine's feminists, providing opportunities for the articulation of divergent yet reconcilable perspectives on women's activism, social change. . . . Women's rights principles are being introduced to segments of the population previously reluctant to embrace feminism.[392]

Phillips also argues that women's highly visible efforts at Euromaidan inspired them to seek roles in local and national government.[393] The public role of women at Euromaidan at a critical time for the country contributed to a new awareness of the role of women in Ukrainian society as leaders. As noted above, the share of female MPs rose by two percentage points, while the change in government empowered women MPs who aligned themselves with the Poroshenko bloc, many of whom are leaders and members of the EOC, a Rada group focused on gender equality.

In the Rada, the EOC, which was created in 2011 and comprises over 45 of the Rada's 450 MPs, leads the gender equality effort.[394] Some of these activities grew out of the protests: after working together to help injured Euromaidan protestors, MPs Mariia Ionova, Iryna Gerashchenko, and Iryna Lutsenko formalized their collaboration in the EOC.[395] Lutsenko reported that her male colleagues agreed to support women MPs' legislative efforts because of their leadership at Euromaidan, arguing that women MPs "forced them to join our Equal Opportunity Caucus by our activism."[396]

Members of the EOC have successfully championed creating electoral quotas at the local level, opening positions in the military to women, and creating and monitoring the NAP.[397] In March 2016 the Caucus created the Public Council on Gender (PCG), which convenes six gender working groups,[398] each co-chaired by an MP and civil society leader. These working groups provide space for coordinated advocacy efforts on legislative priorities,[399] including combating domestic violence and promoting equal pay, pension reform, and political participation. For example, MP Aliona Babak and Natalia Karbowska of UWF co-chair the working group on economic empowerment; they meet every two months to discuss potential policy changes and to develop strategies to achieve change.[400]

Representative of the President of Ukraine in the Parliament of Ukraine Iryna Lutsenko and MPs Gerashchenko and Ionova travel frequently to the East, meeting with hospital staff, school staff, IDPs, and women in the military.[401] Their firsthand experiences grant them legitimacy among their Rada colleagues to discuss the conflict in the East.[402] As Ionova attests, the caucus is not afraid to speak about unpopular or problematic topics,[403] including issues related to gender equality. For Lutsenko, her work directly relates to building peace in Ukraine:

> I can't really distinguish this peacemaking process from the process that we are making, because peacemaking is making sure that children are safe, it's working on education issues and working against domestic violence. Women's participation on these issues is so obvious and the Equal Opportunities Caucus is working exactly on these issues.[404]

Ukrainian women seek to influence national legislation related to women's protection, especially on preventing GBV and domestic violence. The EOC often leads legislative advocacy, mobilizing support through convenings of MPs, government officials, and civil society leaders. EOC-led working groups also connect with decision-makers in government ministries and the Rada to advance women's rights.[405] Natalia Karbowska of the UWF emphasized the role of the Caucus in connecting grassroots actors and legislators, since activists must work with the Rada to affect legislation.[406] Many organizations work closely with the Caucus to organize events, raise awareness, and push for legislative action.[407]

This collaboration has yielded significant gains, most notably the creation of the NAP.[408] Civil society organizations, led by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF),[409] created a draft NAP in 2011.[410] The Ministry of Social Policy took up the task of creating a formal NAP,[411] given its responsibility for gender-related legislation.[412] This official plan differs from the civil society-led plan but incorporated input from UN Women, the OSCE, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and 15 CSOs, including the Women's Information Consultative Center, HealthRight International, UWF, and La Strada.[413] Civil society, the EOC, and international organizations like UN Women and the OSCE lobbied and advocated for the creation of the NAP and for the NAP to be inclusive and accountable.[414]

Advocacy was also key in opening military positions to women. Civil society and MPs used the *Invisible Battalion* report to demonstrate the obstacles for women in the armed forces and to push for opening more opportunities for women to serve. This is consistently regarded across civil society and the EOC as a major achievement for the WPS agenda in Ukraine.[415] Locally, women advocate for the return of detained Ukrainian soldiers and for the safety and support of individuals in the gray zone.[416]

Leading informal peacebuilding and dialogues to advance reconciliation

Women are the leaders of Ukraine's civil society,[417] and they guide informal peacebuilding, both as leaders of peacebuilding initiatives and as participants in dialogues. A number of women's organizations and CSOs led by women, often in partnership with international organizations and government, organize dialogue and mediations at local, national, and regional levels. Some of these efforts focus on women, while others are broader. Some examples include:

- UWF, Crimea SOS, and Public House Ukraine build relationships between IDPs and host communities, using theater, festivals, events, or common activities to bridge the divide.[418]
- UWF and the Union of Women of Ukraine connect people in the East with the rest of Ukraine, or conduct similar activities between communities in the East.[419]
- The International Center for Policy Studies organizes dialogue between women across Ukraine and Russia, including women from nongovernment-controlled areas.[420]

- The Regional Women's Dialogue Platform for UNSCR 1325 in Southern and Eastern Europe/Central Asia (Women's Peace Dialogue) began as a dialogue between women civil society leaders in Ukraine and Russia and has expanded to draw members from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Moldova, and Tajikistan.[421] It aims to facilitate dialogue, create shared goals, and formulate best practices in order to reach official ongoing peace processes in the region,[422] with support from multilateral organizations such as the OSCE, NGOs such as United Methodist Women, and the government of Austria, among others.[423]

For women's groups across Ukraine, however, organizing these dialogues can be challenging. It can be dangerous for people in the gray zone and in Russia to participate.[424] Some women think that dialogue is premature, as Russia still occupies portions of Ukraine.[425]

Many CSOs document and share stories through media coverage and at events, often invoking a sense of a common culture to build understanding across communities. This takes place in a variety of fora, from small gatherings to large events and through national media coverage. Kateryna Levchenko, director of La Strada, highlighted the importance of such efforts: "Without [the] willing[ness] of society, it will not be possible to keep peace, to build peace, and to create peace."[426] Ukraine Crisis Media Center (UCMC), in addition to facilitating dialogue, offers a media platform for CSOs to disseminate information. UCMC explicitly sees its work as peacebuilding, trying to connect people to Europe and the rest of the world.[427] Several organizations, including UCMC, Centre UA, Gay Alliance Ukraine, and the Union of IDPs, highlight positive stories about people engaging in conflict resolution or building peace in order to build a sense of connection and respect for people responding to the crisis or living in the East.[428]

Many Ukrainian government officials, diplomats, and civil society leaders strongly believe that women are key to resolving the conflict.[429] Ambassador Eileen Malloy, the Senior Advisor on Minsk Implementation for the US government, envisions women playing a leadership role in Ukraine's national reconciliation.[430] La Strada's Levchenko argues, "The role of women in conflict resolution has been instrumental for more effective conflict resolution. . . . It's not only because we are half of society . . . but we also can see that women[']s participation can make such conflict resolution more effective."[431]

Addressing data gaps

The CEDAW Committee is among the observers concerned about the lack of gender disaggregated data needed for informed and targeted policymaking,[432] and a number of women's CSOs work to fill this data gap.

In Ukraine, women's CSOs gather data about conflict-related issues, particularly SGBV and the needs of IDPs, as part of efforts to raise awareness about the conflict's effects on the population. Some organizations conduct formal research projects; others gather information from the people with whom they work, often IDPs. For example, Centre UA, the Union of IDPs, Public House Ukraine, and Crimea SOS collect community-level information about displacement and the needs of IDPs.[433]

The data have been used in advocacy as well as to inform provision of services to vulnerable populations. La Strada collects data on GBV via its hotline, and Kateryna Levchenko, La Strada's director, argued that providing information about current events and the status of women is key to building peace: "Increasing of knowledge, dissemination of information is also very important for conflict resolution because . . . we saw . . . that conflict started because people didn't have information."[434]

Some local groups partner with international organizations to understand the effects of conflict on women and other sociopolitical groups,[435] the needs of female and male ex-combatants and their families,[436] the needs of IDPs,[437] the gendered dimensions of displacement, and the effects and potential opportunities of political decentralization for women.[438] The most prominent of these studies was the above-mentioned *Invisible Battalion,* which was influential in opening more positions in the military for women[439] and for encouraging the adoption of the NAP itself.[440] Civil society and MPs in the EOC rallied around this report and used it to lobby for greater opportunities for women in the armed forces.

Building capacity

The relevant training efforts of civil society organizations aim to support women's participation in decision-making and build capacity to provide more comprehensive services to women affected by violence and conflict.

UN Women, Centre UA, NDI, Public House Ukraine, Gay Alliance Ukraine, and the International Center for Policy Studies are among the agencies and groups working to enable women to participate more fully in political processes.[441] Some organizations also facilitate political participation and broader governance reform, working with communities to re-envision their futures. Centre UA works with 15 towns to create political alternatives and weaken the separatist movement, providing coaches to build the capacity of civil society and teaching local organizations how to engage in the political process, as well as helping women enter the political system.[442] Together with UN Women, UWF facilitates strategic planning with women in Donetsk and Luhansk, prompting them to think about life in their communities and their visions for the future.[443]

Women's organizations also provide training and capacity-building to a wider audience, particularly service providers, focusing on conflict- and women-specific issues. Several CSOs, including the Union of IDPs of Donetsk and East of Ukraine, Public House Ukraine,

Women's Information Consultative Center, and the Ukrainian Peacebuilding School, conduct training sessions on conflict management and prevention, and often focus on communication between IDPs and host communities.[444] La Strada and HealthRight International have trained service providers so they can better address women's needs, particularly related to GBV.[445]

Providing services for women

Women are the majority of humanitarian aid and service providers in Ukraine.[446] Many individuals interviewed see women as the face of volunteer initiatives and hotlines and as more active than men in civil society.[447] Many victims of conflict-related sexual violence first approach CSOs for humanitarian aid, medical services, and legal aid.[448]

Women and the CSOs they lead provide both immediate and longer-term services to those in need. For people fleeing conflict zones – both in the East and in Crimea[449] – women provide basic supplies, such as clothing,[450] food,[451] hygiene supplies,[452] money,[453] and coal heaters and other winter supplies.[454] Providers often integrate these services to include psychological,[455] legal,[456] and medical aid[457] to help IDPs integrate into host communities and build new livelihoods. Some CSOs, such as Crimea SOS, connect IDPs to other services, particularly economic resources.[458] This has included organizing employment fairs,[459] training women in entrepreneurship or on how to create microbusinesses,[460] or distributing information about where to find work,[461] financial resources, or housing.[462] UWF provides aid in the gray zone, such as medical assistance and information about current events and available resources.[463]

Women's CSOs serve survivors of domestic violence and GBV, often through hotlines and mobile services. Among others, La Strada and Gay Alliance Ukraine operate hotlines to collect reports of violence and to relay information about resources to survivors.[464] For example, in February 2016, La Strada, supported by the UNFPA, received almost 40,000 calls through the National Toll-Free Hot Line on Prevention of Domestic Violence, Human Trafficking and Gender Discrimination; 68 percent of calls were from women.[465] In the first six months of 2016, La Strada received a record number of calls from Kyiv, Kyiv oblast, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, and Luhansk, and 90 percent of calls came from women experiencing psychological and physical domestic violence.[466]

While the conflict has increased the need for services in the East, government provisions remain limited.[467] HealthRight International, through the Ukrainian Foundation for Public Health, the Ministry of Social Policy, and UNFPA have operated 26 mobile units since November 2015 that provide services for women survivors of GBV and domestic violence in five conflict-affected regions in the East.[468] These units provide case management, shelters, and rehabilitation programs for survivors,[469] and each team works closely with police and comprises two psychologists and a social worker.[470] Since October 2015, the mobile units operating in Donetsk have served 2,000 people, 90 percent of whom were women.[471]

The prevention of violence against women connects to the broader objectives of gender equality and peace. According to Leokadiia Gerasymenko, president of the Union of Women of Ukraine, "Peace means peace at home, peace at work, peace in country, peace with neighborhoods,"[472] a view shared by Representative of the President of Ukraine in the Parliament of Ukraine Iryna Lutsenko, who said, "The point where the equality begins is the absence of violence inside the family."[473]

National Plans: Guiding CSO Advocacy and Government Activity

In Ukraine the NAP has been used as an organizing pillar for CSO and government work and has particularly enabled CSO-led advocacy. The NAP has been a useful tool for structuring related work by women's organizations and government and enabling women to advocate for women's protection and participation.

The NAP helps to inform, identify, and organize work by women's organizations and government

The 2016 NAP has provided a foundation and a structure for engagement for civil society and across government agencies. Leokadiia Gerasymenko referred to the NAP as "the Bible" for the Union of Women of Ukraine, as it created the foundation for the organization's own framework for advocacy and dialogue.[474] La Strada, Public House Ukraine, and the International Center for Policy Studies see the NAP as a guide for action.[475] These groups are using the NAP strategically to structure their own activities and to enhance their ability to work with the government.

The NAP also guides government activities.[476] The NAP provides a framework for policy priorities that is then implemented through action plans specific to ministry and regional administration. Officials in the security sector use the NAP to gather data related to violence against women,[477] provide gender-related training for government employees[478] and for the public, [479] and launch public information campaigns about women and the conflict.[480]

Ukraine's NAP prompted the creation of several ministry-specific and localized plans, intended to implement the priorities enshrined in the NAP. The Ministry of Defense, for instance, created an action plan specific to its own capacities and staff, which is often cited as one of the NAP's greatest successes thus far.[481] Supported by UN Women, Olena Suslova, chair of the board of the Women's Information Consultative Center, serves as a gender advisor to the Ministries of Defense and Internal Affairs to ensure that their ministry-level plans are useful and effective.[482] With the support of UN Women, the Ministry of Defense has created a WPS working group, comprising 19 members and chaired by the Deputy Minister of Defense,[483] and allocated funding for gender-specific policies.[484]

The Ministry of Internal Affairs used its mandate under the NAP to create the Interagency Working Group to Implement Resolution 1325. As part of this effort, the National Police established a Women Police Officers Unit to counter domestic and gender-based violence in Kyiv, Odessa, and Severodonetsk.[485] The Ministry argues that including women in the national police will improve the effectiveness of the force: "Women police officers often possess better communication skills than their male counterparts and are better able to facilitate the cooperation and trust required to implement a community policing model."[486]

UN Women has supported the localization of the NAP in Donetsk and Luhansk.[487] Both regions modified the NAP to meet local medical, humanitarian, educational, and administrative needs, given the ongoing conflict. The NAP has reportedly guided the Donetsk regional administration's activities and has prompted policy shifts amidst the ongoing conflict,[488] and using the NAP, Donetsk launched a program for families and youth affected by the conflict in the region.[489] The Donetsk regional administration has also begun to train and empower women to be active participants in peacemaking and decision-making processes, and started providing case management for IDPs, the majority of whom (1,033 out of 1,310 served) are women. Donetsk also works with the Ministry of Social Policy to develop shelters for women victims of domestic violence.[490] Luhansk tailored its NAP to address the AIDS epidemic among young women and created a database of vulnerable families to document those most in need of state support, based on their conflict-related challenges.[491]

The NAP appears to have facilitated government and civil society coordination. As discussed above, the EOC uses the NAP to coordinate with civil society and international development partners to create a framework for action and advocacy.[492] The NAP's value as a collaborative tool is perhaps most apparent in the realm of service provision. Guided by the NAP's focus on providing services to conflict-affected women, the Ministry of Internal Affairs makes efforts to connect individuals calling their emergency hotline to social services provided by CSOs.[493] Some also argue the NAP encouraged women-focused collaboration between CSOs and officials in the Luhansk and Donetsk regional administrations to identify women in need of resources and to incorporate women into decision-making processes.[494]

The NAP supports advocacy for women's protection and participation

Some women's CSOs have successfully used Ukraine's NAP as an advocacy tool.[495] UWF, for instance, used language from the NAP to push for quotas in local elections. The group had long advocated for quotas, but it was not until the launch of the NAP that their advocacy was successful.[496] Using the NAP, UWF also lobbied oblast administrations and local councils to consider the needs of IDPs in local development.[497]

In their advocacy, CSOs point directly to the government's commitments enshrined in the NAP.[498] Karbowska notes,

> [The NAP] gives us a response to those who are saying that there is no time for gender equality or women's rights in the country which is in war now. We immediately say, "Here you adopted, you, the government, you adopted the NAP which talks about the importance of women in times of war, in the time of conflict," and that's the argument that works . . . in our country.[499]

The EOC, using the *Invisible Battalion* study as evidence and the NAP as an advocacy tool, successfully pushed the Ministry of Defense to open more positions for women in the military,[500] which is one of the NAP's most frequently cited successes.[501] Women also utilized the NAP to advocate for providing hygienic products and women's uniforms for women in the military, as well as the promotion of women to high-ranking positions.[502] Olga Derkach, senior officer at the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, said the NAP has helped increase representation of women in senior security positions, although data to verify this point were not available.[503]

The NAP provides a framework for government and civil society cooperation and has been a tool to support advocacy efforts. The NAP provides a set of commitments that MPs, civil society leaders, and government officials call on to determine policy priorities.

National Plan Limitations

The NAP is a relatively new policy, and implementation remains challenging. As in Myanmar, implementation appears to have been limited by a lack of resources, accountability, and awareness. Additional factors cited in interviews include the large size of Ukraine,[504] a lack of professionals in the civil service,[505] and the inability to implement the NAP in the East.[506] Greater decentralization may provide opportunities for women to participate at the local level, but it also raises resourcing questions.

The government has designated little funding for NAP implementation, pushing the financial burden largely onto international organizations and CSOs.[507] The Ministry of Social Policy – the department that created the NAP and was responsible for coordinating the first year of NAP implementation – has limited funding.[508]

In 2017 the government established a parliamentary subcommittee to exercise oversight over NAP implementation within the executive and coordinate the work of NGOs on gender.[509] It also shifted responsibility for NAP implementation to the commissioner for equal opportunities for men and women, under the Office of the Vice Prime Minister for Europe Integration, Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze.[510] The position has been made responsible for gender integration across the government, which includes

overseeing the implementation of the NAP. The Ministry of Social Policy continues to have responsibility for coordination but is no longer the primary facilitator of this process. The Vice Prime Minister's Office is expected to bring greater authority and urgency to the 1325 agenda. At the same time, however, much of the responsibility for NAP implementation, such as service provision, incorporation of women into the security sector, or inclusion of women in decision-making bodies falls to ministries and local administrations in a context of increased decentralization. There remains a risk that NAP implementation in conflict regions will remain under-resourced and uncoordinated.[511] Some of these issues arise because the NAP is relatively new; time is needed to raise awareness and create effective implementation and accountability mechanisms.

The ongoing conflict in Ukraine makes implementation of the NAP especially challenging. The conflict absorbs financial and human resources and diverts them to military operations.[512] Consequently, the goals enshrined in the NAP, such as protecting victims of violence, are even more important during conflict and in areas like the gray zone.[513]

Other Tools to Advance Women's Rights

Given the limitations of the NAP, women have also utilized a broader range of tools to advance women's rights and make their voices heard. Women civil society leaders, parliamentarians, and government officials have tapped into Ukraine's foreign policy and conflict-related objectives, particularly integration with Europe, to advocate for women's protection and participation.

Leveraging international and regional influence

A number of women are utilizing regional and international frameworks and norms to support women's rights, protect women, and hold perpetrators responsible for violence against women during the conflict. Capitalizing on Kyiv's desire to integrate with the EU, women both inside and outside the government have argued for national standards in line with European gender equality policies. MP Iryna Suslova attributes Ukraine's implementation of gender equality programs (e.g., the gender quota, the Istanbul Convention,[514] and UNSCR 1325 via the NAP) to the larger EU accession process. Advancing gender equality moves Ukraine closer to meeting the requirements for the EU/Ukraine Association Agreement.[515] For example, to meet expectations of the EU's Gender Equality Commission and the Council of Europe, Ukraine works to improve access to justice for women, especially the internally displaced.[516] Anastasia Dieieva, Deputy Minister of European Integration in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, said European integration is the biggest goal for the Ministry, which holds weekly meetings to review progress.[517]

Women have also pushed the Rada to ratify the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, though to date without success. Efforts failed in November 2016 and again in September 2017 due to opposition by religious leaders and more conservative members of the Rada who focused on the convention's definitions of "gender" and "sexuality,"[518] as well as public-spending shortfalls for the implementation of Istanbul's commitments.[519] Several other interviewees regarded ratification as a way to encourage the creation of shelters and mobile brigades[520] and lead to more policies seeking to curb domestic violence and GBV in conflict areas.[521]

Other frameworks have been used to document women's experiences during the conflict. For example, the government engages with the International Criminal Court (ICC) to document violence in Ukraine and to address human rights violations.[522] The Ministry of Justice gathers facts about the role of women and violations of women's rights,[523] while the Women's Information Consultative Center organized a study tour to the ICC for MPs, security sector professionals, and NGOs to learn best practices for mitigating sexual violence in Ukraine.[524] Through these different tracks, the government and civil society are working toward accountability for violence against women during the conflict.

Some CSOs noted that they had learned from Georgia's experience in its conflict with Russia, most notably during the 2008 war and the status of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.[525] The first Georgian NAP addresses women's needs in conflict-affected areas, serving IDPs, and including women in official peacemaking roles,[526] and the second NAP has an emphasis on IDPs, the integration of women into the security sector, the prevention of GBV, and the support for women's CSOs.[527] Both documents provide examples for Ukraine's NAP design and implementation. Several Ukrainian CSOs have conducted exchanges with Georgian officials and civil society leaders. The design of the Ministry of Defense action plan was informed by analysis of international experience, including Georgia's.[528] UWF worked with the Women's Information Center in Georgia, analyzing NAP implementation and sharing expertise, particularly to inform UWF's work in the gray zone.[529] According to Natalia Karbowska, this exercise also served a strategic purpose: if local policymakers see how the NAP works in other countries, they may be more open to implementing the Ukrainian NAP.[530]

Using national frameworks that support gender equality

Some women cited other frameworks as useful tools to support their advocacy and policy goals. Ukraine has created several national frameworks to address human rights across the country, IDP rights, civil service reform, and gender-sensitive education reform.

The most promising is the 2015 National Human Rights Strategy and accompanying action plan, which address human rights broadly in Ukraine and predated the NAP. These documents recognize gender equality as a policy priority for Ukraine[531] and cover a wide range of issues, including legal rights related to speech and assembly; prevention of discrimination; protection for IDPs and people affected by conflict; the rights to social security, healthcare, and education; and indigenous and minority rights.[532] The Strategy incorporates many of the issues of concern to women's CSOs, such as GBV, human trafficking, child marriage, domestic violence, and gender equality.[533] Many organizations emphasized the importance of the Strategy's all-encompassing framework, which includes women's rights, children's rights, LGBTQ rights, rights of churches, and IDP rights –together in a single document.[534] According to several interviewees, the Strategy thus spurs strategic collaboration across a large subset of civil society groups and the government.[535]

In contrast to the NAP, the National Human Rights Strategy is well known in Ukraine. Indeed, some 220 CSOs participated in its drafting, offering their priorities for policy and reform.[536] This created a sense of ownership over the document, and CSOs often use it in their advocacy and lobbying.[537] Like the NAP, the Strategy explicitly links to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine.[538] The Strategy builds on domestic experience and frameworks as well as those developed by the international community, most notably the UN, Council of Europe, OSCE, and European Court of Human Rights.[539] However, like the NAP, the Strategy and Action Plan have not been fully implemented, and monitoring and accountability remain problematic.[540]

Ukraine also has frameworks in place that address human trafficking[541] and the needs of IDPs,[542] both of which have been used to address women's rights and human rights across Ukraine.[543] Similar to the NAP, financing for these frameworks is reportedly limited.[544] The CEDAW Committee expressed concern in its 2017 report about low levels of support for displaced women and the failure to implement Ukraine's existing legislation to support IDPs.[545]

In addition, the EOC works to reform the civil service by providing gender equality training to civil servants and by opening opportunities to serve in official diplomatic roles to women.[546] The EOC also focuses on education as a tool for creating gender equality, working to integrate gender policy as a subject into universities and other educational institutions.[547]

Conclusion: Collaboration and Partnerships Are Key to Implementing 1325

The conflict between Ukraine and Russia threatens Ukraine's territorial integrity, and resources are stretched thin due to corruption and the cost of the conflict. Women are seeking to advance peace and support those affected by the conflict. Women are serving in formal security processes, leading informal peacebuilding processes, and providing key services.

The NAP has served as a framework for CSOs and government institutions, shaping the work they do in the midst of conflict. The NAP has also been a key advocacy tool for CSOs, allowing them to point directly to commitments the government has made to the advancement of women during conflict. However, the NAP is new and implementation is challenging. CSOs have tapped into national policies and foreign policy goals, particularly Ukraine's desire to integrate into Europe as a means to garner support against Russia, to advance gender-sensitive policies. This integration into Europe and political decentralization offer opportunities as well as key challenges for NAP implementation and support for women's protection and participation in the context of the conflict. Ukraine's coalition of women CSO leaders, parliamentarians, and government officials have provided pressure at many different levels in order to advance women's rights and to build a safer and more stable society.

Broader Implications

Building peace amidst conflict requires prolonged and concentrated effort. For this peace to be sustainable, all stakeholders must be involved. Yet in Myanmar and Ukraine, women face major challenges as they seek to contribute to peace.

Given the differing nature of the conflicts in Myanmar and Ukraine, women's strategies for peacebuilding expectedly differed in each country, and there is a diversity among women as well. Yet common themes emerged, including how women's organizations deploy strategies that best suit their skills, experiences, networks, and resources. To a limited extent, women in Myanmar and Ukraine utilize national plans to aid them in these efforts. These plans have helped women coordinate government and CSO activities, advocate for women's participation and protection, and advance women's rights more broadly.

However, national plans are not the only tool women's organizations call on to advance women's rights amidst conflict. Women leverage the influence of international and regional frameworks and norms, appealing to the goals of conflict actors; they advocate around localized or national frameworks on gender equality; and they build interpersonal relationships to establish expertise and guide back-channeling.

Women are seeking – amidst the daily challenges of armed conflict – to build peace and to create more equitable societies. Their strategies reveal important lessons for how to support and promote women's rights.

Appendix A.1 – Search Terms and Databases For Literature Review

The authors used the following databases to conduct a systematic literature review:

Google Scholar; JSTOR; MUSE; ProQuest Research Library; LexisNexis Academic; WorldCat; Institute for Inclusive Security; NDI (National Democratic Institute); PeaceWomen; UNWOMEN; USAID; USIP

The authors used the following Boolean search terms to identify literature to be analyzed as part of a systematic literature review:

"National Action Plan" + women + peace; "National Action Plan" + "women, peace and security" + peace; "National Action Plan" + "women, peace and security" + peace + Ukraine; "National Action Plan" + "women, peace and security" + peace + Myanmar; "National Action Plan" + "women, peace and security" + peace + Burma; "National Action Plan" + women + negotiations; "National Action Plan" + "women, peace and security" + negotiations; "National Action Plan" + "women, peace and security" + negotiations + Ukraine; "National Action Plan" + "women, peace and security" + negotiations + Myanmar; "National Action Plan" + "women, peace and security" + negotiations + Burma; "National Action Plan" + "women, peace and security" + Ukraine; "National Action Plan" + "women, peace and security" + Myanmar; "National Action Plan" + "women, peace and security" + Burma; "National Action Plan" + women + participation; "National Action Plan" + "women, peace and security" + participation; "National Action Plan" + "women, peace and security" + participation + Ukraine; "National Action Plan" + "women, peace and security" + participation + Myanmar; "National Action Plan" + "women, peace and security" + participation + Burma

Appendix A.2 – Identifying Participants

The research team developed a set of media sources, international as well as local for both Myanmar and Ukraine, in which to conduct Boolean searches (see below) to elicit the names of relevant actors in the field. The international list was compiled from multiple sources detailing the top news sources according to levels of readership and depth of coverage for international peace and security studies. The list of local news sources was compiled across multiple lists of top news sources, delineated by readership, in both Myanmar and Ukraine.

International news sources used during participant mapping for Myanmar: The New York Times; The Guardian; Voice of America; BBC; BBC News Asia; Reuters; Radio Free Asia; ReliefWeb; Asia Times

International news sources used during participant mapping for Ukraine: The New York Times; The Guardian; Voice of America; Moscow Times; BBC; Reuters; The Telegraph; Al Jazeera

Myanmar news sources used during participant mapping: Myanmar Times; Democratic Voice of Burma; The Irrawaddy; Myanmar Business Today; Global New Light; Mizzima

Ukrainian news sources used during participant mapping: Kiev Post; Ukrainian Week; UNIAN; UKRINFORM; Ukrayinska Pravda

The research team also compiled a list of international and national organizations with extensive knowledge of the field. These organizations' written materials – where topically appropriate – were either included in the literature vetting process because of their organization's established expertise in this subject area or were included in this participant mapping process because their publications appeared during the literature vetting process.

Organizations used during participant mapping for Ukraine: National Democratic Institute (NDI); Inclusive Security; United States Institute of Peace (USIP); European Parliament Think Tank; Centre UA; International Centre for Policy Studies; Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation; Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS); Human Rights Watch; Amnesty International

Organizations used during participant mapping for Myanmar: National Democratic Institute (NDI); Inclusive Security; United States Institute of Peace (USIP); Asia Foundation; Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS); Human Rights Watch; Amnesty International; International Growth Center (IGC); Myanmar Development Resources Institute (MDRI); Harvard Kennedy School Thinktank search; Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process (AGIPP)

The research team developed a set of Boolean terms to search the above media sources and elicit content that included the names of civil society organizations, women's organizations, women leaders, women activists, government officials, and civil society leaders who are relevant for each case study. The following Boolean searches differ from the search terms used in the literature vetting process, since they are based on the prevalent themes and terms that the research team found within the literature. Additionally, these search terms provide an appropriate filter for searching the terminology of news and media sources. These search terms also include terms specific to the Myanmar and Ukraine cases. All searches were conducted in English.

Boolean search terms used for Ukraine participant mapping:
Ukraine + women + peace; Ukraine + women + "National Action Plan"; Ukraine + women + conflict; Ukraine + women + negotiations; Ukraine + "civil society" + peace; Ukraine + "civil society" + "National Action Plan"; Ukraine + "civil society" + conflict; Ukraine + "civil society" + negotiations; Ukraine + "women, peace and security"; Ukraine + women + 1325; Ukraine + "civil society" + 1325; Ukraine + women + war; Ukraine + "civil society" + war

Boolean search terms used for Myanmar participant mapping:
Myanmar + women + peace; Burma + women + peace; Myanmar + women + "National Action Plan"; Burma + women + "National Action Plan"; Myanmar + women + "National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women"; Burma + women + "National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women"; Myanmar + women + conflict; Burma + women + conflict; Myanmar + women + negotiations; Burma + women + negotiations; Myanmar + "civil society" + peace; Burma + "civil society" + peace; Myanmar + "civil society" + "National Action Plan"; Burma + "civil society" + "National Action Plan"; Myanmar + "civil society" + "National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women"; Burma + "civil society" + "National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women"; Myanmar + "civil society" + conflict; Burma + "civil society" + conflict; Myanmar + "civil society" + negotiations; Burma + "civil society" + negotiations; Myanmar + "women, peace and security"; Burma + "women, peace and security"; Myanmar + women + 1325; Burma + women + 1325; Myanmar + "civil society" + 1325; Burma + "civil society" + 1325; Myanmar + women + war; Burma + women + war; Myanmar + "civil society" + war; Burma + "civil society" + war

The research team mapped all relevant actors found from these searches, engaged in a round of vetting to determine the individuals most relevant to the subject of this report, then contacted those individuals to schedule in-person, phone, or Skype interviews. Where the mapping showed gaps, the research team consulted with subject matter experts to identify individuals and groups to include in the study. The names of individuals and groups gathered through events and expert discussions on the peace process were also included in the mapping.

Appendix A.3 – List of Interviewees

Myanmar

1. Birke Herzebruch – Myanmar Country Director, Trocaire
2. Cate Buchanan – Senior Peacebuilding Advisor, Nyein (Shalom) Foundation
3. Caitlin Williscroft – International Program Officer, Peace Support Fund
4. Cherry Oon – WIN Peace; Member; Women's Organization Network
5. Cheery Zahau – Joint Secretary, Chin Progressive Party; Cofounder, Women's League of Chinland
6. Eh May Oo – Position, Northern Shan State Women's Organization Network
7. Erin Kamler – International Advisor, Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process
8. Jean D'Cunha – Head, UN Women-Myanmar
9. Jenny Hedstrom – Gender Advisor, Fortify Rights; Advisor, Burmese Women's Union; Former Advisor, Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process; PhD Candidate, Monash Gender, Peace and Security
10. Jessica Work – Project Manager, Nonviolent Peaceforce
11. Julia Hollaender – Gender Advisor, Northern Shan State Women's Organization Network
12. Julia Marip – Secretariat, Women's League of Burma
13. Khin Soe Win – Women and Peace Action Network; Member, Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process
14. Lway Cherry – Secretary, Ta'ang Women's Organization; Policy Board Member, Women's League of Burma
15. Mar Mar Cho – Director, Myanmar Institute for Gender Studies; Steering Committee Member, Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process
16. May Sabe Phyu – Founder, Kachin Women's Peace Network and Kachin Peace Network; Director, Gender Equality Network; Steering Committee Member, Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process
17. Mi Kun Chan Non – Director, Mon Women's Organization; Steering Committee Member, Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process
18. Mi Sue Pwint – Central Leading Committee Member, All Burma Students Democratic Front; Cofounder and Advisory Board Member, Women's League of Burma; Former Chairperson, Burmese Women's Union
19. Mie Mie – General Secretary, Karenni National Women's Organization; Policy Board Member, Women's League of Burma
20. Moon Nay Li – General Secretary, Kachin Women's Association Thailand; Policy Board Member, Women's League of Burma
21. Nang Lao Liang Won (Tay Tay) – Cofounder, Shan Women's Action Network; Cofounder and Advisory Board Member, Women's League of Burma
22. Nang Phyu Phyu Linn – Steering Committee Member, Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process
23. Nang Pu – Director, Htoi Gender and Development Foundation; Founder, Kachin State Women's Network; Steering Committee Member, Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process
24. Nang Shan Lahpai – Program Manager, Nyein (Shalom) Foundation; Steering Committee Member, Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process
25. Naw Sa Thyu – Civilian Ceasefire Monitor, Joint Monitoring Committee in Mon State; Central Executive Committee Member, Karen People's Party; Gender Advisor, Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process
26. Nga Ngai – Founder, Kuki Women's Human Rights Organization; Member, Women's League of Burma
27. Peter Barwick – Peace and Development Advisor, Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator-Myanmar
28. Soe Phone Myint – Commissioner, National Human Rights Commission
29. Su Su Swe – General Secretary, Tavoyan Women's Union; Member, Women's League of Burma
30. Thandar Oo – Founder, New Generation Shan State; Coordinator, Women and Peace Action Network; Steering Committee Member, Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process
31. Thin Thin Aung – Founder, Women's Rights and Welfare Association of Burma; Cofounder and Advisory Board Member, Women's League of Burma
32. Thuzar Tin – Director, Women's Federation for Peace; Steering Committee Member, Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process
33. Win Mra – Chairman, Human Rights Commission

Ukraine

1. Anastasia Dieieva – Deputy Minister of European Integration, Ministry of Internal Affairs
2. Anastasia Divinskaya – Gender Advisor, UN Women
3. Dariia Malakhova – Captain; Gender Advisor to the Minister of Defense, Ministry of Defense
4. Ambassador Eileen Malloy – Senior Advisor on Minsk Implementation, United States State Department
5. Eugenia Andreyuk – Co-coordinator, Crimea SOS
6. Eva Zillén – Senior Advisor, Kvinna till Kvinna
7. Halyna Skipalska – Executive Director, Ukraine Foundation for Public Health; Country Director, HealthRight International
8. Igor Buranov – Deputy Director, Department for Information Support and Coordination of Police "102," National Police of Ukraine
9. Igor Semyvolos – Executive Director, Association of Middle East Studies; Maidan Monitoring Information Center
10. Inna Borzylo – Executive Director, Centre UA
11. Iryna Lutsenko – Representative of the President of Ukraine in the Parliament of Ukraine, Verkhovna Rada
12. Iryna Suslova – Member of Parliament, Petro Poroshenko Bloc; Head, Subcommittee on Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination, Verkhovna Rada
13. Kateryna Levchenko – Director, La Strada
14. Ksenia – Department of Organizational and Analytical Support and Operative Reaction, National Police of Ukraine
15. Kristina Chelmakina – Media and Communications, Ukraine Crisis Media Center
16. Leokadiia Gerasymenko – President, Union of Women of Ukraine
17. Lilia Zolkina – Head, Family and Youth Affairs Department, Donetsk Oblast State Administration
18. Mariia Ionova – Member of Parliament, Petro Poroshenko Bloc, Verkhovna Rada
19. Meri Akopyan – Head, International Relations and European Integration Department, Ministry of Internal Affairs
20. Mykola Kuleba – Commissioner of the President of Ukraine for Children's Rights
21. Natalia Altyntseva – Deputy Director, Center of International Cooperation, Security Service of Ukraine
22. Natalia Karbowska – Director on Strategic Development, Ukrainian Women's Fund; Project Director, Economic Opportunities for People Affected by Conflict in Ukraine, Ukrainian Women's Fund
23. Natalia Sevostianova – First Deputy Minister of Justice, Ministry of Justice
24. Natalia Fedorovych – Deputy Minister of Social Policy, Ministry of Social Policy
25. Nataliia Tykhonova – Member, League of Business and Professional Women in Ukraine
26. Nataliya Bogdanova – Head, Department of Gender Policy, Ministry of Social Policy
27. Natalya – Public House Ukraine
28. Natalya – Family, Youth Affairs and Gender Equality Direction, Family and Youth Affairs Department, Donetsk Oblast State Administration
29. Oksana Reiter – Head, External Relations Department, Ministry of Justice
30. Oleksa Stasevych – Project Manager, Foundations for Freedom
31. Oleksandr Harkusha – Deputy Director, Civil Protection, Mobilization and Defense Department, Donetsk Oblast State Administration
32. Olena Suslova – Chair of the Board, Women's Information Consultative Center
33. Olena Zakharova – Director, Foreign Policy Department, International Center for Policy Studies
34. Olga Derkach – Senior Officer, Department of International Cooperation and Eurointegration, State Border Guard Service of Ukraine
35. Lyolya – Department of Human Rights Protection, National Police of Ukraine
36. Olha Lishyk – Deputy Head, Luhansk Regional Administration
37. Oren Murphy – Ukraine Country Representative, Office of Transition Initiatives, United States Agency for International Development
38. Roxana Cristescu – Head, Eurasia Department, Crisis Management Initiative
39. Ruslana Panukhnyk – Member, Gay Alliance Ukraine
40. Sergiy Kyslytsya – Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
41. Serhiy Malyarchuk – Ukraine Crisis Media Center
42. Svetlana Demchan – Vice President, Union of Women of Ukraine
43. Svetlana Krot – Member, Union of IDPs of Donetsk and East of Ukraine
44. Tetiana Medun – National Project Officer, OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine
45. Tetyana Rudenko – Human Security Programme Manager, OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine
46. Victoria Nibarger – Foreign Service Officer, United States State Department
47. Vladyslava Kanevska – Vice President, National Association of Mediators of Ukraine
48. Volodymyr – Donetsk Oblast Social Service Center for Families, Children and Youth, Donetsk Regional Administration
49. Yuliya Tyotking – Ukraine Crisis Media Center
50. Interview with government official

Appendix A.4 – Interview Protocol

Building Peace Amidst War: The Use of National Plans to Advance Women in Peacemaking

Georgetown University Informed Consent to Participate in Research Study

Introduction – Background and Purpose

A research team from the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security is visiting Ukraine/Myanmar for a project entitled *Building Peace Amidst War: The Use of National Plans to Advance Women in Peacemaking*. The Institute is based at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

The goal of our research is to document how women have used national plans to access the ongoing peace process in two contexts – Myanmar and Ukraine. The study will include women from government, civil society organizations, and external capacity-building organizations who have played a role in the peace process or in the creation or implementation of national plans in Myanmar and Ukraine. At the conclusion of our research, we hope to have a nuanced understanding of (1) the extent to which national plans facilitate women's participation in peace processes, (2) the extent to which these plans contribute to gender-responsive discourse within those processes, and (3) the successes, obstacles, and challenges of utilizing national plans.

You are receiving these materials because you have been invited to participate in this study.

The results of the research will be available to the public in September 2017.

Study Plan

You are being asked to take part in this study because you are a key actor in the efforts to facilitate a peaceful dialogue and/or represent the voice of women in that effort. Approximately twenty-five to thirty individuals will take part in this study through interviews conducted in Ukraine/Myanmar.

If you decide to participate in this study, you will take part in one individual interview/focus group. This interview should last around an hour. During the conversation, you will be asked questions about your own role (as well as the role of your organization) in the peace process or the national plan. Your answers should focus solely on your role and your organization's role in the peace process or in the drafting/implementation of the national plan.

The interview will be audio recorded and transcribed for the purposes of accuracy. After the research process is complete, the recordings will be destroyed.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may stop participating at any time. However, if you decide to stop participating, we encourage you talk to a researcher first.

Risks and Benefits

There are no risks or direct benefits to participating in this study.

Anonymity

We would like to include your name or other identifiable information in the publication that results from this research project. Where appropriate, we would like to use your name with regard to the information you provide in this interview. However, you have the option to not have your name used for any information you provide today when the data from this study are published; if this is the case, please indicate so on the last page of this form.

Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to keep any information collected about you confidential. However, it is impossible to guarantee absolute confidentiality.

To keep information about you safe, study data will be kept in a password-protected file on the researchers' personal computer, which only the researchers can access. Audio recordings, digital and paper copies of interview transcripts, and notes will be kept during the research study period. We will code all of this information using a participant identification number to further protect your identity and keep the contributions you make today confidential.

Following the conclusion of the research study, audio recordings, digital transcripts, and paper notes of the interview will be destroyed.

Your Rights As A Research Participant

Participation in this study is strictly voluntary at all times. You can choose not to participate at all or to leave the study at any point. If you decide not to participate or to leave the study, there will be no effect on your relationship with the researchers or any other negative consequences.

If you decide that you no longer want to take part in the interview, you are encouraged to inform the researcher of your decision. The information already obtained through your participation will be included in the data analysis and final report for this study.

Questions or concerns?

If you have questions about the study, you may contact:
Roslyn Warren
Research Partnerships Manager
Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security
Phone: +1-202-525-1965
Email: rw328@georgetown.edu

Statement of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

I have fully explained this study to the participant. I have discussed the study's purpose and procedures, the possible risks and benefits, and that participation is completely voluntary.

I have invited the participant to ask questions and I have given complete answers to all of the participant's questions.

_____

Signature of Person Obtaining Informed Consent Date

Consent of Participant

I volunteer to participate in a research project entitled *Building Peace Amidst War: The Use of National Plans to Advance Women in Peacemaking* conducted by the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security (GIWPS). I understand that the project is designed to gather information about the role of civil society organizations and government in the peace process and in the drafting and implementation of the national plan in Ukraine/Myanmar.

I understand all of the information in this Informed Consent Form.

I have received complete answers for all of my questions.

I freely and voluntarily agree to participate in this study, and I understand that I may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

I understand that, if I feel uncomfortable at any time, I have the right to decline any question or to end the interview.

I understand that my participation in this study will be kept confidential unless explicit written or oral consent is obtained from the study team. I understand that the researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview without my explicit written or oral permission. If I decline to participate or withdraw from the study, I understand that my information and involvement will remain confidential.

I understand that I will be audio recorded as a part of this study, and the recording will be subsequently transcribed by the research team as a part of this study.

I understand that this research study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Georgetown University for Studies Involving Human Subjects.

I have read and understand the explanation provided to me and I have been given a copy of this consent form. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study, free of coercion.

Please indicate whether you agree to be audio recorded as a part of this study.

☐ **YES** *(If you change your mind about this at any point, please let the researcher know.)*
☐ **NO**

_____

Participant Signature Date

_____

Printed Name of Participant Date

Once you sign this form, you will receive a copy of it to keep, and the researcher will keep another copy in your research record.

Please indicate whether you agree to have your full name as well as your organization's name used alongside your comments in the final publication that results from this research.

☐ **YES** *(If you change your mind about this at any point, please let the researcher know.)*
☐ **NO**
☐ **ALTERATION:**

Name or pseudonym to be used: _____

(e.g., first name only, initials only, random pseudonym, only work position/title, only institutional affiliation)

For further information, please contact Roslyn Warren (+1-202-525-1965 or rw328@georgetown.edu).

Appendix A.5 – Interview Questionnaire

The interview questionnaire for each case study was rooted in the respective national plan for each country under review. Dissecting each country's national plan, the research team categorized relevant action items into the four pillars of the conflict cycle articulated in UNSCR 1325 (prevention, participation, protection, and relief and recovery). From there, the research team crafted a series of open-ended interview questions that probed about the participant's work related to that commitment and the efficacy and limitations of the national plan to conduct that work.

Interview questionnaire for Ukraine:

Prevention Pillar

For civil society:

- How, if at all, is your organization preventing violence against women?
- How, if at all, do you see yourself and your organization as engaging in conflict prevention?
- How is your organization communicating to the public about gender aspects of conflict prevention?
- How, if at all, has your organization used the National Action Plan (NAP) in the above? Why not? What other tools, if any, have you used?

For government officials:

- How, if at all, is your office preventing violence against women?
- How, if at all, is your office facilitating conflict prevention?
- How is your office communicating to the public about gender aspects of conflict prevention?
- How, if at all, has your office used the NAP in designing or implementing the above? Why not? What else has influenced your design?

Participation Pillar

For civil society:

- How, if at all, has your organization participated in the process that led to the cease-fire agreement in Minsk?
- How, if at all, has your organization participated in any official peacemaking processes?
- How, if at all, has your organization participated in any informal peacemaking activities?
- How, if at all, has your organization used the NAP in the above? Why not? What other tools have you used?
- How, if at all, is your organization working with other local women's rights groups? How, if at all, is your organization working with international women's rights groups?
- How, if at all, has the NAP helped you to work with these groups?

For government officials:

- How, if at all, has your office helped women participate in the process that led to the cease-fire agreement?
- How, if at all, has your office helped women participate in any official peacemaking process?
- How, if it all, has your office helped women participate in any informal peacemaking activities?
- How, if at all, has the NAP helped inform your work in these ways? Why not? What other tools have informed your work?
- How, if at all, has your office worked with or partnered with local women's rights groups? How, if at all, is your office working with or partnering with international women's rights groups?
- How, if at all, has the NAP informed your work with these groups?
- How have you coordinated with/partnered with other ministries to further your ministry's goals related to women?

Protection Pillar

For civil society:

- What is your organization doing to gather information about the effect of the conflict on women? How do you ascertain the individuals who have been victimized in the East?
- How, if at all, is your organization working to protect women in areas of conflict?
- How has your organization facilitated reporting for survivors of sexual violence and other crimes that are related to the conflict?
- What is the process by which your organization provides assistance to individual survivors/victims?
- How, if at all, has your organization provided training to other professionals on gender aspects of conflict?
- How, if at all, is your organization using the NAP to do this?

For government officials:

- How, if at all, is your office working to protect women in areas of conflict?
- What is your office doing to gather information about the effect of the conflict on women?
- How, if at all, is your office utilizing the NAP to do that?
- How has your office facilitated reporting for survivors of sexual violence and other conflict-related crimes?
- What is the process by which your office provides assistance to individual survivors/victims?

- How, if at all, has your office provided training to other professionals on gender aspects of conflict?
- How, if at all, is your office using the NAP to do this?

Relief and Recovery Pillar

For civil society:

- How, if at all, is your organization helping women access humanitarian aid?
- What strategy does your organization use to assess humanitarian and relief needs of women and girls?
- How, if at all, is your organization using the NAP to do that?
- How will your organization be monitoring the impact of the NAP?

For government officials:

- How, if at all, is your office helping women access humanitarian aid?
- What strategy does your office use to assess the humanitarian/relief needs of women and girls?
- How will your office be monitoring the impact of the NAP?

Interview questionnaire for Myanmar

Violence Against Women (Protection Pillar)

A. Research and Surveys

- How, if at all, has your organization gathered information on the effects of conflict on violence against women?

B. Awareness-Raising

- How, if at all, has your organization participated in awareness-raising activities/campaigns on violence against women for government personnel?
- How, if at all, has your organization participated in awareness-raising campaigns on violence against women for the public?

C. Implementation

- How, if at all, has your organization worked to increase access to social services for women and girls affected by sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in conflict?
- How, if at all, has your organization worked to provide legal services for women and girls affected by SGBV in conflict?

D. NSPAW

- How, if at all, has your organization used the National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (NSPAW) in the above? If not, why not? What other tools have been used?

Women and Emergencies (Protection, Participation, Relief and Recovery Pillars)

A. Research and Surveys

- How, if at all, has your organization gathered information regarding women's access to humanitarian assistance in conflict?

B. Awareness-Raising

- How, if at all, has your organization participated in awareness-raising for government personnel concerning the needs of women in conflict?
- How, if at all, has your organization participated in awareness-raising for the public concerning the needs of women in conflict?

C. Implementation

- How, if at all, has your organization worked to ensure women's access to resources and services in conflict situations?
- How, if at all, has your organization worked to ensure women's participation in civil society organizations responding to conflict?
- How, if at all, has your organization worked to ensure women's participation in local communities' responses to the conflict?

D. NSPAW

- How, if at all, has your organization used the NSPAW in the above? If not, why not? What other tools have been used?

Women and Decision-making (Participation Pillar)

A. Research and Surveys

- How, if at all, has your organization gathered information regarding women's participation in government?

B. Awareness-Raising

- How, if at all, is your organizing implementing awareness-raising activities related to women's representation and participation in national-level positions in government?

C. Implementation

- How, if at all, has your organization worked to increase women's participation in government at national, state, or local levels?
- How, if at all, has your organization participated in any official peacemaking processes?
- How, if at all, has your organization participated in any informal peacemaking activities?
- How, if at all, has your organization worked to increase women's participation in the above?

D. NSPAW

- How, if at all, has your organization used the NSPAW in the above? If not, why not? What other tools have been used?

Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women (Participation, Prevention Pillars)

A. Research and Surveys

- How, if at all, has your organization gathered information regarding government ministries' current policies and procedures with respect to gender issues?

B. Awareness-Raising

- How, if at all, has your organization implemented awareness-raising activities for government personnel regarding the NSPAW?
- How, if at all, has your organization implemented awareness-raising activities for the public regarding the NSPAW?

C. Implementation

For government officials:

- How, if at all, has your ministry delegated responsibility for projects and policies related to the advancement of women?
- How, if at all, has your organization tracked progress on the implementation of programs to advance women?

D. NSPAW

- How, if at all, has your organization used the NSPAW in the above? If not, why not? What other tools have been used?

Appendix A.6 – Coding and Thematic Analysis

The study was guided by the research question: How are women contributing to peace in the context of armed conflict in Myanmar and Ukraine? The authors used a subset of research questions to frame the contours of the study.

They are as follows:

- How do women contribute to peace?
- What tools are they using?
- How do they use national plans?
- What are the barriers to women using national plans?

Endnotes

1 Patty Chang et al., *Women Leading Peace: A Close Examination of Women's Political Participation in Peace Processes in Northern Ireland, Guatemala, Kenya, and the Philippines* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security, 2015).

2 This study uses the term "Myanmar" to refer to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and uses the term "Burma" to refer to the Union of Burma only in historical context.

3 United Nations, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, Office of the United Nations Higsh Commissioner of Human Rights, December 18, 1979. <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx>.

4 The twelve key areas of concern are: poverty, education and training, violence against women, healthcare, armed conflict, economics, power and decision-making, the institutional promotion of women's rights, protection of women's human rights, stereotyping and the media, natural resource management and the environment, and violations of the rights of the girl child. See *Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* (Beijing: United Nations, September 1995), http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/.

5 Ibid.

6 Resolutions 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, and 2122.

7 United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 1325* (New York: United Nations, October 2000). The four pillars are specifically mentioned in operative clauses 1, 2, 6, 8c, and 9, as well as in multiple perambulatory clauses, and supported throughout the resolution as a whole.

8 Peace Women, "Member States," PeaceWomen.org, accessed September 21, 2017, http://www.peacewomen.org/member-states.

9 United Nations and International Alert, *Planning for Action on Women and Peace and Security: National Level Implementation of Resolution 1325 (2000)* (New York: United Nations, 2010), 27-28; Barbara Miller, Milad Pournik, and Aisling Swaine, "Women in Peace and Security through United Nations Security Resolution 1325: Literature Review, Content Analysis of National Action Plans, and Implementation," *IGIS WP* 13/*GGP WP* 09 (Institute for Global and International Studies, 2014), 10.

10 Further detail related to the research methodology can be found in the appendix, including the search terms and databases used to conduct the literature review and to identify interview participants; the full list of interviewees; relevant interview protocols; questionnaires; and the research questions used to conduct the grounded coding and thematic analysis from the primary data collected.

11 Some of these studies were conducted in states that have ongoing conflicts in which death tolls vary every year. The Uppsala Conflict Data Program considers conflicts with greater than a thousand conflict deaths per year to be "wars"; the term "conflict" itself, however, is somewhat less defined. For this purpose, states that are widely recognized as being in an ongoing civil or cross-border conflict (such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict) are not considered "post-conflict." Uppsala, "Uppsala Conflict Data Program," UCDP, accessed June 2017, http://ucdp.uu.se.

12 Coalición 1325, "The Republic of Colombia," in *1325 Civil Society Monitoring Report 2013* (New York: Global Network of Women Peacebuilders, 2013); Nadera Shalhoub Kevorkian, *The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 Implementation in Palestine and Israel 2000–2009* (Presented to Norwegian Christian Aid, 2010).

13 Coalición 1325, "The Republic of Colombia"; Kevorkian, *United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 Implementation*, 2010.

14 Australia Council for International Development, UN Women National Committee Australia, Australian National University Gender Institute, and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, *Annual Civil-Society Report on Australia's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security* (ACFID, UNWNCA, ANU Gender Institute, WILPF, 2013); Fati Badjo, "Sierra Leone: Analysis of the National Action Plan" (PhD dissertation, order no. 1500435, University of Cincinnati, 2011); Gwendolyn Beetham and Nicola Popovic, *Putting Policy into Practice: Monitoring the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security* (FOKUS Forum for Women and Development and United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women [UNINSTRAW], 2009), http://www.fokuskvinner.no/PageFiles/2990/BackgroundPaper_FOKUS_UN-INSTRAW_Conf1325Indicators_EN.pdf; Elin Danielsson, "Ranking the Nordic National Action Plans for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security" (Stockholm, Sweden: Kvinna Till Kvinna, n.d.)

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145 Nang Pu, Director, Htoi Gender and Development Foundation, Founder, Kachin State Women's Network, Steering Committe Member, Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process (AGIPP), December 20, 2016; Khin Soe Win, December 21, 2016.

146 Mie Mie, December 12 and December 13, 2016.

147 Ibid.

148 Jean D'Cunha, December 12, 2016.

149 Article 2J of the Framework for Political Dialogue says that it will "strive to achieve 30% women's participation in political dialogue." Article 4.2.2 states that the "selection process of representatives [at the Union Peace Conference] shall strive to achieve 30% women's participation." Article 10.2 states that "efforts shall be made to achieve 30% women's participation in [political dialogue] Working Committees."

150 Saw Mra Raza Lin was a founding member of the WLB and founder and former chairperson of the Rakhine Women's Union (RWU). Naw Zipporah Sein was a founding member of the Karen Women's Organization (KWO).

151 This document determined the leadership, eligible stakeholders, and procedural rules of the political dialogue.

152 Nang Phyu Phyu Linn, December 19, 2016.

153 Mi Sue Pwint, December 10, 2016; Tay Tay, December 11, 2016.

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157 Nga Ngai, December 10, 2016; Thin Thin Aung, December 12, 2016.

158 Cherry Oon, December 15, 2016.

159 Su Su Swe, General Secretary, Tavoyan Women's Union, Member, Women's League of Burma (WLB), December 9, 2016; Cherry Oon, December 15, 2016.

160 Cherry Oon, December 15, 2016.

161 Nang Phyu Phyu Linn, December 19, 2016; Khin Soe Win, December 21, 2016; Julia Marip, December 22, 2016.

162 Julia Marip, December 22, 2016.

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164 Nang Phyu Phyu Linn, December 19, 2016.

165 Su Su Swe, December 9, 2016.

166 Cheery Zahau, Joint Secretary, Chin Progressive Party, Cofounder, Women's League of Chinland, December 13, 2016; Tay Tay, December 11, 2016.

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169 Nang Pu, December 20, 2016.

170 Thin Thin Aung, December 12, 2016.

171 Khin Soe Win, December 21, 2016.

172 Cherry Oon, December 15, 2016; Thin Thin Aung, December 12, 2016; Mi Sue Pwint, December 10, 2016.

173 Nang Shan Lahpai, Program Manager, Nyein (Shalom) Foundation; Steering Committee Member, Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process (AGIPP), December 16, 2016.

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175 Cherry Oon, December 15, 2016.

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177 Tay Tay, December 11, 2016; Lway Cherry, Secretary, Ta'ang Women's Organization (TWO), Policy Board Member, Women's League of Burma (WLB), December 21, 2016; Mi Sue Pwint, December 10, 2016.

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182 Nang Shan Lahpai, December 16, 2017; Cate Buchanan, December 13, 2016.

183 Jean D'Cunha, December 12, 2016.

184 Cheery Zahau, December 13, 2016; Mi Sue Pwint, December 10, 2016; Moon Nay Li, December 14, 2016; Lway Cherry, December 21, 2016.

185 Mie Mie, December 12 and December 13, 2016; Caitlin Williscroft, December 13, 2016.

186 Cheery Zahau, December 13, 2016; Nang Pu, December 20, 2016; Lway Cherry, December 21, 2016.

187 Mi Kun Chan Non, December 15, 2016.

188 Moon Nay Li, December 14, 2016; Lway Cherry, December 21, 2016.

189 Nga Ngai, December 10, 2016; Caitlin Williscroft, December 14, 2016.

190 Nga Ngai, December 10, 2016; Mi Kun Chan Non, December 15, 2016.

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205 Tay Tay, December 11, 2016; Mie Mie, December 12 and December 13, 2016.

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207 Su Su Swe, December 10, 2016; Thin Thin Aung, December 12, 2016; Interview December 13, 2016.

208 Interview December 13, 2016.

209 Mi Kun Chan Non, December 15, 2016.

210 Tay Tay, December 11, 2016; Thin Thin Aung, December 12, 2016; Cate Buchanan, December 13, 2016.

211 nterview with member of donor organization.

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213 Cate Buchanan, December 13, 2016.

214 Thin Thin Aung, December 12, 2016; Jean D'Cunha, December 12, 2016.

215 Thin Thin Aung, December 12, 2016; May Sabe Phyu, December 15, 2016.

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217 Su Su Swe, December 9, 2016; Tay Tay, December 11, 2016; Mie Mie, December 12 and 13, 2016; Caitlin Williscroft, December 14, 2017; Nang Phyu Phyu Linn, December 19, 2016.

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219 May Sabe Phyu, December 15, 2016.

220 Thin Thin Aung, December 12, 2016; Jean D'Cunha, December 12, 2016; Cherry Oon, December 15, 2016.

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236 Mi Sue Pwint, December 10, 2016.

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238 Jean D'Cunha, December 12, 2016; Cheery Zahau, December 13, 2016; May Sabe Phyu, December 15, 2016.

239 Cheery Zahau, December 13, 2016; May Sabe Phyu, December 15, 2016.

240 Jean D'Cunha, December 12, 2016; Cate Buchanan, December 13, 2016; Caitlin Williscroft, December 14, 2016.

241 Jessica Work, December 13, 2016; Caitlin Williscroft, December 14, 2016; Mi Kun Chan Non, December 15, 2016; Nang Shan Lahpai, December 16, 2016.

242 Nang Shan Lahpai, December 16, 2016.

243 Cate Buchanan, December 13, 2016; Caitlin Williscroft, December 14, 2016; Erin Kamler, December 21, 2016.

244 Cate Buchanan, December 13, 2016; Caitlin Williscroft, December 14, 2016.

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246 Nang Phyu Phyu Linn, December 19, 2016.

247 Cate Buchanan, December 13, 2016; Cherry Oon, December 15, 2016.

248 Erin Kamler, July 19, 2017.

249 Tay Tay, December 11, 2016.

250 Mi Kun Chan Non, December 15, 2016; May Sabe Phyu, December 15, 2016.

251 Jean D'Cunha, December 12, 2016; Cherry Oon, December 15, 2016; Nang Phyu Phyu Linn, December 19, 2016.

252 Tay Tay, December 11, 2016.

253 Caitlin Williscroft, December 14, 2016; Mi Kun Chan Non, December 15, 2016.

254 Nga Ngai, December 10, 2016; Mie Mie, December 12 and 13, 2016; Jean D'Cunha, December 12, 2016; Cheery Zahau, December 13, 2016; Moon Nay Li, December 14, 2016; Cherry Oon, December 15, 2016; Thandar Oo, December 20, 2016; Lway Cherry, December 21, 2016.

255 Mie Mie, December 12 and 13, 2016; Cheery Zahau, December 11, 2016, Thandar Oo, December 20, 2016.

256 Jean D'Cunha, December 12, 2016.

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259 Cate Buchanan, December 13, 2016; Caitlin Williscroft, December 14, 2016; May Sabe Phyu, December 15, 2016.

260 Cate Buchanan, December 13, 2016.

261 Jean D'Cunha, December 12, 2016; Mi Kun Chan Non, December 15, 2016.

262 Tay Tay, December 11, 2016; Jean D'Cunha, December 12, 2016; Cate Buchanan, December 13, 2016; May Sabe Phyu, December 15, 2016.

263 Cate Buchanan, December 13, 2016; Caitlin Williscroft, December 14, 2016.

264 Mie Mie, December 12 and 13, 2016; Cate Buchanan, December 13, 2016; Caitlin Williscroft, December 14, 2016.

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274 Su Su Swe, December 9, 2016.

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287 Mi Kun Chan Non, December 15, 2016.

288 Tay Tay, December 11, 2016.

289 Tay Tay, December 10, 2016.

290 Peter Barwick, December 12, 2016; Jessica Work, December 13, 2016.

291 Ibid.

292 Su Su Swe, December 9, 2016; Cherry Oon, December 15, 2016.

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294 May Sabe Phyu, December 15, 2016.

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296 Thin Thin Aung, December 12, 2016; May Sabe Phyu, December 15, 2016.

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298 May Sabe Phyu, December 15, 2016.

299 Thin Thin Aung, December 12, 2016.

300 Peter Barwick, December 12, 2016.

301 Cate Buchanan, December 13, 2016.

302 Peter Barwick, December 12, 2016; May Sabe Phyu, December 15, 2016.

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304 Cate Buchanan, December 13, 2016; May Sabe Phyu, December 15, 2016; Erin Kamler, December 21, 2016.

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311 Cheery Zahau, December 13, 2016.

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314 Mie Mie, December 12 and 13, 2016.

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322 Nang Phyu Phyu Linn, December 19, 2016.

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