INTERNATIONAL ALERT

GENDER & PEACEBUILDING • PROGRAMME •

women building peace

Judy El-Bushra • JUNE 2003

sharing know-how

women building peace

sharing know-how

Judy El Bushra

JUNE 2003

INTERNATIONAL ALERT

International Alert (IA) is an independent non-governmental organisation that is working to help build just and lasting peace in areas of violent conflict. It seeks to identify and address the root causes of violent conflict and contribute to the creation of sustainable peace. International Alert works with partner organisations in the Great Lakes region of Africa, West Africa, Eurasia, South and Southeast Asia and Latin America.

To complement fieldwork IA undertakes research and advocacy to influence policies and practices at the national, regional and international levels that impact on conflict. The organisation seeks to act as a catalyst for change by bringing the voices and perspectives of those affected by conflict to the international arena and creating spaces for dialogue. The work hence focuses on the following global issues: the importance of gender perspectives and concerns in peacebuilding, development assistance in conflict and peacebuilding, the role of business in conflict and peacebuilding, and security and peacebuilding, including the reform of security-sector institutions and combating the unregulated proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

Contents

Acknowledgements

International Alert would like to thank all the participants that attended the Women Building Peace: Sharing Know-How Workshop (November 2002) without whose enthusiasm this report could not have been written and finalised.

We are particularly pleased that Ndeye Sow of IA's Women's Peace Programme was able to write the Foreword for us. As we are moving our regional and thematic programmes closer together, this is a great instance of cooperation and support between the programmes. Additionally, we would like to mention the support we received from IA's West Africa, Asia and Euarasia programmes. Special thanks go to Laura Hucks, Feyzi Ismail, Fatuma Abdulahi, Dessislava Roussanova and Maria Guerra, without whose sterling support we would not have been able to provide the level of service to the participants that we did.

Judy El-Bushra has been a fantastic author and colleague and has demonstrated commitment in finalising this report. Our Secretary-General, Dr Kevin Clements, and his Deputy, Martin Honeywell have all played a role, providing inputs to both the workshop and the paper, and ideas for further follow-up.

Ancil Adrian-Paul (Manager, Gender and Peacebuilding Programme) led the project and provided editorial inputs to the paper. Nicola Johnston, Senior Policy Advisor to the team has also had an input. We would like to thank Holly Twiname and Asha Dhillon for their commitment and support; Sanam Anderlini and Eugenia Piza-Lopez for their invaluable contributions.

Finally, without the support of CIDA Canada, the Global Fund for Women and Mamacash, this meeting would not have taken place.

Foreword

The Sharing Know-how Workshop held in Oxford in November 2002 is part of the follow-up to the global campaign *Women Building Peace: From the Village Council to the Negotiating Table*, launched by International Alert in 1999. The meeting is evidence of International Alert's commitment to helping women working in conflict situations to reflect on and document their experiences. With this aim, a first meeting focusing specifically on African women's peace organisations was jointly organised in May 2000 in Dakar, Senegal, by International Alert and the Association of African Women for Research and Development (AAWORD), a network of African women researchers, whose aim is to transform gender relations and social conditions in Africa.

The Oxford workshop brought together women peace activists from South Asia, South America, Africa, the Caucasus and the South Pacific, to identify, analyse and assess their conflict-resolution work as well as peacebuilding practices and strategies developed by women. The workshop looked at women's understanding and analysis of conflict, their experiences of armed conflict and their responses to it. There were fruitful debates around general issues pertaining to the meaning of women's engagement in peacebuilding.

More specifically, participants discussed some issues that still lie at the heart of the debate on women, war and peacebuilding, such as why we should focus on women, considering that women do not constitute a separate and homogenous group; whether or not women experience conflict differently from men; and whether women are victims or survivors of war. They discussed women's experiences of armed conflict at all levels of society, as individuals, within the household, the community and at the national level. They recognised that women as social actors do exert agency – that is, they are active in devising alternative ways of coping within their environments, even under the most extreme forms of coercion.

Participants proceeded to define their view of peace as *positive peace*, which encompasses the need for human security, social justice, and the promotion of and respect for human rights, especially those of women. They agreed that women's most important contribution to peacebuilding is to develop an alternative, gendered view of society that will lead to the transformation at all levels of structures, practices and social relations, including gender relations. They noted that conflict has raised women's awareness of the necessity to take the initiative, and over the past decade there has been an increasing number of women's peace organisations and networks established at local and regional levels. However, these organisations face numerous challenges, which reduces the impact of their work.

Most of these organisations operate in an environment characterised by extreme poverty and insecurity and are subject to the pressures and restrictions of patriarchial societies. Women's marginalisation from national political arenas, their lack of unity and solidarity, skills and confidence, contribute to the weakening of their organisations. Peacebuilding activities – usually developed by women – were identified as ranging from provision of survival necessities such as food, shelter and medical care, to peacemaking by initiating cross-community dialogue, building bridges across the conflict divide, intervening in the national peace process, advocating for the promotion of women's human rights and access to decision-making and leadership, and rebuilding communities in post-conflict situations.

The Oxford workshop (November 2002) highlighted once again the importance of assisting women in analysing and understanding their context from a gender perspective, and reflecting on their practices in order to improve them. It is true that an important and

extremely valuable body of evidence on women and conflict has been collected since the mid-1980s, but the bulk of it was done by outsiders, mostly Western feminist researchers. The workshop demonstrated the need to support women peace activists, especially those coming from the South, to document their own experiences and practices. Most of women's painstaking peacebuilding work on the ground, their knowledge and ideas, remain at best marginalised, at worst invisible. Because of this, the lessons learnt have not been institutionalised and rarely influence national and global policies on war and peace. The gender dimension of conflict and peacebuilding is not taken into account in the field of conflict management itself and in conflict management theory, which has been mainly articulated by male academics and remains blind to gender issues. As some feminist peace researchers have pointed out, a gender analysis of conflict management theory and practice is still noticeably absent.

However, women's importance in peacebuilding is increasingly recognised by some international institutions; this is highlighted by the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000. Likewise in Africa, the establishment of the Women's Committee for Peace and Development by the former Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in the late 1990s, was a positive signal sent by the OAU to women's peace organisations. Yet we should be mindful that both initiatives were taken only after years of intense and aggressive lobbying and advocacy by women, who are still faced with the challenge of transforming policy into real and efficient tools in support of their work. In the case of the Women's Committee, the OAU approved its establishment but never provided sufficient resources and support in order for it to be truly operational. What will happen to the Committee now that the OAU has transformed itself into an African Union remains to be seen. As for Resolution 1325, it will be useful only if its content is adapted to women's local realities and integrated within the national policies of their countries.

Ndeye Sow
Gender Policy Adviser
International Alert

Executive Summary

This report aims to synthesise the findings to date of International Alert's *Women Building Peace: Sharing Know-how* Project. It makes use of a varied set of project activities (including conferences, key-informant interviews, documentation from partner organisations, and the deliberations of the Sharing Know-how Workshop held in Oxford in November 2002) as well as a range of sources drawn from literature on the emerging theme of women and peacebuilding.

Summary of main findings

Section 1 of the report provides an overview of documented evidence of women's experiences of war. Physical violence experienced by women is considerable, including rape and personal injury as well as the psychological violence of these experiences and of witnessing harm done to family members, homes and communities. This personal violence can be exacerbated by the breakdown in health services. At the household and community levels, demographic change and changes to the division of labour (resulting in greater work burdens for women) are consistently observed. In general, the institutions that shape women's and men's attitudes and behaviours (such as the household, the school, the army, the state) require women to take on more responsibility as a result of conflict, but do not provide them with the power to discharge these responsibilities effectively. However, the growth in women's peacebuilding organisations is a notable effect of conflict, and where strong women's organisations co-exist with political will, new attitudes to women's rights can be enshrined in law and policy. The section concludes by discussing some of the controversies raised by this overview about, for example, women as contributors to violence and their status as victims.

Section 2 presents a women's analysis (developed by participants at the Oxford workshop) of conflict and peace. It reviews some of the main factors giving rise to armed conflict (notably fragmentation of state power, conflict over territory and natural resources, exclusion and denial of identity), and cites women's views that both the international and local factors generate and perpetuate violent conflict. Women's view of peace is of a world in which rights and democracy are respected and in which people can be secure in their own identity. Women view their most important role in peacebuilding as working to transform attitudes and practices, structures and competencies, to lay the groundwork for the local and global changes that permanent peace requires. Women's organisations put this commitment into effect at local, national, regional and international levels, and respond both to local conflicts and to globalised war such as that recently prosecuted in Iraq. Women's peace organisations are slowly evolving into a women's peace movement.

Section 3 describes what women peace activists actually do. In this it follows the Sharing Know-how Project's Framework for Documentation, and addresses its five categories of activities: survival and basic needs; peacemaking, advocacy and women's rights; women in decision-making and leadership; community outreach; and rebuilding. The section concludes that women's peace organisations cover all these approaches. There has been both numerical and qualitative growth in women's organisations and this has been accompanied by some improvements in women's status and by some limited acceptance of women's contribution to peacebuilding. However, the impact of this work on women's status and on the efficacy of peace processes is difficult to measure, especially at the level of formal peace processes, where women's role tends to be an *invisible* one.

Challenges to women's peace activism arise from the international community, from the national political milieu and from the patriarchal nature of society. Further impediments are

generated by poverty, exclusion, women's own lack of unity, confidence and skills, and weaknesses in their knowledge base (especially in relation to civil and human rights, international legislation and the techniques of non-violent resistance) and organisational capacity. To overcome these problems, women's peace organisations need to develop clear goals based on their own analysis and engage in dialogue with women across the divides in order to develop an agenda specifically for women. They should also be prepared to take both physical and political risks, engage in dialogue with women, men, politicians and civil society, and work from the community level upwards rather than with a top-down approach.

Experience has taught women that though their organisations often lack financial resources, they are rich in terms of resilience, commitment and creativity. They conclude that for peace to be sustainable, it must be built on justice and respect for human rights, and that including women in dialogue and in political processes is crucial to sustainable peacebuilding. They recognise that women are not always peaceful, and that they can be open to manipulation by patriarchal social structures that have an interest in perpetuating violence.

Summary of implications for future work from these findings.

Section 4 outlines a number of key questions for further reflection. In broad terms, these can be summarised as follows:

- Do women gain or lose in conflict, and what measures can help them consolidate the gains?
- Does a *women's agenda* really exist?
- Must women become politically aware in order to engage in peace activism?
- What is the value-added of women's involvement in peacebuilding?
- Are women's rights and emancipation essential components of durable peace?

Section 5 identifies the priority areas for funding and support, namely, enhancing women's participation in peacebuilding, building the capacity of women and of the women's peace movement, promoting women's economic development, democracy and good governance globally, nationally and locally.

The report makes a plea for further work to be undertaken, by International Alert and by others, to consolidate the lessons learned in this project by encouraging documentation and the establishment of coordinated databases, by increasing networking and sharing of experiences between women's peace organisations, and to develop monitoring frameworks and indicators that can concretely describe, measure and support women's achievements.

1. Introduction

1.1 Women Building Peace: From the Village Council to the Negotiating Table

The global campaign *Women Building Peace: From the Village Council to the Negotiating Table* was launched by International Alert in May 1999, with the support of 100 organisations worldwide, to respond to women's concerns about their exclusion from decision-making levels of peace, security, reconstruction and development processes. The campaign was successfully completed in October 2000, when its focus on international policy mobilisation led to the unanimous adoption of Resolution 1325 on *Women, Peace and Security* at the United Nations Security Council. At the same time, it was able to support the development of the European Parliament Resolution on the *Participation of Women in Peaceful Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding*.

Since then, the need for greater clarity and more empirical information on women's peacebuilding *know-how* has been highlighted, we need to ask what exactly women do, how they do it, what challenges they face, what lessons they learn, and how they measure impact. Discussions with a wide range of policy-makers, women's groups and other stakeholders have revealed a need to document women's peacebuilding know-how using a systematic framework that can be shared both with policy-makers and with women's groups locally, nationally, cross-regionally and at an international level. International Alert has therefore transformed the campaign into the Gender and Peacebuilding Programme. The *Women Building Peace: Sharing Know-how* Project is one component of the programme and is a phased activity. Phase 1 of the project has included:

- Commissioning, consulting and agreeing a documentation framework that formed the basis for collecting and organising information about women's peacebuilding activities;
- Interviewing women from different conflict regions using the documentation framework;
- Identifying participants for, and organising a *Women Building Peace: Sharing Know-how* Workshop in Oxford in November 2002.

Phase 2 will comprise:

- Printing, publishing and disseminating the report from the Women Building Peace: Sharing Know-how Workshop in Oxford in November 2002 (the present report)
- Setting up a list-serve for the sharing of information
- Organising a follow-up workshop on impact indicators
- Collaboratively producing four to six video films documenting women's peacebuilding know-how

This present report forms part of Phase 2 of the project and reflects the deliberations of the November 2002 Oxford workshop. The report aims to:

- Identify, document and analyse what women do as peacebuilders
- Provide insight and information into emerging themes for further research
- Further raise the visibility of women's peacebuilding activities at the national, regional and international levels
- Contribute to a strengthened role for women in processes that affect women's peace and security

1.2 The Sharing Know-how Workshop

The *Women Building Peace: Sharing Know-how Workshop*, held in Oxford in November 2002, brought together women from Africa (Burundi, Uganda, Sudan, DRC, Nigeria and Sierra Leone), South Asia (Nepal and Sri Lanka), South America (Colombia), the South Pacific (Bougainville) and the Caucasus. The workshop was organised to provide an opportunity and a safe space for participants to use the Sharing Know-how Documentation Framework to:

- Share experiences on peacebuilding work
- Identify best practices
- Document and analyse women's peacebuilding know-how
- Develop recommendations for policy-makers
- Identify emerging themes for further research

After an introduction to the Women Building Peace campaign and to Resolution 1325, participants presented and analysed their own and their organisation's experiences, focusing particularly on the conflict context, its impact on women and women's responses, the types of activities their organisations are engaged in, the challenges they face and the lessons learned. They distinguished between the specific characteristics of their own contexts and the issues and problems facing women in peacebuilding work generally, and used this analysis to draw conclusions and draft recommendations that will be disseminated to policy-makers, women's organisations, governments, civil society and other relevant stakeholders.

1.3 The Report

This report is about women. This is because women's profiles in peacebuilding, as in many other areas of life, has up to now been unrealistically low and unjustly undervalued. However, in focusing on women we hope to contribute towards a *gender analysis* of conflict and peace, placing women in the context of their relationships with men and with society in general. We hope to demonstrate that the experiences of women and men – and their responses to these experiences – are determined by a variety of factors within their social and political environment, as much as by their sex. We also aim to explore some of the controversies surrounding women and peacebuilding. Do women have a special contribution to make to peace and, if so, is this because of their social position or because of their essentially peace-loving nature? Is there a *women's agenda* for peace? Do women on opposite sides of a conflict have more in common than the conflict that divides them?

The report aims to bring together and summarise the findings to date of the *Women Building Peace: Sharing Know-how Project*. In particular, it aims to assess how much is known of what women experience and their responses, and to identify how much remains to be established.

The report's main source is the proceedings of the Oxford workshop, including written papers prepared by the participants and the series of interviews conducted during Phase 1 to test the Framework for Documentation. It aims to complement this with other documented outputs of the campaign, as well as with supplementary material on the subject of women and their relationship to conflict and peace. The themes of the report are the similarities and differences worldwide in the way women are treated in war, contextual and cultural differences in women's peacebuilding work, and the common challenges they face. What gains do women make and how sustainable are they? What contribution can and do women make to peace and what are the constraints? What lessons do they learn?

We hope the report will contribute to an examination of the assumptions that are often made about women and peacebuilding, by setting out the empirical evidence documented by the *Women Building Peace: Sharing Know-how Project*.

1.3.1 Concepts and Terminology

Box 1: Concepts and terms

Conflict
There are many, and often divergent, ways of defining conflict. In this report we refer to the struggle of human individuals and societies to give expression to diverse identities and interests, and to achieve justice and equality between them. In specific cases, this struggle evolves into violence on a mass scale, and it is this violent conflict that is the main focus of this report.

'Negative' and 'positive' peace
Johann Galtung (Galtung: 1995) defines 'negative peace' as being the end of widespread and violent conflict associated with war. Such a situation may nevertheless involve prevalent violence within society (such as domestic violence), 'structural violence' or gross exclusion and inequality. 'Positive peace', on the other hand, is a situation in which major conflicts of interest have been resolved and where violence is at a minimum.

Security
'Human security is an approach to foreign policy that puts people – their rights, their safety, and their lives – first. Our objective is to build a world where universal humanitarian standards and the rule of law protect all people; where those who violate these standards are held accountable; and where our international institutions are equipped to defend and enforce those standards. In short, a world where people can live in freedom from fear.' (Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. Human Security Programme, www.humansecurity.gc.ca/psh-en.asp)

Gender
Gender is a term used in contrast to sex, to draw attention to the social roles and interactions between women and men, rather than to their biological differences. Gender relations … include the ways in which the social categories of male and female interact in every sphere of social activity, such as those which determine access to resources, power and participation in cultural and religious activities. Gender also denotes the social meanings of male and female, and what different societies regard as normal and appropriate behaviour, attitudes and attributes for women and men. Although the details vary from society to society, and change over time, gender relations always include a strong element of inequality between women and men and are strongly influenced by ideology.
(Pankhurst: n.d., p. 13)

The report focuses on violent, armed conflict (for fuller discussion and definition, see Box 1) rather than conflict in the more general sense. One goal of conflict transformation is to provide a context in which non-violent methods of managing conflict, acknowledging and respecting the interests of different sides, can flourish in preference to recourse to arms. A key question underlying this report is: What do women do as peacebuilding? Do they have a particular contribution to make to a culture of non-violence as a principle for managing conflict?

The concept of peace used in this report is derived from Galtung's distinction between *negative* and *positive peace. Positive peace* is often associated with inclusive political representation, open and accountable government, and a dynamic civil society. The definition of what *positive peace* means in any particular situation, however, has to be determined to the satisfaction of all social actors, women as well as men, and including minority or disadvantaged groups.

International Alert's work generally is embedded in the concept of *human security* (defined by the Canadian Government in Box 1). Under this paradigm, the international community takes responsibility for protecting individuals from threats to their safety and well-being. The concept of human security reflects a shift in the international community's approach to global security, moving from the state-centred concept of security towards an approach in which the individual's rights to freedom from fear and abuse take a central place.

1.3.2 Policy Environment

The *Women Building Peace: Sharing Know-how Project* took place against a background of several decades of achievement on the road towards enshrining women's rights in global policy and legislation. For example, the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) provided a strong impetus for women's global mobilisation and led to an unprecedented series of debates on women's condition and rights. The seminal Platform for Action that resulted from the Beijing Conference forms part of a series of landmark international laws and agreements. These internationally accepted norms are of two types: humanitarian and human rights laws (see Box 2 for a list of the most important of these).

In response to these agreements, a number of international donor agencies have developed policy initiatives and statements giving women's equality in peace and development processes a high profile. Some examples are provided in Box 3.

Since the Beijing Conference in 1995 in particular, the global policy and legislative climate has moved visibly towards one in which the *principle* of women's equality is no longer seriously challenged at the policy level. However, many policy-makers recognise that serious shortfalls remain in implementing these policy frameworks. This has created a demand for grass-roots and intermediary women's organisations as channels of communication for informing policy-makers. At the same time it has provided opportunities for dialogue between policy-makers and *ordinary* women, and hence for women's experiences and perspectives to be made both more visible and more influential. International Alert's global campaign Women Building Peace: From the Village Council to the Negotiating Table, and the *Women Building Peace: Sharing Know-how Project* have been designed to strengthen this dialogue by providing a voice to grass-roots women's organisations working as peace activists.

1.3.3 Past Scholarship and Present Trends

The project also complements a decade of work recording and analysing women's experience of armed, violent conflict. Early accounts of women's experiences of modern

Box 2: Landmark international laws and agreements strengthening the international recognition of women's rights

International humanitarian legislation

1949 Geneva Conventions
1977 Additional protocols of the Geneva Conventions

International human rights legislation

1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights
1952 Convention on the Political Rights of Women
1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
1976 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
1979 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child
1998 Adoption of the Statute of the International Criminal Court
1999 Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

Other significant agreements

1945 Charter of the United Nations
1975 First UN International Women's Conference – Mexico
1980 Second UN International Women's Conference – Copenhagen
1985 Third UN International Women's Conference – Nairobi
1993 UN General Assembly Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women
1993 UN International Conference on Human Rights – Vienna
1998 First war crimes judgment citing guilt on grounds of rape, International War Crimes Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia
1994 UN International Conference on Population and Development – Cairo
1995 UNHCR Policy for the Protection of Refugees (revised 1997)
1995 Fourth UN Conference on Women – Beijing and Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
2000 UN General Assembly Outcome Document on Follow-up to the Platform for Action – New York
2000 UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security

(Sources: International Alert: 2001; Lindsey: 2001)

war, in the early to mid-1990s, fell mainly into two categories. Firstly those based on personal testimonies and the investigations of journalists (Bennett et al: 1996; Maier: 1993; McGreal: 1993; Shiner: 1994) and those that attempted to list different types of impact in order to analyse economic, demographic, political or social trends (Callaway: 1987; El-Bushra and Piza-Lopez: 1993, 1994; Ferris: 1992). Many of these accounts focused on what conflict meant for men, women and children at the local level, as a reaction to mainstream conflict analysis, which generally took politicians, warlords and militias to be the main players. Secondly, in the field of international relations, work within a specifically feminist framework analysed the links between global trends such as militarism and global trade expansionism on one hand, and their local consequences on the other (Enloe: 1993; Peterson: 1993; Vickers: 1993). This work described how militarism shaped global images of women and men, and how in the process women's role was devalued to that of provider of services to military forces, paving the way for abuses such as trafficking, prostitution and unregulated employment.

Box 3: Policy objectives of some key donors in relation to women's empowerment

DFID

'DFID's objectives for women's empowerment are to:

Secure equality in human rights for women and girls
Promote reforms designed to give women greater livelihood security
Eliminate discrimination in the law
Eliminate violence against women
Close gender gaps in human development
Enable more women to take leadership roles
Strengthen the institutional mechanisms that protect women from discrimination and enable them to demand equal opportunities
Promote gender aware approaches to environmental management
Challenge gender stereotyping'

(DFID: n.d.)

CIDA

'The goal of CIDA's gender equality policy is to support the achievement of equality between women and men and to ensure sustainable development. The objectives of the policy are:

To advance women's equal participation with men as decision-makers in shaping the sustainable development of their societies;
To support women and girls in the realisation of their human rights; and
To reduce gender inequalities in access to and control over the resources and benefits of development

(CIDA: 1999)

OECD Development Assistance Committee

'... Gender equality is an overall strategic objective for promoting the role of women and therefore sustainable people-centred development.'

(OECD/DAC: 1998)

In the decade since this interest in documenting women's experiences of conflict began, a new factor has emerged – the growth of women's organisations and women's movements, including those for peace and reconciliation. This growth has taken place at the local, national, regional and global levels. Attempts made in the 1990s to record and analyse women's experiences now need to be updated and revised by listening to the voices of the women and men who are most directly caught up in conflict, who experience the cost of conflict, and who are now strategising to change their situations from within, using local and global knowledge and the networks to which they now have access.

1.3.4 Structure of the Report

The report draws links between women's experiences of conflict and their understanding of and responses to it. The report is presented in five sections. **Section 1** provides an overview of documented evidence of women's experiences of war. **Section 2** presents a women's analysis (developed by participants at the Oxford workshop) of the causes of

conflict and the factors that perpetuate it, and describes how women peace activists view their work at local, national, regional and international levels (including women's recent responses to the globalisation of conflict as evidenced in the preparations for war against Iraq). **Section 3** describes what women do in their peacebuilding work, what problems they face and how they see the solutions, while **Section 4** highlights some general issues for debate around women and peacebuilding. **Section 5** presents the recommendations of the Oxford workshop to policy-makers, governments and civil-society actors – recommendations that will hopefully contribute towards raising the profile of women in peace-related work.

2. Women's Experiences of Armed Conflict

2.1 Experiences and Impacts

> *Girls as well as boys were subjected to rape, torture, killings, forced labour, drugging and combat training. As civilians, women were particularly targeted as a tactic of war. Those who were not abducted managed to flee to refugee camps, where they endured much hardship. Young women have had no schooling since 1990. Those who are returning to their communities as returnees are facing situations of extreme poverty and social destitution. With the vast displacement of families during the war, women in both rural and urban settings are increasingly finding themselves as single heads of households over large numbers of dependents. For the single teenage abductees who have been returned, many are facing pregnancy, childbirth, social isolation, stigma and trauma on their own, at a young and vulnerable age.*
>
> [ENO: 2000, P. 68]

As the above quotation illustrates, women's (and men's) experience of armed conflict is bewilderingly varied, and takes place in highly varying contexts. In some cases individuals become direct targets of violence, while in others whole communities may be indirectly threatened through insecurity, fear and loss of livelihood. Conflict may be momentary or may continue for years, giving rise to situations of long-term generalised insecurity. Displacement and flight are often important features, but not consistently so. The impacts of conflict are therefore difficult to categorise and the distinctions made will inevitably be arbitrary. In reality, the consequences of conflict are many and multifaceted, and often lead in turn to further consequences. For the purposes of analysis however, in this report we will examine impact at the personal or individual level, at the levels of household and community, and at the broader societal level.

2.1.1 The Individual Level

Physical insecurity

At an individual level, women experience the danger of attack, rape, landmines, or other abuses from militias as they go about their daily business – working in fields, searching for water, food or fuel, or selling produce. Carrying out these routine tasks may expose them to major risks (such as returning to the home fields from which they had fled in order to collect harvests). Fear of danger may limit their ability to carry out these tasks or lead to them fleeing to safety. Women may have limited mobility when under direct attack, especially if they are pregnant, responsible for small children, older people, or those who are ill. Women are particularly vulnerable to rape and other forms of sexual abuse, including forced

marriage, sexual slavery, forced prostitution and trafficking. Assessing the impact of armed conflict on women, UNIFEM's panel of experts described their findings thus:

… Knowing all this did not prepare us for the horrors women described. Wombs punctured with guns. Women raped and tortured in front of their husbands and children. Rifles forced into vaginas. Pregnant women beaten to induce miscarriages. Foetuses ripped from wombs. Women kidnapped, blindfolded and beaten on their way to work or school. We saw the scars, the pain and the humiliation. We heard accounts of gang rapes, rape camps and mutilation. Of murder and sexual slavery. We saw the scars of brutality so extreme that survival seemed for some a worse fate than death.

[REHN AND SIRLEAF: 2002, P. 9]

The view that rape is a systematic and gendered war strategy is borne out by the case of the Rwanda genocide of 1994, where Hutu nationalist extremists claimed that Tutsi women were licentious and would use their sexuality to destroy Hutu culture, laying the ground for militia to target Tutsi women for rape (AVEGA: 1999).

Protection of women and defense of their rights is often used as a propaganda tool by both sides in conflict. Maoist guerrillas in Nepal, for example, have sought to enlarge their support amongst the general population by adopting policies promoting women's equality within the movement and by integrating women's rights as part of their agenda. However, in reality, abuse of women by both government and rebels has been well documented (Gautam: 2001). In other conflict situations, too, there is little evidence to suggest that either government or rebel militia provide effective protection or liberation for women. Evidence from Uganda (Lumoro: 2002; Ochieng: 2002) and from Rwanda (Twagiramariya and Turshen: 1998) indicate that rape and other forms of violence against women have been committed by soldiers from both sides.

Domestic and sexual violence

Women's organisations often describe how domestic and sexual violence within the community increases in times of conflict. This is in addition to, and perhaps the result of, violence perpetrated by opposing military forces. Increased levels of domestic and sexual violence have been widely reported in, for example, South Africa, Namibia and Uganda. In Palestine, a women's rights organisation (the Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling) recorded sharp increases in cases of incest, of girls absconding from home, and of 'honour' crimes against women, between 1999 and 2002, a period when the activities of the Israeli army against Palestinian targets was increasing (Abu-Dayyah: 2002).

The impact of the destruction of health services

The destruction or lack of access to health services puts women at risk from routine health problems. In Palestine, one of the consequences of the current campaigns by the Israeli army is reduced access for Palestinians to health services. This has heralded a substantial increase in childbirth outside hospitals and in informal, makeshift clinics with inadequate equipment. Forty-six women are said to have given birth at army checkpoints because they were not allowed across them, while deliveries in cars are not unknown (Abu-Dayyah: 2002).

General health services are likewise reduced. A district nurse in Sablaale, Somalia, explained:

… Before the civil war Sablaale had a government hospital and doctors. The hospital was well equipped and had sufficient staff. The conflict has devastated this public service. All the staff fled and people have occupied the buildings. The number of people with tuberculosis (TB)

has increased over the years. I believe now 15 per cent of the population of Sablaale district has TB. In addition, internal worms, bilharzias and malaria, which are endemic, have been some of the major diseases threatening the health of the communities living in this district.

[INTERVIEW QUOTED IN NUR: 2002, P. 17]

Psychological consequences

The loss of family members, homes, prospects for the future, as well as the need to adjust to radically new circumstances, all exacerbate the psychological impact of the experience of war, social upheaval and displacement. Psychological stress from shocking events can be heightened by the feeling of lack of control over one's life, a factor that may in some circumstances be more significant for women, whose social position is one of relative vulnerability (Moreno: 1993). Psychological vulnerability can be made worse by worries arising from economic stress.

It has also been suggested (ACORD: 2002) that when men and women find themselves unable to live up to the values and expectations placed on them as wives and husbands, daughters and sons, it can cause stress-related illnesses which often accompany violent conflict, including depression, aggressiveness, suicide, alcoholism and other forms of self-harm. Although increasing attention is being paid to psycho-social stress by humanitarian providers, there is a general lack of understanding of the impact it may have in different social settings. In general, family and community members still bear the main burden of supporting individuals affected in this way. The workshop noted how, in northern Sri Lanka, economic stress on the community in general has led to increases in male alcoholism and domestic violence, and to the inability of the community to provide support to particularly vulnerable women such as those heading households.

2.1.2 The Household Level

Demographic change and its consequences

Within the household, family composition changes when large numbers of men and boys are absent. There is a clear tendency towards a greater proportion of female-headed and child-headed households. In conflict and post-conflict situations the proportion of female-headed households commonly reaches 30 per cent or more, although such figures are unreliable due to difficulties of definition. Female- and child-headed households are vulnerable to unexpected shocks as they tend to be without men, who can negotiate within predominantly male-dominated markets more easily than women or children.

Disintegration of the social fabric, family life and social values has increased pressure on the female-headed households in the region…. There is no food security and such women do not have access to regular and sufficient quality of food…. The society is unable to help these families as the majority are in the same situation.

[SRI LANKA PRESENTATION AT THE SHARING KNOW-HOW WORKSHOP]

Female- and child-headed households suffer from inadequate access to household labour and may find difficulty in gaining access to productive resources such as agricultural land, employment and outlets for the sale of produce. However, female-headed households may be more efficient than male-headed ones in ensuring the welfare of their members.

Another consequence of changes in family composition is that women's long-term expectations of marriage and family life may change. Some women face a choice between remaining single and never establishing a family of their own, or entering into polygamous or informal relationships. Women who have been raped or injured are frequently rejected

by their husbands, though women whose husbands have been physically or mentally disabled are expected to remain supportive (Panchavichetr: 1993). Widows with children have particularly difficult decisions to make about remarriage, given the difficulties of ensuring equal treatment for children of different fathers.

Changes to the division of labour

Whether the household is male- or female-headed, there is a strong tendency for women to take on additional productive roles, either because of the absence of men, or because men have lost access to the resources they once controlled. The ACORD study found that in Juba and Northern Uganda, displacement from rural to urban areas meant that men's economic role became reduced because they no longer had access to agricultural resources, while at the same time women were finding economic niches in the informal urban economy (in petty trade, for example, or in domestic services or sex work). In other contexts urban labour opportunities may be greater for men than for women.

Other factors may also be promoting this change in economic roles. A UNDP report on Bougainville, for example, listed seven reasons for the changing responsibilities of women and men:

The crisis has created confusion about the responsibilities of men and women and consequently, roles are now being renegotiated. Several factors are understood to be affecting this process. (1) Tensions between traditional and modern systems, (2) the effect of mobility on traditional clan/community relations, (3) the high incidence of single mothers, (4) the effects of trauma, (5) the adjustment problems experienced by youth, (6) the effects of war on societal values and norms, and (7) current law and order issues.

[PEACOCK-TAYLOR: 1999, P. 28]

As women's responsibilities and pride in their achievements increase, men's self-esteem seems to become eroded. Two studies, based largely on interview material, have attested to this trend (Bennett et al: 1996; ACORD: 2002). In many different contexts, men consistently appear to sink into apathy, either because they no longer have access to activities that previously gave them power and a sense of identity, or because they fear the loss of status involved in undertaking the menial activities that may be all they have access to.

Men don't want to do jobs that are not related to their specialisation, education and status. But women are ready to do any job that will bring money and security to their families. This turns the women into workhorses, which is dreadful.

[CAUCASUS PARTICIPANT AT THE SHARING KNOW-HOW WORKSHOP]

This widespread change in the division of labour has both positive and negative consequences for women. Increased control of family finances has given women greater self-confidence in their abilities, and to some degree a greater level of responsibility for household decision-making. This factor provides some grounds for believing that conflict may hold the seeds of radical change in women's status. On the other hand, it also means a much greater level of physical exhaustion for women and increased risks of domestic violence, at a time when poverty is reducing nutritional standards and health services are curtailed. It also means that women have little time for engaging in social or educational activities that fall outside their household responsibilities.

This war is an advantage to women in some ways because they have learnt a lot about business, while on the other hand it is a disadvantage because you get a number of school girls dropping out.

[INTERVIEW IN JUBA, SUDAN, QUOTED IN FODUL: 2002, P. 21]

2.1.3 The Community Level

Traditional women's roles – social welfare and petty trade

At the community level, women often emerge as the main informal providers of social welfare, a need that is generally increased as a result of conflict (caring for the sick and wounded, rape victims, orphans, or supporting sick or injured women in their household tasks). It is this commitment to the caring role that often provides women with the political space – after the war is over – to demand changes to their status. Box 7 describes how in the immediate aftermath of the genocide in 1994, Rwandan women played significant roles in caring for orphans and prisoners (thereby taking that burden from the state). This has been officially recognised and has led to major changes in policy and legislation. Other commentators have described similar processes, for example in Kashmir:

When the repression was strong, the men retreated because they too were vulnerable. Instead, the women came out in their traditional roles, as nurturers and as protectors of the community. It is an empowering experience. It was the women who negotiated with the security forces and the administration.... It is both women's importance and weakness that gives them the right to access the powerful and say, Give me justice. At times such groups are able to transcend beyond the nurturing role and into political activity.

[MANCHANDA: 1999, P. 30]

Local economies are largely maintained, on a day-to-day basis, by women's involvement in petty trade, although women occasionally expand into male-dominated areas of trade such as agricultural produce or currency-trading (see Nur: 2002 for some examples from Somalia). Women traders provide income for the family and also act as the mainstay of the local economy during depressed conditions. Petty trade may seem an appropriate opportunity for women because it does not stop them from carrying out some of their childcare and provisioning roles within the family; at the same time, trading may be less risky for women than for men. Conflict in Somaliland, for example, opened up opportunities for women traders because women could cross enemy lines and undertake long-distance travel more safely than men. As well as transporting and selling commodities – at a time when the usual marketing systems had broken down – women were also able to act as a money transfer facility and 'served as mobile banks' (Warsame: forthcoming).

New roles

Taking responsibility for social welfare and accessing opportunities for petty trade to provide for the family both fall within what is normally perceived as women's natural role. However, conflict often obliges – and permits – women to take on roles and characteristics that expand the limits of what is considered proper. These might range from involvement in large-scale commerce to sex work. They may be accompanied by an unaccustomed independence of decision-making based on their new economic confidence, which may infringe people's concepts of how women ought to behave. Some of these more radical changes in gender relations may be viewed negatively. Moreover, they generally fall short of permitting women's access to the institutions that govern community decision-making, which tend to remain dominated by men.

Longer-term impacts

The general effects of conflict (for example, resource depletion, impoverishment, displacement, demographic distortion, social dysfunction) generate further impacts which are also gendered. For example, economic survival may require women to take on new and

perhaps socially unacceptable activities, which may lead to family breakdown and tensions between generations, which may in turn lead to further impoverishment, itself perhaps experienced differently by men and women. A case study from Uganda (Box 4) describes how nearly 20 years of conflict have impacted in different ways (both economic and social) on marriage practices, and hence on relations between young men and women, and between generations.

Box 4: An example of a long-term cycle of social change as a result of conflict-related displacement, resource depletion and social breakdown

… Legal marriage according to the Acholi code is now rarer than in the past. This is partly because the cattle and other resources needed to provide bridewealth and fund the marriage ceremony are in short supply. (Indeed, even if a person is able to provide bridewealth, he or she may fear it being looted.) However it is also because civil registration has taken the place of traditional registration and has little meaning in people's eyes…. Many practices relating to the formalisation of marriage (such as researching the prospective spouses' family backgrounds, exchange of gifts between the families) are dying out, both for economic reasons and because young people are rejecting marriages arranged by their parents. Separation and divorce are believed to be more frequent, especially in displaced camps, while increasing numbers of women remain single: they are able to support themselves and their children because of their access to education and economic opportunities.

Age of girls at marriage appears to be reducing, and in consequence the number of child mothers increasing. While in the past courtship was highly regulated, in the perception of parents girls and boys nowadays do what they like, including picking up partners through casual acquaintance. Girls no longer behave demurely in front of boys, and indeed often initiate relationships or propose marriage themselves. Men perceive modern women as being more interested in having money spent on them than on seeking a life partner.

The sense coming through the testimonies is that the institution of marriage is breaking down, and that this breakdown is related to the erosion of traditional values as well as to practical restrictions resulting from the war and in particular from displacement.

The rapid increase in prevalence of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases (at a time when HIV infection is being brought under control in the rest of Uganda) as well as the introduction of new forms of economic support based on sexual relationships (such as 'sugar daddies' and 'sugar mummies') fuel the belief that moral degeneration is the result of this breakdown in clan values.

[LUMORO: 2002, PP. 19-20]

2.1.4 The Societal Level

How far have role changes resulted in women gaining greater influence in decision-making bodies at the community or national levels? If women have had to adapt and take on new and unfamiliar tasks, do people regard this as a positive change that offers opportunities for both women and men, or do they feel that their values are being undermined and their identity threatened? Evidence that positive change results from the upheavals of conflict is hard to find. On the contrary, some recent research has shown that:

Conflict may create space to make a redefinition of social relations possible, but in so doing it rearranges, adapts or reinforces patriarchal ideologies, rather than fundamentally changing them.

[ACORD: 2002, RESEARCH REPORT P. 5]

Box 5: Back to the kitchen – the case of Eritrea

The Eritrean People's Liberation Front, one of several movements fighting a war of secession against Ethiopia that eventually dominated the post-independence government, adopted a policy of women's equality as part of the struggle to create a new society. Women were encouraged to join the EPLF as fighters as well as support personnel, and several achieved high military rank. At the same time, peasant women in areas administered by the EPLF, and later in the country as a whole, were encouraged to participate in the political process and laws were introduced to equalise their access to land and other resources. Women are now well represented amongst ministers, the judiciary, police and local government. However, poor educational provision for women, and widespread family opposition to women taking active roles in public life, have discouraged women from standing for office.

Once independence had been obtained, women fighters received the same demobilisation package as men and were given privileged opportunities for training in income-generating skills. However, no thought was given to the very different constraints that demobilised women ex-fighters faced, especially those with dependent children. Using up their demobilisation allowances on living expenses, and culturally isolated from their families through the experience of military living, many slipped quickly into poverty and social isolation. At the same time, the National Union of Eritrean Women, which had once been a respected partner in the liberation struggle, was politically marginalised and was unable to ensure that the egalitarian policies that had once characterised the demobilisation programme were maintained.

(Sources: Pankhurst: 2002; Seyoum: 1999)

Eritrea and Bougainville, for different reasons, offered hope that respect for women's rights had permanent prospects. In the case of Eritrea, women's equality was a stated goal of liberation movements, and had been effectively gained within at least one of them during the period of armed struggle. In Bougainville, a matrilineal society, women already held relatively powerful positions (many women were landowners and there were female as well as male chiefs) before conflict started. Yet in both cases, the gains for women were fragile.

2.1.5 The Significance of Women Organising

Women organising – the missing link

In a few cases structures and values have radically changed. What distinguishes these cases is that women have been able to organise. In countries such as Somalia, Uganda and Rwanda, women have taken on more active roles in national political life and are beginning to gain acceptance from male hierarchies, even though this may be contested by traditionalists and may not yet have led to changed attitudes at grass-roots level. In cases such as Rwanda (see Box 7) women's organisations have successfully encouraged the national and international communities to introduce lasting changes to women's legal status and enhance their political legitimacy. Political will at the highest level in Rwanda has been critical in the progress achieved to date, and the President, Paul Kagame, has lent personal weight through his speeches to the cultural shift that is taking place.

The emergence of women's organisations at different levels is a notable feature of post-conflict societies. The influence of donors and the existence of a positive funding climate has stimulated the growth of such organisations. However, this is only one factor in the growth.

Box 6: Bougainville women still struggling

Bougainville is a matrilineal society in which women have considerable powers of ownership and decision-making. Indeed, women landowners were among the first to decry the injustice of the activities of foreign mining companies (see Box 9), and in doing so they triggered outbreaks of violent resistance by men, which eventually led to war. However, the presence of Papua New Guinea national military, police and politicians, who did not share the ethos of matrilineal societies, began to tilt the balance of gender relations towards reducing women's status. One observer noted that they 'have become more confined to the home environment and seem less able to effectively participate in voicing their views'. Since the peace agreement was signed in 1998, women have regained some of their former influence as a result of their high-profile involvement in the peace process and in demobilisation and reconstruction programmes. However, one of the ongoing consequences of this war has been an increase in domestic and sexual violence against women and of violent incidents involving the use of small arms.

(Sources: Peacock-Taylor: 1999; and Bougainville participants in the Sharing Know-how Workshop)

Box 7: How conflict provided the context for the emergence of women's organisations in Rwanda

At local level, women started organising spontaneously shortly after the genocide, helping each other to come to terms with their experiences, to cultivate fields and to protect their families. With the support of national (government and NGO) and international development partners, these spontaneous groupings became formalised and were provided with various forms of support, including funds, relief supplies such as clothing and household utensils, psychological support, and training in organising.... Groups … had played an important part in conflict reduction by maintaining contact with relatives who had sought refuge in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, providing them with guarantees of fair treatment if they returned. The groups were ethnically mixed and believe that the commitment to serving the community together is another strategy for reducing tension.

Since 1994, the number of women's organisations in Rwanda has continued to rise. The organisations have been credited with contributing in important ways to post-genocide reconstruction and rehabilitation. It is unique that, in Rwanda, an effective umbrella women's organisation, Collectif Pro-Femmes TWESE HAMWE exists which … now brings together more than 40 [organisations] … promoting a culture of peace and remembrance, protecting widows and the displaced, promoting legal rights of widows and children; health promotion, promoting women in decision-making positions and fighting violence against women and girls. Organisations that are part of Pro-Femmes played an important role in responding to the pressing needs of the most vulnerable groups in the country, including widows, orphans, and child-headed households. The focus areas of women's organisations include: economic empowerment, women's rights and trauma counselling; rehabilitation, reintegration of vulnerable groups and health; education, literacy and advocacy; peace building, gender awareness and research; information and communication. It is significant that many women's organisations have been active participants in efforts aimed at eradicating all forms of violence and discrimination against women.

[UNIFEM: 2003, P. 7-8]

Conflict itself has made women more aware of the need for reconciliation and reconstruction, and of their possible contribution to it. Contributors to the Know-how Sharing Workshop described how this awareness led to the founding of their organisations:

Many women … never thought that they would be able to influence national processes. But after the conflict, they starting thinking. Why do we women have so many difficulties today? Why are there so many psychological problems for our families? Women are responsible for solving these problems and yet they have no say in the decision-making process.

[CAUCASUS PARTICIPANT AT THE SHARING KNOW-HOW WORKSHOP]

Réseau des Femmes (DRC) started in 1998 because women had noticed they were often being sidelined in political processes. Women thought this was the time to intervene.… Women in Réseau des Femmes have come together to discuss what they should be doing. The main question they ask is why is there war and these divisions? Nobody has been able to give answers.

[DRC PARTICIPANT AT THE SHARING KNOW-HOW WORKSHOP]

Women were tired of witnessing the breakdown of the family unit. The women's movement {in Sierra Leone} grew very strong in 1994 and women were the first to call for peace and democracy. Women advocated for the recognition of women's rights and inclusion in decision-making.

[SIERRA LEONE PARTICIPANT AT THE SHARING KNOW-HOW WORKSHOP]

Generalisations about the impact of conflict are unwise: although some trends are clearly documented (such as demographic changes, changes to marriage practices and expectations, and changes to the sexual division of labour), the longer-term social processes that follow in the wake of conflict must be understood in their particular contexts.

2.2 Women and Conflict – Some Controversies

2.2.1 Why Focus on Women?

Women do not constitute a separate and homogenous group. Women are the wives, mothers and daughters of men (and women) who make war, and their lives are inseparable from those of their male relatives and neighbours. In giving priority to women's experience, the present report recognises this continuity. At the same time, women's experience is not universal but varies in relation to their social position. The experience of older women will differ from that of younger women, that of wealthier women from that of poorer, that of one clan or ethnicity from that of another. The perspectives of the participants in the Sharing Know-how Project reflect the importance of recognising both the differences and the similarities in their experiences. Recording women's experiences and activism highlights a number of debates that are relevant to an understanding of social and political change, ranging from the nature and social impact of violence, to globalisation and the role of international solidarity.

2.2.2 Do Women Experience Conflict Differently From Men?

At a fundamental human level, war is indiscriminate in its capacity to kill, maim and destroy property and livelihoods. It accentuates existing differences of power and access to resources, weakening the position of those who are already without power, whether they are men, women or children. Women suffer through the violence and deprivation imposed on their men-folk, just as men are affronted and emasculated through the abuse and humiliation of their wives, mothers and daughters. Within the household, both men and

women struggle to fulfil their social roles of providing for and protecting family members, in circumstances of extreme difficulty. Supporters and opponents of war are to be found amongst both men and women.

The wartime targeting of women for sexual abuse of many sorts, including rape (often accompanied by extreme violence), has been widely documented (see, for example Kelly: 2000; Turshen: 2001; Turshen and Twagiramariya: 1998). However, male rape is also a feature of warfare, and although it is less common than female rape, its consequences can be just as devastating (see Zarkov: 2001 for accounts of male rape in Bosnia-Herzegovina).

Despite the similarities in men's and women's experiences at one level, at another level there are clearly differences in particular instances. The social positions of men and women prior to conflict differ: they have different social roles and can command different types of resources, and they respond to crises differently according to their responsibilities and the expectations placed on them. For example, in many societies, men are seen as protectors of women and children, while women are expected to provide food, medical care and welfare for their families and for the more vulnerable members of society. In such cases it is perceived as being 'natural' for fighting to be a male role and for women to be seen as vulnerable targets in need of protection. In this sense the different social roles of men and women ensure that their experiences of conflict diverge.

The challenge, then, is to record and analyse the social mechanisms by which these common experiences are differentiated in particular instances – in other words to articulate 'how women, men and children are differently constructed and differently violated as a result of armed conflicts' (El-Jack: 2002 p. 54).

2.2.3 Victims or Agents of War?

Women, like men, are resourceful and dynamic in responding to the crises and stresses created by war; they pursue their responsibilities with inventiveness and skill and take extraordinary risks in doing so. In what sense, then, is it possible to describe them as 'victims' or members of 'vulnerable groups'? The question is fraught with contesting views. Some commentators view war as being part and parcel of men's capacity for violence, self-interest and insensitivity to others' suffering, while women are always the main targets of this violence, with horrific results. According to this view, war is in effect a 'war on women' (Kelly: 2000; Turshen and Twagiramariya: 1998).

It is impossible to deny the huge catalogue of horrors that women have experienced in conflict, and equally impossible to avoid equating this with the subordinate position of women generally. However, while women may indeed be targeted for particular types of abuse because they are women, it does not follow that being women renders them incapable of resistance or resilience (see Ridd and Callaway: 1987). Feminists have long argued that women, as a general category, exert agency, i.e. are active in shaping their world and in contributing to events according to their own values and wishes, and that their often-extraordinary resilience in the face of abuse and deprivation has generally not been acknowledged.

2.2.4 Do Women Work for War or for Peace?

Women contribute to war directly as members of military forces, and in less direct ways, such as providing support services to militias, carrying information or weapons, organising logistics and supplies, and undertaking clandestine activities such as spying or hiding fugitives. They may be active in promoting the *culture of war* by taking part in ritual validations of fighting, by giving their blessing to fighters, as well as by the values they

promote as they raise and educate their children. Some examples of the wide range of ways in which women contribute to conflict are presented in Box 8.

Just as women lend their support to fighting, they may also do the opposite when they consider it right to do so, using what resources they have (including their position as wives and mothers) to ensure that fighting stops and that non-violence is pursued to resolve differences. History and anthropology abound with references to women influencing the outcome of war by intervening either in favour of, or in opposition to war. The play *Lysistrata* by the classical Greek writer Aristophanes describes how Athenian women withheld sex from their husbands until they brought war to an end. In recent times women have been found on the barricades, some defending war and others opposing it. The opponents, however, are gaining strength through mobilising and organising both locally and globally. The remaining sections of this report focus in more detail on the work of women's organisations working for peace as represented through their participation in the Sharing Know-how Project, their understandings, actions, achievements and constraints.

Box 8: Women supporting and participating in conflict

Warfare between clans was further regulated by the necessity to carry out certain cleansing rituals before making an attack. The rituals involved different clan officials… .The chief's wife or mother pronounced a blessing as part of the ritual. In this way the war initiative was established as a legitimate – and indeed unavoidable – duty, supported by the clan as a whole.

[LUMORO: 2002, P. 18]

Women joined the guerrillas [in El Salvador] because their lives and outlooks had been changed by other experiences, and because they believed they would be listened to in these organisations…. Above all they were carers, whether they took care of logistics or houses and sites. They participated in marches and mobilisations. They supported the militancy of their men by nurturing committed families. And they led the defence of human rights when repression spread throughout the country. They were crucial to the survival of the guerrilla camps, whether as combatants or cooks; they were in charge of communications and the supply of food, clothing, medicine and munitions. And it was also they who, in the villages, gave shelter to the guerrilla women who were about to give birth; it was they who took care of the new-born children.

[IBANEZ: 2001, PP. 120–121]

Women involved in Maoist activities are engaged mainly in four areas: people's militia, the party, the party's sister organisation for women, and as common supporters, feeding and hiding the fighters in the villages and collecting information for them. In some districts, 40 per cent of the militia consist of women. Women party workers are engaged in social justice, reform and creating awareness among women who are still bound by the patriarchal system of the society. Their work in fighting alcoholism, polygamy and other social anomalies attracts more and more women to the Maoists.

[ADAPTED FROM GAUTAM: 2001, PP. 38–42]

In the North of Ireland, as in Palestine, there was a general belief that women were more protected than men, especially because the British and Israeli forces deemed them less suspect than their male counterparts. Thus, as in other national liberations struggles, women took to the streets, organised protests, engaged in direct confrontations with Israeli or British soldiers, transported ammunition, carried important messages and got involved in the armed struggle.

[SHARONI: 2001 P. 93]

Women in right-wing Hindu nationalist movements in India have been in the forefront of attempts to marginalise and make illegitimate the claims of minority Muslim communities. They have done this in three main ways: through the stridently female voices of some women leaders of the movement encouraging a highly aggressive Hindu masculinity among the men, by extending the reach of the main extremist parties through the activities of their women's wings, and by sanctioning (and encouraging) specific acts of anti-Muslim violence such as the demolition of the Ayodhya mosque.

[ADAPTED FROM MUKHTA: 2000, PP. 171–176]

I was captured in 1996 at Tombodu (Sierra Leone) by a woman captain. She took me to be part of her squad and to be her close aide. I was trained to use an AK 58 gun and a pistol. We attacked Tongo, Koidu, Kongoteh, and a Guinea border town called Fokonia, where we burnt houses and foodstuffs and chopped off people's hands. When we were forced to move out of Koidu, we went near to the Liberian border and then started attacking right up to Freetown. I used to infiltrate into enemy territories to spy. We smoked marijuana, took capsules, had cocaine injections.

[FINDA (AGED 16), QUOTED IN JUSU-SHERIFF: 2000, P. 48]

3. Conflict and Peace: Women's Perspectives

Given the enormously varied experiences of war described in the previous section, what understanding do women have of the processes of conflict and peace, and of the challenges of participating in them? How does this understanding frame what they do? This section largely reflects discussion amongst a group of committed peace activists (from Uganda, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Colombia, Tbilisi, Sukhumi, Abkhazia, Sri Lanka, Bougainville and Nepal) at International Alert's Sharing Know-how Workshop. While they clearly represent only one strand of women's opinions worldwide, these participants have forged their understanding through experience and reflection on what conflict and peace mean for women. Quotations in this section are from workshop participants unless otherwise stated.

3.1 Women's Understanding of War and Conflict

How do women understand conflict? Workshop participants recognised that the causes of conflict are complex and need to be addressed in context. They identified three major underlying causes of war, often found in combination.

3.1.1 Fragmentation of State Power and Lack of Good Governance

Firstly, the participants understood war as resulting from imbalances in the nature of power distribution, both internally within the state, and externally. The state contributes to conflict when it is unable to balance the needs of different sections of the population (including minorities and those not represented in national decision-making forums), and to forge unity and an overarching national identity from these disparate and potentially conflicting groups. The causes of this failure may in some cases be traced as far back as the colonialist era.

Sudan has been at war since colonial times, and colonisers exploited differences between the north and south. The British wanted the south, rich with natural resources, to be more closely related to the east African countries, and the north with the northern African Arab countries. But with Independence in 1956, the south and the north of Sudan were forced to become one country.

[PARTICIPANT FROM SUDAN]

Uganda has never had any cohesiveness. There is more allegiance to ethnic groups than to the nation. Since Independence, one crisis has followed another.… There were a number of small

kingdoms which wanted to secede at Independence. Everybody had their own interests and four years after Independence there was war.

[PARTICIPANT FROM UGANDA]

Within the state there are always tendencies towards fragmentation that need to be kept in check. These tendencies can be made worse by permitting the expression of different ethnic identities; they can also be heightened by doing the opposite, i.e. by putting all power in the hands of a centralised authority. Hence the eternal dilemma of the state:

Congo is a vast country and the population doesn't want the country to be divided…. But now we have the problem of representation and how to manage the country…. If each region were autonomous this would lead to an imbalance in resources between the regions.

[PARTICIPANT FROM DRC]

3.1.2 Conflict Over Natural Resources and Territory

Participants noted that many of the war situations in which they were living were based on conflicts over natural resources and the territory in which these were found. Many of these are inspired or exacerbated by the interests of external actors, which national authorities are unable or unwilling to bring under control for the benefit of the populations most directly affected. In all the cases considered by the workshop, not only was natural-resource exploitation initiated without the consent of local people, but also the benefits have been shared between governments and international companies, with only very minor benefits – if any – accruing to the communities who depend on the land in question. Working with allies in the international community, and being able to call governments and international companies to account, is an essential strategy for locally based peace activists.

3.1.3 Exclusion and the Denial of Identity

Diversity does not need to be a problem. It only becomes a problem when there are injustices. Diversity can enrich our lives. One of the problems in Africa is that people have no way to change the status quo. We have to keep on challenging governments to accept democracy and the rights of diverse groups.

[PARTICIPANT FROM UGANDA]

Exclusion, the denial of identity, and the denial of rights and means of self-expression make up the third basic cause of conflict.

- Wars in Sudan and Sri Lanka originated in the desire for self-determination of those groups (southern Sudanese, Tamils) who had been deprived of access to national decision-making machinery. Both these wars are of long duration: in the Sudan's case since 1956; in Sri Lanka fighting has been ongoing for 20 years.
- The denial of rights to cultural and religious expression figure as causes of grievance in conflict as, for example, in the case of the Sudan.
- The Ogoni people of the Niger Delta region formed their social movement (the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, MOSOP) in response to their exclusion from national seats of power, dominated by the other main Nigerian ethnicities, the Hausa-Fulani groupings, the Yoruba and the Ibo.
- The 50-year conflict in Colombia began when political opposition was suppressed and later turned into a war about oil and other resources. Those already marginalised, such as the black Colombians, have suffered most, and new categories of excluded people (including the 2.5 million displaced) have been created.

- The Maoist rebellion in Nepal was a response to a political system that discriminated against relatively powerless groups (including women) and its political platform aims to reclaim the rights of these groups.

In all these cases resistance is seen as a means by which marginalised people reclaim rights that have been denied them due to a lack of political representation. The debate is about whether violent or non-violent means can be acceptable or effective in achieving these ends. A participant from Sudan explained: 'Our people want to rescue their identity and find political and peaceful solutions to differences between north and south.' Participants saw the 'rescuing of identity' as a key issue to be addressed.

3.2 Factors That Perpetuate Conflict

3.2.1 Corruption, Illegal Trade and Impunity

Workshop participants saw self-interest and corruption as factors that perpetuate conflict. Competition for control of lucrative markets in illegal or hard-to-regulate commodities has generated many conflicts, such as those in Colombia (see Box 9). In Sierra Leone, attempts to re-establish national unity during the 1990s was hampered by a series of coups and counter-coups, mostly aimed at securing access to the country's gold and diamond resources. Participants believe that impunity from restraint or prosecution arouses anger in those who have been treated unjustly, and so threatens peace. Small arms and other illegal trades such as the drugs trade, although not necessarily direct causes of war, fuel it and ensure its continuance. Small arms and anti-personnel mines ensure the continuation of insecurity long after the conflict has formally ended.

3.2.2 The Role of the International Community

We have already seen how political control during colonialism and the extraction of resources by external actors – often with the support of the state – can be direct causes of conflict. International interests also play a role in perpetuating them. For example, Abkhazia remains an unrecognised territory because:

… International organisations and other mediators have an interest in maintaining Abkhazia as part of Georgia. Abkhazia is also a good instrument for Russia to influence the policy of Georgia. Russia supports Abkhazia while the US supports Georgia.

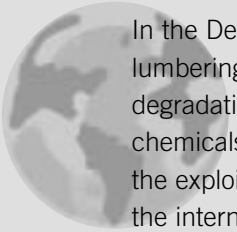
[PARTICIPANT FROM CAUCASUS]

Participants also expressed the view that the international humanitarian community has failed to exercise its full influence towards peace because it seeks palliative remedies for humanitarian tragedies rather than supporting local capacities for reconciliation. Given the direct role played by external actors both in generating and in maintaining conflict, alliances between local and international civil society around shared goals are important to develop. In Colombia, for example:

… The support of the international community is needed, and international solidarity to limit the armed population, to help relieve the humanitarian crisis and strengthen initiatives from civil society, particularly the women's movement. The international community and NGOs must co-ordinate their activities between them, because each organisation cannot come to the country with a different proposal.

[PARTICIPANT FROM COLOMBIA]

Box 9: Examples of conflicts based on struggles over natural resources and land



In the Delta region of **Nigeria,** common local means of livelihood are fishing, farming and lumbering. All these have been severely hampered by the extremes of environmental degradation brought about by the oil and other associated industries (producing petro-chemicals, fertilisers, steel, electricity and aluminium). The conflict in the Delta region over the exploitation of oil was triggered by two interlinked factors: the greed and insensitivity of the international oil industry, and the Nigerian government's lack of attention to the voices of Delta ethnic groups. Although the Delta's oil contributes around 95 per cent of the national wealth, the people of the region are politically marginalised and are not represented at the decision-making level. The Nigerian government took control of all land by decree in 1978 and is therefore legally entitled to enter into agreements with the oil companies. However, the double standards of the oil companies (exercising environmental controls in European countries but not in Africa) leads to destruction of the environment on which the Ogoni and other Delta peoples depend.

Likewise, the government of **Papua New Guinea** failed to defend the interests of Bougainvillean communities whose land was being plundered by the Panguna copper mine, owned by CRA, an Australian subsidiary of Conzinc-Rio Tinto. Consequences included destruction of the environment, pollution of water systems and displacement of the population from their villages. Here, too, claims over communal land ownership are critical. By law, private landowners own the surface of the land while the government owns what lies beneath. By this reasoning the government was entitled to enter into agreements with mining companies. However, people argued that the substrata cannot be reached without cutting through the topsoil, of which they are the legal owners.

Colombia is another example of a country whose resources (gold, oil, coca) are the cause of multiple conflicts. Originally a conflict over access to political representation and power, the focus of violence now is on the coca trade, which sustains guerrilla movements of both left and right. The US has invested 1.6 billion dollars in 'Plan Colombia', a basket of military initiatives and economic measures ostensibly designed to curb the drugs trade but with the effect of ensuring control of this strategic oil supply for North America. Attempts to control cocaine production have resulted in large areas being fumigated, leading to loss of life, reduced health and harmful consequences for the environment. Marginalised groups such as the descendants of black imported plantation labourers, who lack rights to land ownership and political participation, have been particularly affected by the struggles of the different armed forces over these resources.

(Source: presentations from workshop participants)

3.2.3 Internal Gender Inequalities as Factors Perpetuating War

Attitudes and values attached to the behaviour of women and men are key elements of identity, and are often manipulated in order to mobilise support for conflict, as we have already shown. At the same time, the pressures generated as a result of conflict (poverty, lack of employment opportunities, displacement into camps or restricted areas), can destabilise gender relations and cause particular stresses for women. Even where exclusion and subordination are not in themselves direct drivers of conflict, they reduce a society's resilience to the destruction and deprivation generated by war, and thus build up barriers to conflict resolution. A society with the capacity to negotiate sustainable peace (a peace that responds to the needs of all sections of society) is of necessity a society in which women (as

well as women and men from marginalised groups) are fully represented in decision-making. Similarly, cultures of silence and exclusion foster resentment and violence.

3.3 Context-specific Issues

3.3.1 'Frozen' Conflicts and Non-recognised States

Workshop participants also signalled particular problems arising in 'frozen conflicts'. In these situations, efforts to resolve the underlying political constraints to conflict resolution have stagnated, and a state of conflict continues over a long period of time. The result is a situation where the absence of security becomes the norm. They also noted the particular problems of non-recognised states (such as southern Sudan, Somalia and Somaliland, or Abkhazia), where international law does not formally apply. Non-recognised states have difficulty in attracting official aid, including support for peacebuilding initiatives. Those involved in such initiatives have difficulty in engaging in international networking as a result. The situation of non-recognised states also raises particular concerns for women's efforts to secure positive changes in their social status in the post-conflict period, since non-recognised governments cannot be held to account against global conventions. A participant from Abkhazia observed:

… When certain governments sign international policy documents then there is some change at the formal level. Then it's up to civil society to make sure that these institutions are really working and … impacting on real life. We can say to our government then that the document has been signed and now there is an obligation. This is the difference between recognised and non-recognised states. The latter has no responsibility.

[PARTICIPANT FROM CAUCASUS]

3.3.2 Nationalism and Secession

Several conflicts represented at the workshop are centred round issues of nationalism, self-determination and secession. Nationalist, including ethnic, politics are a feature in, for example, Georgia and the DRC, and are often manipulated as a pretext for attempts to control natural resources. However, different patterns emerge that illustrate alternative views about how state structures can be responsive to the needs of minorities or perceived minorities.

- **Southern Sudanese** see little alternative but independence from the northern government that has attempted to impose control over the south and which has effectively prevented the south from accessing its own resources.
- The **Georgia-Abkhazia** conflict has raised debate about the viability of Abkhazia (population 500,000) as a separate nation. While some would accept a confederate status, others have pushed for a declaration of independence, which has effectively pre-empted other solutions.
- The war in **Bougainville** similarly brought into the open differences of approach within the Bougainville community. The independence movement that initiated the conflict was eventually suppressed by the government, but 'outsiders' (e.g. government soldiers, traders from elsewhere in Papua New Guinea) are still resented by Bougainvilleans for having played a predatory and interfering role during the conflict and for lacking respect for Bougainville's culture. Opinion differs in Bougainville now about independence: for some, independence is a risky and confrontational strategy that conflicts with the current need for reconciliation and reconstruction.

3.3.3 Displacement

Participants also noted particular issues around displacement and the treatment of internally displaced people (IDPs) and returning refugees, an issue that many of the organisations represented at the workshop were attempting to tackle. Displacement is a common outcome of the conflicts described by workshop participants, for example in Colombia, DRC, Burundi, Georgia-Abkhazia, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Numbers of displaced are in some cases very high and have built up over a long period. In 50 years, Colombia has generated an IDP population of 2.5 million, while 200,000 have been displaced over 20 years in Sri Lanka.

The form of displacement differs from place to place. In Burundi, insecurity tended to displace Hutus across the border to Tanzania, while displaced Tutsis tended to move to more secure environments within Burundi. Since a peace agreement has now been reached, both refugees and other displaced communities are being encouraged to return, but the process of return and re-installation is different in each case. In the Georgia-Abkhazia conflict, ethnic Georgians who had been living in Abkhazia were obliged to return to Georgia when the first round of fighting resulted in a victory for Abkhazia. Subsequently, ethnic Abkhazians in Georgia had to return to Abkhazia. These are now in political limbo until the dispute between the two countries is resolved – becoming, like displaced persons elsewhere, pawns in the games of politicians. As one participant put it, 'Abkhazia has to decide what its priorities are – IDPs or independence'.

3.4 Women's Views on Peace and Peace Activism

There are two parallel processes that must be considered. One is the political negotiations, which have been frozen for the last 10 years in a state of no war and no peace. The other is people's diplomacy. Many women believe they have achieved a lot in this sense, particularly in understanding that each of the sides has their own truth and their own pain. We understand that everybody wants to live in peace. But that vision of peace is different on the different sides, and we understand that it is possible to find a compromise.

[PARTICIPANT FROM CAUCASUS]

The view of peace expressed by participants in the Sharing Know-how Workshop is of a world in which rights and democracy are respected and in which people can be content in their own identity, express their own culture and control their own resources, and in which they are able to experience happiness, joy, love and care for others. Participants emphasised the need for security and for the provision of basic needs. They wanted diversity and 'constructive conflict' to be recognised and celebrated in a context free of fear and violence. Prerequisites of this are – in their view – justice, respect, progress, forgiveness, understanding and solidarity. This must include respect for women in the home as well as in public life:

Peace is something where women have honour, respect, dignity, and social justice. When you come to human dignity, a person cannot begin talking to you without greeting. The greeting, the personal approach, is a form of dignity and love. This is the respect that we envisage as women, as mothers. If a man is your husband or son, he must know how to communicate with you.

[SHARING KNOW-HOW PROJECT INTERVIEW WITH ANISA ACHIENG AND STELLA SABIITI, OCTOBER 2001]

Many of the organisations represented at the workshop had become involved in conflict resolution as a result of a frustration with male politics and with the lack of moral justification for the violence that was being committed in their names. One participant expressed the view that 'too much has been left to political leaders and politicians with guns'. They believe that a different approach based on principles of non-violence is possible.

3.5 The Contribution Women Can Make to Peacebuilding

3.5.1. Promoting Social Transformation

The most critical contribution to peacebuilding that participants exemplify in their work lies in transforming attitudes and practices, structures and competencies, to lay the groundwork for the local and global changes that permanent peace requires. Women's peace activism works towards women's own rights and equality, and it also works towards broader societal goals. Both are necessary elements in conflict transformation.

The work of building peace is not exclusively about direct mediation or formal negotiation. It demands the integration of initiatives taking place at different levels – local, national, regional and global – and requires the transformation of global and societal relations. Successful and sustainable peacebuilding processes involve people acquiring self-respect, identity and dignity, as well as physical security. It also requires that all sections of the population have access to political processes and the opportunity to participate in them.

3.5.2 Developing an Alternative World View

Workshop participants believe that women peace activists can contribute to peace processes through developing an alternative, gendered view of the world – one that goes beyond a focus on political and military negotiations, and extends to examining and questioning every aspect of the situation.

Women's organisations should try as much as possible to analyse and question every status quo. Because only then can you extricate yourself from the barriers that have been put on you. What are the causes of the conflict? When you start questioning, going back to history, from a gender perspective, it is possible to shake off stereotypes and exceptions, in order to move ahead.

[PARTICIPANT FROM THE SUDAN]

3.5.3 The 'Feminisation of Protest'

Participants often find that they adopt this approach as a result of a 'gut feeling' rather than through applying a systematic, learned methodology of non-violence; they are experimenting with different techniques, which they see as representing a particularly women's style of social activism. In this way they see themselves as promoting the 'feminisation of protest' and developing a common 'women's agenda' as a counterpoint to the failed politics of violence. They believe that this capacity for women's activism is derived from several factors that unite them:

- Their common values and experiences as women provide them with a special capacity to build bridges across social and political divides;
- Because of their role in caring for the casualties of war and ensuring social security in times of service breakdown, and because of the particular forms which women's experience of war takes, they have a stake in peace and the establishment of security and stability;
- Oppression motivates activism and people who have experienced conflict have a deeper appreciation of peace;
- As wives and mothers, women have a special capacity to influence family members, especially in societies which exalt these roles;
- Women's peace activism is not new: as we have seen above, in many societies they have traditionally played recognised roles in decision-making about conflict and peace.

3.6 Turning 'Organisations' into a 'Movement': An International Division of Labour

Do the women's peace initiatives reviewed in the Sharing Know-how Project add up to something more than a collection of organisations? Is there such a thing as a 'women's peace movement', and if there is, do the project's participants feel they are part of it? In this section we examine a key component of a 'global movement', namely its capacity to operate at different levels and to put in place effective links between these levels.

3.6.1 Addressing the Local Manifestations of Conflict

As women's experiences of conflict demonstrates, it is often at the local level that the most direct tragedies of conflict can be seen, in the violations of individual security and rights, and in the bewildering processes of social change destabilising households and communities. Women's peace activism at this level is likewise focused on direct relief from suffering and awareness-raising to change attitudes and behaviour. The types of organisations represented at this level, and their activities, vary greatly in relation to the specific needs of the context. At the same time, linking the local dynamics of conflict to the analysis of wider processes and to national and international support and advocacy initiatives is an important element in this work.

3.6.2 National-level Peace Movements and Reconciliation Initiatives

Women's movements have often been instrumental in raising awareness of the devastating impacts of conflict on civilian populations and in urging reconciliation. Their exhortations to peace are of necessity directed towards both sides in the conflict, and this requires them to be politically involved, not in terms of representation of different interests but rather of engaging in the political arena. The Sierra Leone Women's Forum, for example, focused its campaign on the holding of elections as a basis for civilian rule, and built up a momentum of popular opinion towards that end (see Box 10).

The practical contribution of women's organisations often comes after formal peace has been declared. In cases such as Rwanda (see Box 7), women are respected collaborators in the attempt to rebuild a permanently secure society. Their legitimacy is built on their record of commitment to the welfare of others and on the broad-based support for their national structures. In both these cases, a strong, inclusive and experienced network of women's organisations with effective national coordination mechanisms has provided a platform through which women can play an accepted and influential role.

3.6.3 Regional Networking and Support

A number of regional women's peace networks have evolved, particularly in Africa, responding to the critical nature of armed and violent conflict on that continent. These include peace networks such as Federation of African Women's Peace Networks (FERFAP) and the African Women's Committee for Peace and Development (AWCPD), as well as women's-rights organisations that have incorporated strong peace components into their programmes, such as ISIS/WICCE and Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS). These organisations have often grown out of national movements and form an important link between national processes on the one hand, and national and international decision-makers on the other.

Women leaders within these organisations have often gained experience of politics in their own countries and are well versed in the dynamics of international organisations.

Box 10: Women in Sierra Leone's peace process

In 1994, a university women's group initiated networking among the many women's professional and mass organisations in the country. The network came to be known as the Women's Forum. Groups met to discuss issues of common concern, initially in preparation for the Beijing conference. However, the women soon became drawn into discussions about the war with the rebels and how to end it. This gave rise to the creation, as a member of the Forum, of the Sierra Leone Women's Movement for Peace (SLWMP). Supported by the Forum, the SLWMP initiated campaigns of appeals to government and rebels, marches, prayer rallies and meetings with government and members of the international community to press for a negotiated settlement. Perceived as having no political axe to grind, the women were able to challenge both government and rebels without being seen as a threat, and the campaign gained a legitimacy from which other peace groups also benefited.

One of the Forum members, WOMEN, took a lead in calling for elections and a return to civilian rule. The proposal was generally accepted, since by this time it was becoming clear that military victory by the government was unlikely. The planned elections came close to being cancelled. However, women's exhortations were instrumental in convincing them of the need to go ahead.

In the long run, the women failed to take up the challenge of civilian government and become a political force. 'Women believed that their hard work in the democratisation process would be rewarded by places at the negotiating table, but politicians recognised that the ideas and attitudes thrown up by the women's movement had the potential of destabilising traditional politics, so they discouraged further participation by women in leadership. Thirty years of systematic marginalisation of women in politics had left them lacking confidence.' (Jusu-Sheriff: 2000, p. 49)

With the second coup d'etat in 1997, the women's movement's peace work was eclipsed. However, since the return of civilian government the Women's Forum has worked actively alongside other civil-society groups, advocating for women's inclusion in local government, and for the establishment of gender units in government. Women's groups are taking an active part in reconciliation work, for example participating in the Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration Programme, working as peace educators, and carrying out human rights, literacy and skills training work with women. Women's organisations are also being brought into the wider Mano River peace process involving Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia.

(Sources: Jusu-Sheriff: 2000; Eno: 2000; Femmes Africa Solidarité: 2000; and workshop participants)

Inonge Lewanika, one of those interviewed for the Sharing Know-how Project and a member of FERFAP, builds on many years of experience as a parliamentarian in Zambia as well as being a member of a wide variety of development organisations and networks. She describes FERFAP's work in these terms:

FERFAP is a network of women's peace organisations that were already in place in Mozambique, Mali, Ethiopia and Sudan. The idea of coming together was to strengthen their voices; they had been doing all this work but nobody knew about them, they had been looked at as insignificant – 'just working for peace'…. We went to Burundi and the women said 'no one has ever come', we went right out to the villages, to talk with them and just cry … no one had ever come to sit with them, they were in a real state, and I think this is where it can really make a difference.

[SHARING KNOW-HOW PROJECT INTERVIEW WITH INONGE LEWANIKA, SEPTEMBER 2001]

Activists such as Inonge often experience difficulties in breaking into male-dominated political institutions. Despite this, though, they have used their positions to link local women's initiatives with major international organisations such as the OAU (now the African Union), the World Bank, United Nations bodies and national governments. They have been able to access funds for networking between women peace activists in different countries, and have levered support for the participation of women in regional peace processes (such as those in Burundi, mentioned above).

National women's initiatives are encouraged and supported by regional organisations working across national borders to support women's peace work through advice, information, training and documentation. ISIS/WICCE, based in Kampala, extended the peace activism begun in Uganda to other countries in the Great Lakes region (see Box 11) and promotes common training strategies and exchange of experience between these countries. Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) aims to develop comprehensive, gender-sensitive policies and practices for conflict prevention and resolution, and to socialise these through regional and international bodies and peace processes, creating a conducive climate for the work of national women's peace initiatives (Diop: n.d.).

Box 11: ISIS/WICCE

Created in 1974 as an international organisation dedicated to women's human rights, ISIS relocated its International Cross-Cultural Exchange programme to Uganda in 1993 with the aim of using women's knowledge and skills internationally to promote women's rights and leadership. Over 80 women leaders have been trained in Uganda.

In 1999 ISIS/WICCE began a programme of research and documentation on the experiences of women in situations of armed conflict in all affected areas of Uganda. The research revealed disturbing evidence of the violations perpetrated against women, which largely go unrecognised. Surprised at the degree of animosity and mutual blame between the groups that they encountered, they concluded that bringing different groups together for training and sharing experiences would break barriers and build relationships, as well as ending the isolation of women in conflict areas and providing them with effective leadership and advocacy skills, enabling them to participate in peacebuilding, the ultimate solution for the violations of women's human rights in armed conflict.

Accordingly, 45 women from different districts of Uganda and from southern Sudan came together for a week-long meeting focusing on building relationships and dialogue, and developing a common understanding of conflict. Travelling as a group to their different places of origin (itself a risky activity for some), they familiarised themselves with different projects and recognised the need for mutual solidarity. Realising that peace depends on regional as well as country-wide relationships, ISIS/WICCE has now extended the programme to women leaders (28 in 2002) in Burundi, DRC, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan and Tanzania.

(Source: workshop presentations; ISIS website (www.isis.org.ug); Sharing Know-how Project interview with Jessica Nkuuhe and Ruth Ochieng)

FAS has supported women's participation in peace processes in, for example, Burundi, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Mano River area of West Africa. In West Africa, women from the three countries (Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia) came together to seek synergies between the countries and to influence politicians and donors to support these. The resulting Mano River Women's Peace Network (MARWOPNET) sent

delegations to meet the presidents of the three countries, encouraging them to initiate dialogue. When the presidents eventually met in Rabat in 2002, they agreed to open borders, increase economic and diplomatic cooperation, and reduce the prevalence of small arms. While on these visits, the women took advantage of opportunities to lobby UN agencies and to participate in peace demonstrations and marches. MARWOPNET designed a Plan of Action for peace and reconstruction in collaboration with women from various UN agencies, in an effort to avoid duplication and maximise the Plan's potential for implementation (Diop: n.d.).

3.6.4 International Lobbying and Policy-making

Women's approaches to peacebuilding at the international level are exemplified by the introduction and adoption of the UN Security Council's *Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security* (see Appendix V). The history of the adoption of the Resolution (Box 12) shows that the principle of women's participation in peacebuilding has been accepted in the international arena. It also demonstrates that the process of obtaining agreement at this global level requires carefully coordinated influencing strategies, and that to be effective the global process needs to be complemented by interlocking work at different levels.

The Resolution, now adopted, will be effectively implemented only if women's organisations and their supporters exert pressure on national and international bodies and hold them to account. The expectation of the Women Building Peace campaign is that the Resolution will be used by women's peace organisations, both as a basis for dialogue with national authorities and policy-makers, and as an awareness-creating tool at grass-roots level, since in order to be effective the Resolution must be linked to women's realities. The Women Building Peace campaign has already held consultative meetings in Nepal, the Caucasus, Uganda and Nigeria, which some workshop participants had also taken part in. The Sharing Know-how Workshop attempted to build on this experience by informing participants unfamiliar with it about the Resolution, and by sharing experience of its use as a tool to stimulate debate.

Participants broadly welcomed the existence of the Resolution, convinced that mobilising women to hold authorities to account was a strategy that would bear fruit progressively and contribute to women's empowerment.

When governments know that women are monitoring their actions and reports, it can be effective. If you can document how women's shadow reports and meetings are actually working, people will be convinced that you can change the system…. To be informed is to have power, because then you can … know what to do.

[PARTICIPANT FROM UGANDA]

While participants welcomed the Resolution and the opportunities it presents, they identified a number of practical constraints that women's organisations need to address if its potential is to be maximised. Firstly, women peace activists themselves need to understand its contents thoroughly so that 'we can put it in our pockets and use it when we need it'. Secondly, when discussing the Resolution at the national level a number of problems arise, given that global power imbalances may limit the possibility for states to be held to account for the security of their citizens. The fact that the Resolution emanated from the Security Council rather than being signed by individual governments provides further possibilities for states to evade responsibility. This is further complicated by the situation of non-recognised states.

Box 12: UNSC Resolution 1325: how the Women Building Peace Campaign influenced global policy

The ultimate objective of the campaign was to influence policy within the United Nations Security Council and at the European Council, encouraging them to adopt resolutions that incorporated women's needs and concerns on peace and security issues. Successful global advocacy initiatives require tight multi-level collaboration among a number of actors, so the campaign worked closely with key stakeholders to secure their support. These key stakeholders included:

- Civil-society actors including NGOs, who formed a loose grouping known as the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security;
- Key Security Council governments, especially Namibia (then holding the presidency of the Security Council), which put forward statements and resolutions, convened debates, issued press releases, and generally encouraged the process;
- United Nations agencies and departments, notably UNIFEM.

Campaign staff engaged in a multi-angle strategy involving:

- Mobilisation of women from different conflict areas to share experiences, explore concerns and outline their need for an international campaign;
- Launch of the campaign with high-profile patronage;
- Systematic multi-constituency consultations to refine themes;
- Creation of structures to guide and govern the initiative;
- Policy engagement with governments and UN missions;
- Awareness-raising to highlight and celebrate women's positive peacebuilding activities;
- Information dissemination to engage and educate constituencies and facilitate direct action at both the global and local levels;
- Facilitation of dialogue between women affected by conflict and members of the Security Council.

The campaign used a number of methods to encourage debate and awareness amongst a variety of constituencies inside and outside the Security Council. It disseminated policy recommendations based on the campaign's research, and followed these up with round-table discussions and bilateral meetings. It disseminated a regular newsletter, organised a global petition addressed to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, listing women's five demands, produced an interactive CD-ROM on Women and Conflict, together with the campaign's website, campaign pack and leaflets. International Alert used its partnership with the NGO Working Group, and its links with UK and EU official bodies to lever support in different countries and within the UN system to promote support for the adoption of the Resolution. Now that the Resolution is a reality, the challenge for the future is to ensure that Resolution 1325 is rooted in the local realities women face and is implemented to effectively support their peacebuilding activities.

(Source: Adapted from Adrian-Paul: forthcoming)

In every discussion, we must focus on a particular context, because we have different realities. Some countries have signed and supported international agreements, others have not because there is no political will to sign or implement these agreements. How independent is international policy when the US is so strong with little accountability?

[PARTICIPANT FROM UGANDA]

Thirdly, the tool needs to be used in different ways at different levels, with particular degrees of adaptation being required at the grass-roots level because of different understandings of women's position and needs. The dominance of arms and armed movements in some contexts also affects women's ability to carve out niches where they can participate effectively in negotiations.

We can differentiate and be selective about using the Resolution at different levels. With policy-makers, we can discuss the Resolution directly, and when we speak to women activists, we can talk about mechanisms and using the document as an advocacy tool. When talking to women at grass-roots level, we cannot start talking about the resolution itself, as a policy document, but we must start at a more basic level.

It is difficult to engage grass-roots organisations on a continuous basis. The women themselves oppose international standards, because it's a man's world. Custom, tradition, or resistance militate against changing the status quo because of fear. There have been a lot of misperceptions. Eighty-nine per cent of women are illiterate in some areas, so we need to bridge these gaps. But once they are engaged, much can be done.

In Burundi, we were told by the rebel group that women couldn't be part of the discussion because they don't have arms. It can be regional or international, but the men decided that those who participate must hold arms. We obtained observer status, and women are still doing the work on the ground, negotiating at community level.… But at the end of the day, how can women bring their experiences and expertise to the table? We have only paper.

[PARTICIPANTS FROM THE DRC AND BURUNDI]

3.6.5 The Globalisation of War and Anti-war Protest

Since the end of the Cold War, the shift in global power relations and growing structural inequalities have intensified regional, local and international armed conflicts. In the aftermath of 11 September 2001, preparations for war against Iraq, intensifying as this report is being finalised, have destabilised old political alliances and generated an unprecedented polarisation of opinion worldwide about global power structures and governance.

At the same time, the gendered dynamics of global war have been thrown into relief by an international media machine that has used images of women's oppression as justification for violent responses to 'terrorism'. United Nations military intervention against the Milosevic regime in 1999 gained widespread acceptance as a result of the regime's strategy of ethnic cleansing, of which rape formed an important component. The Coalition military response to Afghanistan in 2002 claimed, amongst other things, to be liberating Afghan women from the intransigence and misogyny of the Taliban, a claim underscored by countless media images of *burka*-clad Afghan women. Gender ideologies are again being used to underpin war, this time on a global scale.

In this context, the growth of women's peace organisations can be seen as a consequence not only of particular wars, but also of globalisation itself, since globalisation provides the channels and mechanisms – including Internet communication – for international movements of solidarity and dissent. Much of the force of these movements has been directed against the impending war with Iraq, and women – both as individuals and as members of organised groups – have been significant participants in them. Women and women's groups took part extensively in the countless anti-war demonstrations held in many different countries on 15 February 2003. The international movement Women in Black, for example, and its member and associate organisations in many countries around the world, have been prominent in this field.
However, the globalisation of the response to war can be seen in respect of a number of other conflicts as well. Women in Black, which grew originally out of the Palestine conflict, supports

women's non-violent initiatives in many countries. Sharing Know-how Workshop participants, even those working at a local level, also had experience of working on a global scale.

There was a UN delegation to the Great Lakes, and we wanted to insist that they consult women. So, taking 1325 as our framework, we wrote a memorandum to challenge the government to involve women in the peace process. We also wrote to New York and voiced concerns about the timing of the delegation. We didn't achieve much but we felt satisfied that we had written the letters and raised our voices at the international level. Peace work is very slow.

[PARTICIPANTS FROM UGANDA]

4. Building Peace: Women's Initiatives

4.1 What Do Women Do?

The peacebuilding activities recorded by the Sharing Know-how Project can be reviewed under the categories outlined in International Alert's Documenting Women's Know-how Framework (see Box 13). Categorisation is difficult as each organisation has developed in a specific context and with a specific history. In this section we select activities as illustrations; in reality most of the activities carried out by participants fall under one or more heading.

Box 13: The spectrum of peace-related activities in which women's groups may engage

1. Survival and basic needs
- Provision of food;
- Provision of medical care;
- Income generation;
- Provision of shelter;
- Counselling and de-traumatisation for victims of violence;
- Care for orphans;
- HIV/AIDS and conflict issues.

2. Peacemaking
- Traditional modes of cross-community dialogue, making contact and building bridges across the conflict divide;
- Creating spaces for dialogue;
- Analysing conflicts, identifying needs and priorities and building consensus around critical issues;
- Facilitating talks cross-community and/or national-level peace processes;
- Mediation;
- Engagement in peace accords, monitoring of national processes.

3. Advocacy
- Launching national, regional and international campaigns to raise awareness;
- Single-issue lobbying (e.g. disarmament before elections, addressing IDPs);
- Documenting human rights abuses, disseminating information;
- Working with the media;
- Building strategic alliances to promote an issue e.g. exclusion from peace negotiations.

4. Women in decision-making and leadership
- Role of women in elections
- Role of women in political parties
- Women in peace negotiations (formal and informal)
- Women as parliamentarians
- Women in the judiciary

5. Community outreach/rebuilding communities post-conflict
- Healing/reconciliation
- Peace education/awareness-raising
- Childcare and education
- Demilitarisation and reintegration of soldiers/disarmament
- Counselling victims of violence
- Demobilisation and reintegration of child soldiers
- Counselling and training of women
- Uniting around women's equal-ights issues – in legislation, education, employment and governance
- Disarmament issues, e.g. small arms, land mines

(Source: International Alert: n.d.)

4.1.1 Survival and Basic Needs

Some of the most effective strategies have been simple actions aimed at breaking down mistrust by offering shared social security. Some of these actions have included sharing food with women from the opposing party, bringing gifts to welcome displaced people and returning refugees, arranging solidarity days and exchange visits, and providing health services for the most vulnerable families.

- In Burundi, the Search for Common Ground Women's Peace Centre aims to build a strong women's movement with a culture of tolerance. It trains women in leadership and tolerance and organises visits to encourage links between returning displaced women and those who have remained settled. The Centre organises solidarity days between women of the two groups, in which the women exchange gifts and perform songs and dances. On solidarity days, settled women help plant land that they have made available to the returnees and try to make them welcome. Intellectual and grass-roots women monitor the status of women in terms of health, education and security in the villages and the hills and report any problems to the Centre.
- The Women's Rehabilitation Centre, Nepal, runs a women's health resource counselling centre, where trained counsellors give psychosocial support and address the health problems of traumatised women.
- RFDA (The Réseau des Femmes pour un Développement Associatif or Women's Network for Group Development) in the South Kivu area of the Democratic Republic of the Congo maintains an inventory of information about violations of women's rights and uses this information to expose and denounce these violations.
- In Burundi, individual women were reported as having supported other women on opposite sides of the fighting by warning them of attacks, hiding people at risk, wet-nursing orphaned babies, bringing goods and food to people in hiding, making secret visits of support, taking charge of orphaned and abandoned children, looking after the possessions, animals and fields of women neighbours who had had to flee, and organising local associations against massacres (Ntwarante and Ndacayisaba: 2000, p. 28).

Often these practical actions involve women-to-women encounters and emphasise their solidarity as women, while in other cases women have organised services for the whole community. In Somaliland for example, women's groups have obtained official funding to operate community soup-kitchens and run employment-creation schemes for young men (Gardner: forthcoming).

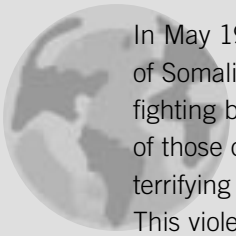
4.1.2 Peacemaking

Women's participation in formal peace processes is limited. One reason for this is that women have little input into formal political processes and are perceived as lacking the political weight – as a group – to represent parties to conflict. Where women are involved in formal negotiations this may be as a result of their membership, as individuals, of a particular party to conflict rather than because of their special contributions as women. The example of Somaliland (see Box 14) describes how in this instance women's claim to be present in and to influence negotiations was based on their non-partisan approach. In effect, the non-partisan approach amounted to envisaging women as a separate party to the negotiations, as described by one of the Sharing Know-how Project interviewees in relation to formal negotiations in neighbouring Somalia:

… People fight because of the clans and they wanted to reconcile according to their clan, and every clan wants to get a share. We as women refuse to rally behind the clan, and said … there's no role according to traditional clan structure, women have no role. So we said why don't we form our own clan which is the women's clan?… And then we lobbied to get one clan, and we really succeeded to have our own clan.

[SHARING KNOW-HOW PROJECT INTERVIEW WITH ZAKIA ALIM, MARCH 2001]

Box 14: Women in peace negotiations in Somaliland



In May 1991 the north-west region seceded from Somalia to form the independent Republic of Somaliland. The initial euphoria of independence was shattered by the outbreak of violent fighting between sub-clans in Burao in January 1992 and in Berbera in March 1992. Many of those caught up in this fighting had only just arrived in Somaliland, having endured terrifying journeys as they fled from the horror of the inter-clan conflict in southern Somalia. This violent conflict was brought to an end in October 1992 through a political settlement and peace conference, held in the town of Sheik, brokered by the Somaliland elders. What is seldom documented is the role women played in bringing an end to the conflicts, promoting the Sheik conference, and their role in subsequent peace processes in Somaliland.

A woman peace activist remembers:

About 300 of us came to Burao and we tied white bands around our heads – white symbolises anger or sorrow in Somali culture – and we hurriedly assembled between the two fighting groups. Then we marched up and down between the two groups demonstrating and singing moving buranbuur *(women's poems or songs) urging the fighters to remember the bad times they and their families had been through. As we did this the men stopped firing. The fighters were shamed by our sorrowful songs. What really made the fighters throw down their weapons was the wailing and crying songs sung by the women as we ran to and fro between the two units until a ceasefire was achieved.*

When further violence broke out later in the year, hundreds of women with banners and slogans marched together in protest to the presidency and parliament building urging men to stop the war and solve the disputes peacefully. The elders agreed but dragged their feet. After determined pressure from the women the Sheik peace conference was arranged for

October 1992. In accordance with custom, women were not present as participants or mediators but as one man put it 'they were the wind behind the peace conference – they mobilised the elders, prepared the venue, the food, and encouraged the participants to keep going until the final peace accord was reached'. The Sheik conference paved the way for a national conference in Boroma the following year. Here, 10 women, representing two women's organisations (Somaliland Women's Development Association and Somaliland Women's Association) participated, after petitioning forced the conference delegates, all of them men, to accept their presence. However, none of the women representatives were allowed voting rights.

Although excluded from formal decision-making the women were allowed to present their views in front of the delegates and they worked hard to ensure that they successfully influenced the process and outcomes of the conference. Through speeches, pamphlets, songs and women's poems, many specially created for the occasion, the women representatives advocated and lobbied to persuade their male clan representatives of the need to reconcile their major differences with the other clans, for the sake of the country.

(Source: Adapted from Gardner: forthcoming)

In Somalia, the idea of a 'sixth clan' (the women's clan) was eventually accepted and 25 seats were reserved for women in the Transitional National Government.

Most of the activities carried out under the heading of peacemaking centre around building links across divides rather than mediation as such. Examples of women working across divides include the Sudan women's peace initiative, which brings together women from different parts of the north and the south in a long-term programme of dialogue (see Box 15), the League of Women of the Caucasus (see Box 16), and ISIS/WICCE (see Box 11).

Within the South Kivu area of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, RFDA promotes the development of poor and marginalised women's groups in rural and urban settings with the aim of establishing positive inter-communal relations and equality between men and women. Having come together through shared frustration at the violence and destruction around them, their first step was to share a meal together. The importance of this simple act lies in the fact that, in the current climate, people are unaccustomed even to preparing and sharing food or spending time together. This culture of mutual suspicion has been fostered by extremists on both sides. RFDA also runs workshops and training sessions on peace and on human rights and holds seminars on women's role in peace processes. It undertakes community activities to generate popular awareness on peace.

Box 15: Sudanese women working across divides

Since 1994, the Sudanese Women's Association in Nairobi (SWAN), with the support of UNIFEM, the Carter Centre and the Netherlands Embassy, has created a conducive environment in which women can discuss problems relating to peace, human rights and development without taking account of ethnic, cultural and religious differences. Also since 1994, Sudanese women from the north and south have been working together to restore peace in Sudan.

In 1998, a series of seminars were organised on the theme of gender and the peace process. In May 1999, Sudanese women participated in the Hague Appeal for Peace, as a united group of women representing the warring parties and civil society.

(Source: International Alert and AAWORD: 2000, p. 15)

Several women's groups represented in the project use the social position of women to talk to and influence a wide range of contacts, starting with the women's own families and neighbours, and local militia forces. RFDA, for example, obtained representation for women in local security meetings and was able to argue for the protection of specific groups of vulnerable people. It also recruits peace volunteers to work at community level to be on hand to promote tension-reducing mechanisms whenever disputes arise, with the aim of establishing a culture of negotiation rather than resorting to force. IHRICON, in Nepal, also places peace volunteers in villages.

The Association of Women of Abkhazia holds meetings and workshops for women from conflict regions, including multilateral meetings for exchanging information and experiences between women on a range of peace-related subjects, such as mediation and conflict resolution, women's political participation and campaigning.

Box 16: The League of Women of the Caucasus

In 1998, within the framework of International Alert's Eurasia programme's confidence-building project, the first women's meeting on building trust took place. In 2000, within the framework of the campaign 'Women Building Peace', a conference on the topic of South Caucasus women building peace was held in Tbilisi. Women from many regions of the Caucasus – and for the first time after the end of military actions, women from Abkhazia – participated in the conference. All spoke about the necessity of active participation in the processes of democratisation of our societies, peacebuilding and the need to unite efforts to create a Caucasus women's organisation. This became possible through a project on confidence-building between Georgia and Abkhazia funded by the EC, whose director was a woman. At the next meeting the decision to create a League of Women of the Caucasus – a peace-making female network – was accepted. For the best understanding of the problems and position of women in the Caucasus, LWC is now developing research on this question. The founders of the League declared: 'We, the women from different regions of the Caucasus and the South of Russia, gathered together in Sochi in September 2001 … join efforts to prevent violence and to promote peace and stability in our land. It is time for women to move on from separate peacebuilding actions to coordinated and planned activities to influence development in the region. We are open to cooperation with all those who share our ideas and are ready to promote the establishment of the all-Caucasus women's movement.'

(Source: workshop presentations)

4.1.3 Advocacy and the Promotion of Women's Rights

The Women's Health Centre, Nepal, organises community groups that are mobilised to advocate against human-rights violations and to take up specific cases in the local or district courts. At the national level, WHC is involved in advocacy through a networking group consisting of human-rights organisations and NGOs. Through this network, seven-day hunger strikes and mass rallies are being organised to pressurise the government and the Maoists to negotiate for peace. The WHC has also created a Human Rights Monitoring Unit to document cases of rights abuse.

In Rwanda, the women's umbrella organisation Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe carries out lobbying, networking and message-diffusion through women's structures around the large variety of themes addressed by its members: social security, justice, culture, health, power and decision-making, the media, research and education (Mukamulisa and Mukarubuga: 2000, pp. 34-36).

Box 17: IHRICON, Nepal

The Institute of Human Rights Communication, Nepal, is conducting public hearing programmes about the problems facing women in the present situation, the accessibility of women for peacebuilding initiatives, the effects of the conflict on children and the effects of the conflict on education. In these public hearing programmes, IHRICON works to obtain the commitment of the government. IHRICON has conducted one national consultation meeting with all political parties to obtain their commitment to Resolution 1325. Consequently the impact of the conflict on women was highlighted and a commitment to involve women in peace was achieved. However, unfortunately the security of those women that would potentially be able to make an impact in the villages could not be guaranteed, so it is very difficult to involve them in peace. In order to improve the security of these women, the Nepali human rights community established a network called Human Rights Solidarity for Peace. This network established weekly demonstrations and peace rallies at national and regional levels. As a result of these activities IHRICON is often invited by government to peace talks and consulted by international organisations. Its activities are also gaining a higher profile at village level.

(Source: workshop presentations)

The Council of Women and the Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency in Bougainville are lobbying the government to assist in changing attitudes with regard to violence against women, which sharply increased during and following the conflict, as did human-rights violations, domestic violence and alcohol and drug abuse. Training workshops and political empowerment workshops are now being held throughout the island and networks among women are being established. Volunteers are being recruited as counsellors for domestic violence.

Research and documentation is a feature of a number of organisations represented in the workshop, and is viewed as extremely important in order to establish the impact of conflict on women and their communities and to raise awareness of the problems they face with government, the media, policy-makers and support organisations. Organisations carrying out research and documentation activities include the Association of Women of Abkhazia, IHRICON and the Women's Health Centre in Nepal, RFDA in DRC, Cordaid in Sri Lanka, and ISIS/WICCE. Much of this research consists of documenting specific cases of abuse, recording interviews with conflict survivors, or recording community-level discussions, and provides an extremely important record of problems and issues that often go unremarked and unanalysed. Methods of disseminating this research include:

- Conventional publications (ISIS/WICCE, Nepal);
- Film-making (Nepal);
- Radio broadcasts (Bougainville, Galkayo, Somalia – see International Alert and AAWORD: 2000, p. 50);
- Documentation centres (ISIS/WICCE and Nepal Human Rights Monitoring Unit);
- Encouragement to local groups to develop dramas presenting their experiences (ISIS/WICCE, see Box 11).

4.1.4 Women in Decision-making and Leadership

Many of the organisations represented at the workshop undertake training of women leaders. These include ISIS/WICCE, the RFDA in DRC, and the Association of Women of Abkhazia. Assist Yourself (Abkhazia) provides education for women on democracy, civil society and human rights.

Several groups are engaged in collaborations with other civil-society movements. Caucasus Women's League, for example, is working in alliance with the Caucasian People's Diplomacy movement. One advantage of working within such alliances is that it may strengthen calls for the promotion of women's education and welfare, and the inclusion of women in political life and in peace delegations.

4.1.5 Community Outreach and Rebuilding

A distinction needs to be made between community development work, which is adapted to situations of conflict, and that which addresses the causes of conflict (working 'in' and 'on' conflict). There is a widely held view, especially amongst international development agencies, that assisting people in dealing with the impacts of conflict is a strategy for building peace. While this may be true, the effectiveness of such work is strengthened if it arises out of an analysis of how best the community can resist factors conducive to conflict in future.

Amongst participants in the Sharing Know-how Workshop, two were engaged in developmental activities at community level. Both aim to build their programmes on community dialogue and capacity-building. CORDAID in Sri Lanka has developed a community development methodology which involves, firstly, collecting and sharing information about issues raised by villagers, and then facilitating meetings at village level, involving people from diverse backgrounds to decide on common action. In later stages the organisation provides support for any agreed actions, then gradually encourages the formation of local or regional community associations. The organisation addresses those issues that are articulated by villagers, which to date have included the economy, health, religion, resettlement, culture, human rights, psycho-social stress and infrastructure.

The Gajaak Relief and Development Organisation (GARDO), is a Sudanese community-based organisation working in the Upper Nile region. Its activities include a range of food-security and peace-related activities. It carries out capacity building work including both formal and informal education to empower the community, especially women, with the knowledge to advocate for peace. It builds women's capacities to access health-care services, express their views freely in public, and participate to their fullest capacity in the community political arena.

4.2 What Have They Achieved?

Workshop participants believe that the peacebuilding processes that they and their organisations are engaged in are at an early stage and face many unresolved challenges. They feel they have far to go before peace is secured. Nevertheless, their experiences have generally encouraged them to believe that change is possible. They identified a number of specific achievements, which fell broadly into three categories.

4.2.1 Achievements Relating to the Growth and Increasing Capacity of Women's Organisations

The number of women's organisations is growing, and in some countries these are forming alliances, bringing together women activists working on a variety of different issues. For example, there are 70 women's organisations in the Caucasus Women's League, while Ruta Pacifica in Colombia comprises 80 member organisations. In the case of the Caucasus Women's League, member organisations include those on both sides of the divide, and many of these are working on confidence-building. It currently sees itself as a network organisation, and is 'looking for an identity and trying to prioritise activities'.

The growth of women's organisations also signals a change in women's perception of their interests and rights. Participants noted that in the past, the interests women shared tended to be voiced around their traditional roles, whereas one impact of women organising has been a stronger concern to hold politicians who claim to represent them to account for their actions.

In the past … women were saying 'What kind of clothes are we buying this week?' but now they are working, they are trying to think about the problems we have now. And the good thing is they are trying to think about what will happen in Sun City in South Africa {where Burundi peace negotiations were going on} and they are now speaking loudly about the authorities, asking what these people are going to do for us. It has not happened in the Congo during the past 10 years. No, 10 years ago … women were educated but they didn't … have a gender perspective.

[SHARING KNOW-HOW PROJECT INTERVIEW WITH IMMACULÉE BIRAHEKA]

4.2.2 Achievements Relating to Improvements in Women's Status

In countries where conflict has come to a formal end, there has been observable constitutional changes relating to women's status and representation. In Sierra Leone, gender units have been established in government ministries, and representation of women in parliament has reached 16 per cent. In Bouganville women and men are now working together for women's rights:

There are more women now in government, therefore it is clear that the status of women is being raised. There are more women magistrates and policewomen and more training for them.… Inclusion of women in the constitutional committee for the Autonomous Republic of Bougainville is essential. What is heartening is that men are advocating for 50/50 in the new government.

[PARTICIPANTS FROM BOUGAINVILLE]

4.2.3 Achievements Relating to Peace Processes and Dialogue

To the extent that women have played a role in formal peace processes, their role has tended to be behind the scenes (and even in the kitchen, as with the Somaliland processes described in Box 14), and others have tended to acknowledge it only with reluctance. This reflects a widespread resistance to the idea of women taking a direct part in formal decision-making. This resistance can be shared by the international community, which, even while supporting women's peacebuilding initiatives in rhetoric, still tend to conceptualise women's role as belonging primarily at the local level (see Bouta and Frerks (eds): n.d. for a review of literature reflecting this approach).

Women in Somaliland were described by one male decision-maker as being 'the wind behind the [Sheik] peace conference'. Similarly, a commentator charting the evolution of women's involvement in the Mano River peace process describes women as 'jump-starting' the process by seeking audience with the three Mano River presidents and encouraging them to enter into dialogue with each other (Diop: n.d.). The same commentator describes how senior African statesmen such as the Mano River Heads of States, and Julius Nyerere and Nelson Mandela as Chairs of the Burundi peace process, expressed private surprise at the commitment shown by women peace activists working together across divides, and at their determination to contribute to processes from which they seemed to be excluded. These 'background' roles have not necessarily been the choice of the women themselves, but they have been prepared to accept them, recognising that power and influence may be exercised in informal as well as formal ways, and hoping that they would provide positive experiences on which to build.

Some positive acceptance of women's roles in negotiations and mediation have been noted, however. Bougainville women feel that they contributed to the build-up of pressure for peace, as well as taking part in processes of social reconstruction alongside men, and that their contribution to these processes is valued. In South Kivu too, women peace activists feel that they are starting to be taken seriously by politicians and military and that they have been able to use their credibility to demand participation in security discussions, protect vulnerable groups from attack and contribute to negotiations.

Monitoring and evaluating women's peace work faces a number of challenges. The 'behind-the-scenes' nature of much of women's work in formal peace processes has meant that little recording or documentation of their role has been possible, which in turn contributes to its 'invisible' nature. More generally, it is difficult to distinguish the impact of women's peacebuilding work from that of other civil-society actors, or from the impact of generalised social change. If women are to be more widely accepted as serious and legitimate partners in peacebuilding work, it will be crucial to develop methods of identifying what their particular contribution has been and can be, and what its strengths and limitations are. The task of identifying suitable monitoring frameworks and indicators will be addressed in the next phase of the Sharing Know-how Project.

4.3 What Challenges do Women's Peace Organisations Face?

Women participating in the Sharing Know-how Workshop recognised that women's organisations working for peace face a large number of constraints. These include external threats and social factors as well as organisational weaknesses.

4.3.1 Challenges From the International Community

Participants criticised the humanitarian community for its failure to move beyond relief work in conflict areas and address the factors that contribute to conflict, and for stifling local solutions and failing to support local initiatives. For example:

There are no NGOs engaged in peacebuilding work in the north of Sri Lanka. Donors should allow time and resources to build trust and confidence among people. Displaced people returning home are being assisted, but not the residents who are receiving these new people. NGOs and governments must first connect these people and then provide them with adequate resources.

[PARTICIPANTS FROM SRI LANKA]

Participants also made a devastating critique of global interests that incite and perpetuate conflict in their countries. Constraints to peacebuilding generated by the international community include:

- Multilateral economic interests in the exploitation of minerals and other highly valued natural resources, encouraging resource conflict;
- Collusion between international mining interests and national governments, resulting in the oppression of local communities, which depend on agricultural land in resource-rich areas, through violent repression of protest;
- The double standards of international mining companies that fail to adhere to the same standards of practice in developed and developing countries, exacerbating environmental degradation in the latter;
- The failure of the international community to bring international lawbreakers to account, leading to environmental degradation and the prevalence of small arms;

- World economic conditions that devalue local raw materials and currencies;
- The failure of humanitarianism to address conflict issues in their relief work or to support local capacities for reconciliation;
- The lack of support to civil society in non-recognised states.

4.3.2 Challenges from the Patriarchal Nature of Society

Participants saw further challenges to peacebuilding in centralised government, and in particular in the centralised control of national resources such as land. They also cited the inability of male-dominated authority structures to manage conflicts non-violently.

The collapse of the negotiations led people, including the current president of the country, to believe that the only solution was military. These are the challenges that women face in this context.

[COLOMBIA PARTICIPANT AT THE SHARING KNOW-HOW WORKSHOP]

Patriarchal cultures, including religion and gender ideologies that undermine women's rights, impede activism for peace. Different opinions were expressed around the issue of traditional methods of conflict resolution. Some saw value in these as they may provide important validation for women's contribution to reconciliation initiatives. Others, however, were concerned that traditional reconciliation mechanisms are part and parcel of patriarchal society and questioned whether they can bring benefits to women. Moreover, traditional approaches to reconciliation are often built around the need to contain and manage violent conflict, rather than offering alternative approaches based on non-violent resolution of conflict.

In the end, the critical factor in building up sustainable peace is the local capacity for peace and reconstruction. Social fragmentation and a lack of shared identity impede this.

4.3.3 Challenges from the National Political Arena

As members of civil society, women's organisations appreciate the need to develop alliances with other civil-society groups and to take their place in civil society's negotiations with government. To gain credibility they must be prepared to advocate for specific objectives that are seen to be steps on a critical pathway towards lasting security. However, they see politicians and civil society as having often-irreconcilable goals that restrict the potential effectiveness of the latter. Moreover, there are divisions within civil society, which are open to manipulation by cynical and hypocritical politicians.

These weaknesses confronting civil society in general have specific consequences for women, especially where government lacks gender-aware policy-makers or gender-sensitive policy frameworks, through which government machineries might be called to account. In these circumstances there are limitations on women participating in civil society 'as actors with power'. Furthermore, women often lack representation in government. Even where such representation exists (as it does in Uganda) it may still be difficult for women to participate in the political process on their own terms:

From 1989, there have been women representatives for the 49 districts. The 1995 constitution of Uganda is the most gender sensitive constitution in Africa. At national level in parliament there has to be representative for each district. But quality is more important than quantity. Women are elected by an electoral college which is unfortunately easily manipulated.

[UGANDA PARTICIPANT AT THE SHARING KNOW-HOW WORKSHOP]

4.3.4 Challenges Posed by Poverty and Insecurity

Participants believed that the conditions in which they live and work – characterised by poverty, exclusion, political marginalisation, unemployment and insecurity – represent a threat to dialogue and to people's willingness to take the physical and moral risks which dialogue implies. Poverty and unemployment generates desperation and puts a premium on gaining a livelihood by any means available.

Peacebuilding activities in Uganda are challenged because Ugandans do not want to put themselves on the line due to survival instinct, because they are selfish and there is non-acceptance of difference.

[UGANDA PARTICIPANT AT THE SHARING KNOW-HOW WORKSHOP]

The widespread existence of small arms in many communities, and their use in pursuit of criminal acts, is a direct physical threat for all citizens.

Poverty imposes a great burden on women, and especially on women who are heads of households, as the Sri Lanka study shows. The destruction and loss of services, especially health services, which accompanies conflict has particular implications for women's health and for their role in caring for others. Participants also noted that the prevalence of domestic violence, often increasing as a result of conflict, impedes women from taking part in community work. Women peace activists may also face practical constraints related to the weight of their domestic responsibilities. Additional work burdens may be imposed by resource depletion and poor economic conditions resulting from unemployment, blockades and other economic consequences of conflict.

4.3.5 Challenges Posed by Women's Own Lack of Unity, Confidence and Skills

A major challenge facing women's organisations engaged in peace and reconciliation work is the lack of a united set of goals and strategies. Working across divides that are not necessarily of their own making, women attempting to work towards peace are polarised by politicians and by identity politics. In the view of some workshop participants, politicians would prefer to see women divided and supporting sectarian politics. Women do not necessarily have a common understanding, and do not necessarily accept that they have a shared identity as women.

Women involved in reaching across the divide come with their own political agenda, and as a result, there have been confrontations during the meetings.... How can we tackle these personal interests that have grown within us, and that are impeding us from seeing and addressing the realities?

[SUDAN PARTICIPANT AT THE SHARING KNOW-HOW WORKSHOP]

Even where women share a common view of the problems facing them, their ways of dealing with these problems may differ. For example, societies divided by conflict commonly face the dilemma of reconciliation: should unity take precedence over the search for justice? Fear, or pressure to reconcile with those who have inflicted violations on themselves or their family members, for the sake of unity, may lead women to forego the possibility of legal action. This may conflict with a view of 'positive peace' based on justice and the redress of grievance. Women, who may be the targets of sexual violence during conflict, have particular reasons for fearing physical violence if they offend powerful people. Women's past experience may have led them to mistrust authorities and to be wary of taking physical or political risks.

A further factor constraining women's participation in community peace activism is their lack of education and knowledge. Participants debated at length the need for women's educational level to be improved. On the one hand, it was felt that 'education seems to be the key to everything'. Those working in situations where women's levels of literacy are low, such as the Sudan, saw literacy for women as a key goal. On the other hand, it was also recognised that education in itself is not a sufficient basis for their emancipation. In the Caucasus, for example, where women's educational level was generally higher than men's, when hostilities first broke out women were among the strongest supporters of nationalist movements.

In many cases women may have a good education but they don't want to work; they would rather meet a rich man and deal with matters in the home. It seems that in many countries, politics is such a dirty job that women are afraid to be involved in it. Education in the Caucasus is Soviet style, which is gender-neutral therefore women have little idea about their rights. Women need a modernised education where they have freedom of choice.

[CAUCASUS PARTICIPANT AT THE SHARING KNOW-HOW WORKSHOP]

Women often lack knowledge about their legal rights, both locally and in terms of international law. They may hold stereotyped and unchallenged beliefs about women's roles and characteristics, which lead to their potentials and capacities being unrecognised even by themselves. Moreover, they often lack familiarity with the theory and practice of peace and non-violence, and have little experience of working in the public, political arena.

Unused to having a public voice, women often lack confidence in their political abilities and may be inhibited from participating in politics through the fear of violence (including both domestic violence and the threat of 'public' violence) or because of the stigma of mixing with men and entering in 'masculine' preserves. Women's subordinate position in society generally means that the basis of their capacity to influence – where it exists – is not their access to specific forms of political power but rather their capacity to appeal to the common humanity of those engaged in or supporting war.

4.3.6 Challenges of Organisational Capacity

A key requirement for an organisation engaged in peace and reconciliation work is the identification of clear goals and strategies. In the case of women's organisations it is important for women to develop their own political analysis of the context and of their possible contribution to it. In developing these goals and strategies they need to have a clear view of what their aims are *as women*, and where, as women, they position themselves in relation to other actors, including government, external organisations and other civil-society groups. The Sierra Leone example implies that without this clarity it will be difficult to sustain women's peacebuilding as a long-term process.

Many participants felt that their organisations lacked many of the capacities that would enable this 'women's agenda' to be developed. Firstly, they acknowledged a lack of organisational and leadership skills, and a lack of basic rights and peace education. Policy advocacy and reconciliation work require knowledge and skills that must be learned and to which women in isolated and marginal communities may not have easy access, such as human-rights education, training in international instruments such as the Beijing Platform for Action and Resolution 1325, and skills in non-violent methods of conflict resolution, group organisation and fundraising. They also lack the networking opportunities that would enable them to acquire these skills and maintain their motivation over the long term.

There are very few women who have opportunities like this workshop to discuss these issues. If we could take opportunities to hold similar sessions within our own countries, women would become more conscious of the need to participate actively. We shouldn't be discouraged, we should remain hopeful. Otherwise we'll take steps backwards.

[PARTICIPANT FROM UGANDA]

As women, they receive inadequate support from national governments and international organisations, and as a result they may lack the political weight that would provide them with greater social mobility, enable them to claim recognition as legitimate partners in negotiations, and provide protection to women in difficult circumstances. Participants noted a tendency for women's organisations to achieve successes, but only in the areas to which they have close links.

What we need to do is to organise more – go beyond a few people (we are very weak on documenting what we are doing) – enlarging ourselves from the smaller to a bigger group. We are very weak at formalising structures, capacity building, knowing how to penetrate the formal structures.... At the household and community level people are doing such a good job but at the national level they are not – it's the literacy, the language, the experience, the practice, and also knowing the rules. Where we are now is not saying that the mainstream is perfect but it's getting there, we are making an impact on the mainstream and changing it for the better so that the women's perspective can be included.

[SHARING KNOW-HOW PROJECT INTERVIEW WITH INONGE LEWANIKA, SEPTEMBER 2001]

A challenge, then, is to use these achievements to scale up impact and reach other levels. Failure to work at all levels at the same time can have serious consequences for individual women. In Nepal, for example:

Women at the village level are involved in peace activities, but their work is not acknowledged at the national level and they have not developed linkages and networks to national-level organisations. Since last year a small number of women's organisations have been raising the issue of conflict at the national level, but these have no presence at the village level. Nepali women are challenged in their peacebuilding activities by being unable to protect grass-roots women and by the fact that civil society is divided.

[PARTICIPANT FROM NEPAL]

Women have had difficulty in obtaining recognition for their contribution to peacebuilding, since reconciliation – like other essentially political negotiations – has long been seen as the province of men. Documented examples of peace processes, as in Somaliland (see Box 14), show how hard-won – and how restricted – women's participation in formal negotiations has been, and what a variety of methods and strategies they have needed to adopt in order to gain influence.

Lack of a sustainable financial base is another weakness recognised by several participants. The issue is not simply lack of funds, but rather a long-term strategy for resourcing the organisation that does not depend on the vagaries of donor priorities. Participants recognised that their vulnerability to pressure from donors can lead local organisations to undertake strategies that do not fit with their knowledge of what needs to be done. For example:

Local organisations often exclude men to please donors, thus creating problems in families. Men must be encouraged and supported to work for women's rights. At the same time, we must also understand the culture before we begin working on peacebuilding issues.

[PARTICIPANT FROM SRI LANKA]

Box 18 provides a checklist for identifying possible capacity problems within women's peace organisations.

Box 18: Framework for analysing the challenges facing women's peace organisations

Building trust

In an environment of fear and distrust, how do women cross the conflict divide to work together for peace? Can their efforts withstand criticism and opposition from their own and/or other communities? What structures and systems are in place to dispel suspicion and ensure communication even if the conflict itself is growing more violent?

Capacity

What skills are needed to organise women's groups, run programmes and interact with policy-makers, funders and other constituents? This relates to the skills and expertise both of individual members and of the organisation as a whole. Skills to consider include strategy development, programme planning, negotiation and mediation, conflict resolution, advocacy, fund raising, dissemination and basic presentation. Are the women and the organisations developing and building their capacities, and if so, how? How do they develop organisational strategies? What resources do they need/draw upon? How do they build capacities to work with mainstream political, religious, military and diplomatic structures?

Gaining legitimacy and credibility amongst other actors

To secure women's position in processes and ensure the legitimacy of their voices, coalition building, networking and community outreach efforts are critical. How do women's groups bridge the local/national divide? How do they relate to and interact with mainstream civil society institutions? How do they engage with political decision-makers locally and nationally and what strategies do they develop to engage with the international diplomatic and donor community? How do the regional and international networks they belong to operate? How are roles and responsibilities of members defined? How are strategic partnerships formed and how do women use and co-ordinate different areas of experience and expertise?

(Source: Adapted from International Alert n.d.)

4.4 Strategies

4.4.1 Strategies for Building the Internal Strengths of Women's Peace Organisations

Participants believe that women's peace organisations need to have clear and well-founded goals if they are to exert influence. In order to develop such goals, they need to be well informed about gender and women's rights, human rights and non-violence. They need to have developed an agenda that represents the views of a broad-based constituency with roots in the community.

Women from different countries must try to find common agendas. For example, women from urban and rural areas, indigenous and middle class women, and women from the grass-roots, must find common elements that can lead to common agendas for future negotiations. In order to develop this common agenda, we have to overcome a lot of problems which women face, including distrust.

[PARTICIPANT FROM SUDAN]

Peacebuilding requires a willingness to take risks – both physical risks and the intellectual risk of challenging one's own and other people's attitudes, with the possibility of being

rebuffed or being seen as behaving inappropriately. Peace activists need therefore to be sure of their ground and to be convinced that their activities are consistent with principles and values that can be defended. Moreover, unity amongst women acts as a powerful defence against intimidation.

Women must not take fright in front of the men. The men will do anything to frighten you, to keep you silent, but you have to be determined. However, first of all women must join together and they must create solidarity between themselves. If we join forces then our voice will be heard and we will conquer a real peace for our country.

[NIBIGIRA: 1999]

While recognising the power of women's unity, women peace workers must engage in dialogue with men (both those who support war and those who oppose it) and with women of different persuasions, and be prepared to change their own mentality rather than blaming others.

4.4.2 Strategies for Maximising the Effectiveness and Impact of Women's Peace Organisations

Women's peace organisations should give priority to engaging in dialogue with all parties (including both government and non-government, national and international actors) and through all possible means, including networking, advocacy, lobbying and mobilising. However, this should be on the basis of a vision of peace that women have developed together. Achieving this may take time, and developing dialogue may need to be postponed until this 'women's agenda' is identified.

We need to be sure what we want and can offer before engaging with policy makers.... It is very easy to criticise decision-makers and policy-makers, but it is very difficult to suggest to them something realistic, something which can persuade them to work with civil society, including women. At the moment, women are in the process of finding this realistic solution ... to find the theme to continue to engage with government, and initiate discussion and collaboration with them.

[PARTICIPANT FROM CAUCASUS]

Box 19: Addressing the challenges: some strategies for women's peace organisations

1. Strategies for building the internal strengths of women's peace organisations

Building conviction

- Question the status quo from a gender perspective;
- Overcome women's mistrust, lack of confidence, lack of hope;
- Build on women's own resources;
- Take risks, be convinced of your principles.

Formulating goals

- Develop own analysis, vision of peace;
- Develop clear goals;
- Develop common agendas across groups of women;
- Base analysis on research.

Building capacity

- Promote women's education, skills development, empowerment, rights education, peace education;
- Learn how to work within male politics;
- Use international legal and policy frameworks such as Resolution 1325.

2. Strategies for maximising the effectiveness and impact of women's peace organisations

Prioritise dialogue at all levels

- Networking, collaboration, alliances with governments, women who support war, men, civil society, military, policy-makers, international actors and campaigners;
- Advocacy, campaigning, lobbying, mobilising (including marches, demos);
- Engage with the media;
- Work in a spirit of mutual acceptance and readiness to compromise;
- Promote men as peacebuilders;
- Build solidarity from the bottom up.

Clarifying the basis for dialogue

- Develop common agendas amongst women;
- Find realistic solutions, themes, on which to base dialogue.

Assert women's and human rights

- Use international legal and policy frameworks as a basis for dialogue around women's rights;
- Challenge governments to accept diversity and the rights of minorities.

3. Strategies aimed at improving the prospects for peace

Promote new forms of civil society emerging as a result of conflict

- Promote shared identity across conflict divides;
- Promote democracy;
- Ensure representation of women in politics.

Promote human security

- Security and mobility for peace activists;
- Monitor early warning signs and share information.

Promote a culture of peace

- Peace education;
- Contribute to culture of peace and gender equality.

(Source: synthesis of workshop discussions)

Workshop participants felt they had a critical role to build solidarity between groups from the bottom up, 'solving smaller wars within bigger ones' and challenging governments to accept democracy and the rights of diverse groups. The call for a 'women's approach' generated much discussion about men and their role in conflict and peacebuilding. Despite the frustrations participants felt about the failure of 'male' politics to find routes out of conflict, they did not see their work as involving women standing in opposition to men or to male-dominated institutions. They believed that their role as women in peacebuilding was to seek dialogue with those of similar views *and* of opposing views, whether these were men or women.

Women's organisations need to develop a stronger capacity to use international as well as local networks and linkages, with the goal of raising the profile of women's political participation. As one of the Sharing Know-how Project interviews discussed:

One country cannot do it alone for women's leadership. Suppose we are campaigning for a woman president in Africa… All of us … will rise up and build a strong campaign to make sure that she goes through. We will send her profile to all the women's and men's organisations that we know. That is the kind of network I am talking about.… This is what we want, not Africa going it alone, Latin America alone, no … I think this is something practical.

[INTERVIEW WITH ANISA ACHIENG AND STELLA SABITII, OCTOBER 2001]

4.4.3 Strategies Aimed at Improving the Prospects for Peace

In the context of a post-Cold War world of fragmented states and global 'informal governance', heavily influenced by trans-national economic interests, women's peace organisations are part of a broader movement that is in the process of building new forms of civil society. These new forms of civil society are contributing to a key goal of peacebuilding, namely the development of a sense of shared identity within the nation state, something that many workshop participants felt was lacking in their societies: 'We don't have a sense of a nation because society is so fragmented.'

If these new forms of civil society are to contribute to breaking down this social fragmentation, their goals must include the promotion of a culture of peace in which women (amongst other disempowered groups) participate fully in political processes.

The onus is on women's peace organisations to identify and analyse, from their own perspective, the key factors giving rise to and perpetuating conflict in their contexts. By closely monitoring, at different levels, events and trends related to these factors, women's organisations can circulate information which enhances the security of peace activists and which may prevent further violence.

4.5 What Resources can Women's Peace Organisations Draw On?

The most valuable thing we have as women is that we should not blame men but know that change should start from within ourselves. If we have this understanding of the need for freedom for each woman, we will achieve a lot. This is my hope.

[PARTICIPANT FROM THE SUDAN]

The lack of financial resources is an issue confronting participants generally, though they recognise that international support does exist for the work of women's organisations. However, they also recognise that women's personal strengths are considerable and provide the motivation and energy to carry them through. Women have an interest and a stake in peace, and therefore they have the will, talent, commitment and dedication to the cause. They have creativity, enthusiasm, hope and emotional strength.

Participants also believe that their social position as women provides them with significant resources on which they can build. In particular they are able to draw on both their social capital and their numerical strength to develop their networking capacities.

Women can build on traditional institutions and social structures that provide them with important advantages as mothers and wives when putting across their views to men. However, they recognise that these positions can also be a setback, since women can be manipulated and used as tools for different political agendas. They also recognise that emphasising these roles may reduce the choice that women ought to have as to whether they wish to conform to traditional roles or not.

4.6 What Lessons Have Women Peace Activists Learned from Their Experiences?

Participants at the Sharing Know-how Workshop reflected on the nature of 'sustainable peace' and concluded that for peace to be sustainable, it must be built on justice and respect for human rights. Conflict is not just about local or national solutions: foreign intervention (whether in the form of business interests, foreign governments and armies, or international agencies) may exacerbate conflict, knowingly or not. They believe that solutions must meet the needs of all sections of society if a resurgence of conflict is to be avoided, and that including women in dialogue and in political processes is a key to peacebuilding. Sustainable peace is strengthened by a dynamic civil society with strong internal and external networks.

Women's activism has been stimulated by their experience of conflict and the experience of oppression they share with other women and other groups who are excluded from access to power and decision-making. They are particularly aware that governments cannot be relied on to protect citizens in conflict. Yet participants also recognise that women are not always peaceful, and that they can be open to manipulation by patriarchal social structures that have an interest in perpetuating violence. Herein lie some of the most critical dilemmas that confront women's peace organisations.

In developing strategies to advance their cause, women will continue to rely on networking and on emphasising the commonalities between them in order to build trust and overcome barriers. They will continue to challenge the status quo and to campaign for women's rights and inclusion, while ensuring that their actions are rooted in community values and methods for conflict resolution. Participants understand that 'conflict is about power and women must go into conflict resolution equipped to address these issues in a powerful way'. Accordingly, they will work to improve the educational status of women and to develop women's capacities in human rights and peacebuilding skills, and they will give increased emphasis to building solidarity within the global women's movement and to documenting their activities and results in order to share the lessons they have learned with others.

Participants recognised that the road to peace is a long one and that for women, peace activism is often contrary to the beliefs and wishes of those around them. Defeating violence requires a long-term commitment. Yet taking small steps and building unity slowly can enable women to bring about lasting change.

The evidence of the Sharing Know-how Project is that women's most important contribution to peacebuilding lies in working to transform attitudes and practices, structures and competences, to lay the groundwork for the local and global changes that permanent peace requires. Women's peace activism works towards women's own rights and equality, and it also works towards broader societal goals. Both are necessary elements in conflict transformation.

5. Reflections on the Sharing Know-how Project: Issues for the Future

The Sharing Know-how Project has clarified, but not resolved, a number of issues that lie at the heart of conflict transformation work. Women's peace activism lies at the intersection between conflict transformation and feminist approaches to violence, and embodies the contradictions of both.

5.1 Do Women Gain or Lose in Conflict, and What Can Help them Consolidate the Gains?

As we have seen, armed conflict opens up possibilities for change in gender relations. However, radical, ideological change appears more difficult to achieve than the reordering of the division of labour, and there is a tendency for opportunities to close once conflict is over. Should we then view these possibilities for change as being negative or positive for women? And under what circumstances can the gains they make be consolidated?

The above review indicates that one of the factors that may lead to positive change in women's status is the existence of women's organisations, which also appear to grow in numbers and strength under the impetus of conflict. Is their growth due to women's experiences of conflict, which have made them aware of the need for non-violence? How important a factor in this growth is the existence of the current international interest in supporting women's organisations? What is the potential of international fora, and international instruments such as Resolution 1325, in mobilising women – how have they helped and in what circumstances? Are women's peace organisations developing into a women's peace movement, and do women peace activists necessarily want or perceive themselves to be part of a women's movement?

5.2 Does a 'Women's Agenda' Really Exist?

The notion of women building peace is based on the assumption that women have a common identity that cuts across other identities of nation, ethnicity or religion, and that they can therefore build bridges across these divides. While there may be evidence in favour of this assumption, there is as much evidence to the contrary. Is there a women's agenda? And if so, what is it?

The question should perhaps rather be: What do women gain or lose by emphasising their commonality? Women's nurturing role as wives and mothers provides them with a broad and respected platform from which to influence their families, governments and other powerful

interests. By emphasising that role, are they making a strategic choice to use that platform to enter the political domain? Or are they closing down options for women who do not wish to be identified through that role?

5.3 Must Women Become Politicised in Order to Engage in Peace Activism?

Commentators on women's participation in the Sierra Leone peace process have suggested that the women's peace movement there had strong influence on public opinion during the mid-1990s, but that it later allowed itself to be eclipsed by politicians because the women themselves had failed to develop a strong political analysis – and hence political leadership – of their own (Jusu-Sheriff: 2000; Eno: 2000). Under what conditions can individual women's groups move beyond their own political analysis to one shared with others who have divergent interests?

For participants at the Sharing Know-how Workshop, the political milieu is dominated by men and by a male approach to politics, something that women find intimidating. For them, the dilemma was: should women learn to make their own politics, or take part in mainstream politics on men's terms? If the former, how can women become a force recognised by politicians? Workshop discussions reflect shades of opinion concerning the wisdom of attempting to influence governments. For some, resistance to oppressive authorities was the only possible stance, while others sought to influence governments through marches, demonstrations and other forms of lobbying. For still others, women's organisations should only engage in the political arena after they have:

- Developed their own political analysis
- Clearly identified their agenda and strategies
- Built up strong and skilful organisations
- Developed clear consensus between women from different factions

This perspective differs from that of other commentators, who believe that women's involvement in the political arena changes the nature of politics and of peace activism:

In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the NGO sector, especially the peace and human rights movements, are primarily women's movements … the dominant role of women gives this movement characteristics such as a moderate tone, a non-aggressive attitude and easier communication and co-operation between separate islands of interest which neither the government nor economic organisations can or want to see.

[RAJNER: 1999]

… {In relation to Northern Ireland} it is … fair to say that women have been at the fore in a kind of politics that has laid the foundations for a future in which the two major traditions learn to accommodate each other and to express differences without aggression.

[ROULSTON: 1999]

Workshop participants also had varied perceptions on the role of liberation movements as vehicles for women's advancement. While some saw women's inequality as intimately bound up with oppression of the wider group, and commended the stance of many liberation groups in favour of women's equal participation, others felt restricted by broader movements. Examples were given of liberation movements that inflict human-rights abuses against women in equal measure to those of the authorities.

So how far should women 'get involved'? Thandi Modise, Chair of the Defence Committee in the South African parliament, urged women at International Alert's inaugural campaign conference to accept that 'you can't stand outside and say things without getting involved and being realistic about your demands for peace and security'. She went on to describe how women in South Africa had contributed to peace and security at the very local as well as at national levels:

We need to start saying that we will get involved, that we will help other women defend themselves and that we will work for collective security within our own regions.... We set up peace committees, street by street, because that was one way we could prevent brother from killing brother over their political beliefs, or neighbours suddenly looking at each other suspiciously.... My organisation, the African National Congress Women's League, stated that if women were not equally represented in the negotiating teams, the negotiations would stop. For a whole day, nobody could talk until all political parties included women.

[MODISE: 2000, PP. 23-34]

5.4 What is the Value-Added of Women's Involvement in Peacebuilding?

A major barrier to women's peacebuilding work is that their subordinate social position limits their influence. Locally, it has often been constrained by a reluctance on the part of men to accept women as legitimate partners in decision-making. Is this true for the international community too? Does the international community really see the value of women's peace work, or is their support tokenism? Is it in danger of consigning women's role to the 'local' level while accepting their marginalisation within formal national and international decision-making structures (see Bouta and Frerks (eds): n.d. for example)?

The evidence provided by the Sharing Know-how Project is that women's vision of peace is built on broad and inclusive concepts of security and development, rather than a cessation of hostilities. If peace is inclusive and enables all voices to be heard, then women's subordination is logically an impediment to peace, and women and men should work towards removing it for the sake of peace, stability and development. However, it has yet to be demonstrated empirically that a society in which women participate is less likely to suffer violent conflict. By the same token, it is yet to be demonstrated empirically that inclusion and democracy necessarily reduce the risk of violent conflict. Evidence of social processes such as these can only emerge over time. How can these connections be researched more urgently?

5.5 Are Women's Rights and Emancipation Essential Components of Durable Peace?

If conflict is the 'reclamation of identity', as one participant at the Sharing Know-how Workshop put it, what is the relationship between patriarchal structures and war? Can war be defined as a 'conflict of patriarchies' (ACORD: 2002)? If so, how should women balance the need to establish their own rights as women with those of all discriminated and minority identities, including subordinate groups of men? Is working towards a common women's agenda is the only way of ensuring women's rights and freedoms?

How should women strategise to ensure the establishment of their rights? How do they balance the divergent views of those for whom women's 'traditional' roles are the basis of their involvement in peacebuilding, and those for whom peace and women's emancipation are the same thing? How should they balance the need for gender justice as a key component of peace, against the need for forgiveness and reconciliation? In other words, is peace possible without women's liberation?

6. Suggestions/Recommendations

Participants to the *Women Building Peace: Sharing Know-how* Workshop developed and agreed suggestions for actions that could be taken to highlight, increase and sustain women's peacebuilding activities and their participation in peace processes. These suggestions are targeted to a number of stakeholders, of which the primary ones are:

- Civil-society organisations including women's groups
- National, regional and global policy-makers
- The donor community

The suggestions/recommendations focus on eight main issues:

- Women's mandatory inclusion at the decision-making levels of peace processes;
- Strengthening the capacity of women and their organisations to better engage in peace processes
- Engaging in research, sharing of information and dialogue
- Compliance, accountability and promotion of women's rights
- Promoting women's economic development
- Educating women
- Promoting psychosocial rehabilitation and reconstruction
- Provision of sustainable and sustained funding

1. Ensure women's inclusion and participation in peace processes at decision-making levels

The inclusion of women in peace processes at all levels is a priority. Women play complex and important roles as bridge-builders and peacemakers. These contributions to peace often go unrecognised, especially at the more formal levels. There is a clear need to make fuller use of the genuine potential of women's groups, networks and modes of operation in peacebuilding activities. Participants therefore request the international community, donors and national governments to promote women's involvement at the decision-making levels of peace processes in all possible ways. For example by appointing them as Special Representatives to the UN Secretary-General and including them at decision-making levels in peace negotiation teams.

2. Strengthen their capacity

Strengthen the capacity of women and their organisations to better engage in peacebuilding and peace processes. In order to do this effectively and to overcome the often-significant barriers that women face between themselves, donors and policy-makers must pay attention to assisting the process of trust and confidence-building among women's organisations.

They further emphasised that the **process of trust-building** in which they are engaged is a long-term project, and urged donors to take this into account in their funding strategies. Participants urged donor agencies to focus more attention on **support to local organisations**, which often play significant roles in peacebuilding, but are frequently overlooked and are in particular need of strengthening.

Additionally, in reviewing the achievements and challenges facing their organisations, participants were aware of the need to maximise their organisational capacity. They particularly stressed the need to **build women's confidence** and generate women's hope and belief in their own power to change their situation, together with the need to enhance global networking, sharing of experience and solidarity.

3. Support research, dialogue and sharing of information

Participants believe that a priority for women's organisations is to engage in research and dialogue, both within and between organisations, with a view to analysing conflict contexts from a women's perspective and to developing a **women's view of peace**. This analysis could then form the basis for developing organisational strategies for action. It would enable the organisations to plan **dialogue with a wide range of actors**, including both men and women, and those who oppose and support violence. Participants further recommended that donors and concerned international agencies work towards establishing a more effective and accessible **database** for women's organisations as a prerequisite for improved networking. Additionally, women's individual and collective experiences of building co-existence within and among communities during conflict, coupled with social and gender analyses, could provide donors with a useful resource base especially for the post-conflict reconciliation phase.

4. Ensure donor compliance and accountability through effective promotion of women's rights

Participants saw the international community and national governments as having a particularly important role to play in promoting the principles of **gender-responsive democracy**, and urged them to ensure women's involvement at all levels of decision-making. They should ensure the development of and compliance with **codes of conduct** in the humanitarian provision and peacekeeping and undertake all necessary measures to ensure that international laws and agreements, including **Resolution 1325**, are adhered to.

Indeed, the international community has a responsibility to **ensure compliance with international legislation** not only in the military and humanitarian fields but in all other areas. Among these, environmental protection is an area of critical concern. The international community is therefore urged to ensure that **oil companies and other multinational commercial interests** maintain the same level of gender-sensitive and environmentally friendly practices in developing countries as they do in their own countries of origin.

5. Promoting women's economic development

Recognising that poverty, and the social problems that often accompany it, such as poor health standards and domestic violence, prevent many women from engaging in activities outside the home, the participants in the Sharing Know-how Workshop believe that practical **livelihoods support for grass-roots women and communities** is an important priority, and stressed the need to promote income-generation strategies for women.

6. Promoting women's educational rights

Achieving this calls for a wider approach to education, in which investment in women's education, and in **civic and human rights education** for men, women and children, is prioritised. Participants urged donors and authorities to enhance girls' and women's educational levels by, for example, increasing adult-literacy programmes for women and by setting up scholarship programmes for girls.

7. Promoting psycho-social rehabilitation and reconstruction

Women suffer a great deal of psychological and emotional trauma during and after conflict. Participants to the workshop requested that governments and policy-makers consider designing special programmes to deal with the psychological and emotional trauma of all aspects of violence against women. Such programmes should focus on the causes of the violence and the psychological traumas leading men to become more violent. At the same time, donors could fund additional research into the gender-specific information available on these problems. One concrete request is that donors investigate modalities for establishing a **global trust fund** for victims of violent conflict.

8. Provide women and women's organisations with adequate and sustainable funding for their peacebuilding work

Women often face severe obstacles and critical neglect to their needs in the rehabilitation, reconstruction process as they struggle against discrimination at every level in trying to house their families. Moreover international donor reconstruction programmes and the distribution of humanitarian aid often fail to take into account the new economic and social roles that women must fulfil in the aftermath of civil conflict. Their essential needs are thereby inadequately factored in.

Donor funding should be focused on supporting civil society and especially women's peacebuilding work. Strengthening the position of women within mixed and mainstream organisations, such as those working on human rights, relief, rehabilitation and peacebuilding, is an important part of capacity building. More importantly, donors should establish specific funds for supporting women's peacebuilding initiatives. In other words they should provide sufficient and sustainable levels of funding.

Appendix I: Framework for Documentation

Documenting Women's Peacebuilding Know-how: A Framework

PART I
A. Introduction

1. The Know-how Project

The Gender and Peacebuilding Programme has evolved out of the global campaign Women Building Peace: From the Village Council to The Negotiating Table, launched by International Alert with the support of over 200 organisations in May 1999. The campaign aimed to raise the visibility of women's peacebuilding activities and provide a platform for lobbying international policy-makers to adhere to the humanitarian and human-rights standards developed to promote the advancement and empowerment of women and their inclusion at all levels of peace and development processes. During the intervening 30 months the need for greater clarity on women's peacebuilding 'know-how' has been highlighted, i.e. What exactly do women do? How do they do it? What challenges do they face? What lessons have they learnt? How do they measure impact? Discussions with a wide range of policy-makers, women's groups and other stakeholders have revealed a need for the documentation of women's peacebuilding 'know-how' using a systematic framework that could be shared both with policy-makers and with women's groups locally, nationally, cross-regionally and at an international level. Additionally, the project offers the possibility of closely linking ongoing consultations on the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, and emerging issues to women's peacebuilding activities.

Cross-cutting issues emerging from ongoing discussions include the following:

- Women's exclusion from political negotiations to advance peace processes
- Lack of protection of women's human rights in conflict and post-conflict situations
- Lack of a gender perspective in conflict early warning response mechanisms
- Gender, demobilisation, disarmament, rehabilitation and reintegration
- Protection of women's rights and security
- Gender justice and accountability

1.1 Objectives of the Project

With this project, the Gender and Peacebuilding Programme seeks to:

- Further raise the visibility of women's peacebuilding activities at the national, regional and international levels through providing policy-makers with evidence-based information
- Identify and document concrete steps that women take as a part of their peacebuilding activities, including the impact they make, the challenges they face and the lessons that they learn
- Provide insight and information into emerging themes for further research;
- contribute to a strengthened role for women in processes that affect women's peace and security

International Alert will incorporate both a thematic and a regional focus on themes related to peacemaking/peacebuilding and human-rights related issues, all of which are interlinked with women's security and protection.

1.2 Products

Final report
The product from the meeting will be a final report that contains documented case studies of women's peacebuilding know-how, each citing the key issues discussed in the context of women, peace and security issues. The case studies will be drawn from different regions to exemplify women's peacebuilding know-how, the challenges faced, the lessons learnt and policy and practice recommendations that will be shared with policy-makers, women's groups and other relevant constituencies. Other products will include documenting the process of the know-how project and an internal report from the workshop that will be uploaded on to the campaign's website.

Documentaries
This will be a parallel process involving a team of two persons from Trojan Horse Productions limited, accompanied by the relevant campaign staff visiting the local context of the selected case studies for each thematic publication. This tracking of the work of the selected case-study organisations is necessary in order to add substance to the theoretical workshops and engage policy-makers in the field activities. It also provides an educational and additional advocacy focus that would strengthen the project. This process will need a longer time-frame that will involve:

- Two visits to each of five or six local contexts for filming
- Production of the documentary
- Checking by the campaign staff and the case-study organisations
- Revision
- Production
- Dissemination

1.3 The Audience

The reports and videos will be disseminated to:

- Policy-makers and decision-takers at the United Nations (UNIFEM, DPKO, DDA, UNDP, UNHCR, OHCHR); the EU (Conflict Prevention and Human Rights departments and the Commission), UN and EU Member States and regional and sub-regional organisations such as SADC, AU (formerly OAU), ECOWAS and IGAD, OSCE and the Council of Europe
- Women's organisations at the local, provincial, national and regional levels that have been identified as working on a selected peacebuilding theme. Additionally, the products will be disseminated to women's organisations cross-regionally in order to satisfy an expressed need for solidarity and support both among and between women's organisations
- Other institutions providing training (e.g. Responding to Conflict) and libraries

2. The Context

Armed internal wars and post-conflict situations with their associated complex results are a significant and, regrettably, growing phenomena in developing and transitional countries. Since the 1990s internal conflicts have claimed over five million lives and have violated people more than borders. In the wake of such conflicts, a new understanding of the concept of security is evolving, expanding from the defence of state security to include the protection of communities and individuals from internal violence and its results (e.g. the proliferation of light weapons and small arms, ethnic and religious violence, political insecurity, disarmament issues, HIV/AIDs and peacekeeping). Women's vulnerabilities and

exposure to violence and sexual exploitation in such conflicts have been well documented, i.e. forced migration, forced pregnancy and abortion, rape and systematic rape and forced eviction among others. The Women Building Peace (WBP) Campaign aims to integrate a gender perspective into international security policies and strategies, including small arms, security-sector reform, peace support operations and peace negotiations by expanding the more traditional definition and integrating a gender perspective. The campaign has therefore collaborated with like-minded NGOs, sympathetic governments and United Nations agencies, programmes and funds to secure the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 that binds Member States to take action that promotes the empowerment, advancement and inclusion of women in processes affecting their peace and security.

3. UN Security Council Resolution 1325

The UN Security Council's open debate on Women, Peace and Security issues (October 2000) was an historic event giving voice to women's concerns regarding international peace and security. Resolution 1325, which emerged from that debate, categorically calls for the inclusion of women and for consultation with women's organisations and civil society groups in peace negotiations. It also calls upon Member States, UN agencies and other actors to ensure that gender mainstreaming[1] issues are accounted for in all aspects of conflict prevention, peacekeeping, peacemaking and post conflict reconstruction processes. If implemented, these measures would place women firmly and equally at the center of peace and security matters.

For women's NGOs, groups and other organisations working to secure the Resolution, its unanimous adoption was a great coup. For them, the rationale for women's involvement in peace and security matters has been overwhelming. They have witnessed the burdens that women deal with during crises without additional social support and have helped women in war zones create their own structures to cope with issues of survival. In places such as Northern Ireland, Catholic and Protestant women came together around issues of women's equal rights to social services, health, employment and education. Elsewhere, in Bosnia and across the Balkans they have joined together to deal with the trauma of war including the violence, rape and abuse. These issues and activities have proven to be an effective entry point in a community and often in creating links between women across the conflict divide. To a large extent the reason for the Council's unanimous support were the strong voices of the women peacemakers, activists and experts from war zones across the world who shared their experiences with the Council members. The message that women are not passive victims, that they can and do contribute to peacemaking, and that their absence is detrimental to the building of sustainable peace had reached to the most powerful global body on security.

The momentum and level of interest generated by Resolution 1325 has created a unique opportunity to place women firmly at the centre of contemporary international peace and security discourse. But unless the moment is seized, the opportunity will pass. It is thus imperative to take a closer look at how women contribute to peace processes. But words and even UN resolutions alone are not enough to make women's concerns heard. Gender issues continue to be largely ignored in the mainstream policy debate on development and in the

---

[1] In 1997 ECOSOC defined the concept of 'gender mainstreaming' as: *the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area. It is a tool for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic, and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. (ECOSOC, Doc.E/1997/66)*

formulation of policies on security. Women's peacebuilding at the grass-roots level is not fully recognised nor appreciated by major institutions and policy makers. Yet the multi-faceted challenge to bring about change and awareness lies with women themselves. Analysis of their efforts, documentation of 'know-how' and lessons learnt are needed and should be provided using a systematic framework.

4. Terminology

Before continuing the discussion, it is important to clarify a number of terms that inform the Framework.

4.1 Women's organisations and networks

These terms are used to describe a wide range of organisations ranging from localised groups to internationally recognised NGOs as well as loose networks and coalitions of women's groups working in conflict zones, e.g. in Burundi and Northern Ireland. The common thread is that the organisations are engaged in peacebuilding/peacemaking or human rights related activities in conflict areas.

4.2 Peacebuilding or peacemaking related activities

There is a wide range of activities that can be described as peace-related. For women, the driving force for involvement is often survival. Thus women's groups tend to develop around basic-needs issues such as the provision of food, medicine and shelter. More recently, the expansion of the concept of security to encompass human and community security and its interface with peace has led to the involvement of women's groups in security-sector reform, disarmament and other related issues that affect women's peace. Like other actors, women's groups engage in peace activities at different stages and phases of conflict. The context, (including the stage of the conflict, the state of the women's movement, the organisation's profile, degree of trust etc.) often determines the type of activity in which women engage and to a greater extent their impact and success. For some an initial involvement in peacemaking evolves into longer-term peacebuilding work. For others the focused awareness-raising about women's rights continues and is adapted to the changing political sphere. Often, these efforts are curtailed or halted by the escalation of violence.

4.3 Human rights and protection

Women's rights motivate many women in war zones. In this context groups often focus on awareness-raising about women's legal and political rights and the provision of counselling to victims of sexual and other types of abuses. Skills training may include conflict resolution, mediation, reconciliation, dialogue, legal and negotiation skills and other areas of interest.

4.4 Post-Conflict situations

Women often become involved in changing the status quo and claiming their place in the political sphere. Women's groups and organisations become engaged in building women's capacity for leadership and political participation as well as demobilisation, disarmament, re-integration and other related issues.

In essence there is great diversity and fluidity in the type of organisations, the range of activities they undertake and the specific micro-context in which they work. Despite this complexity there are still many parallels that can be drawn. For the purposes of analysis

and replicability, it is essential that the Framework outlined below is used as a template that may be adapted for use in different contexts.

PART II
B: The Framework

The aim of this framework is to provide a set of guidelines based on systematic and targeted questions to elicit specific information on women's peacebuilding 'know-how' that can be used as evidence of women's contribution to peace and security processes. A secondary aim is to work with women activists themselves, building their capacity to analyse their experiences, identify weaknesses, learn from each other and ultimately, strengthen their peacebuilding approaches.

1. The Questions

Fifteen key questions that can be adapted to fit particular contexts form the basis of the Framework:

1. How do women understand the term 'peace'?
2. What kind of peacebuilding work are women engaged in?
3. Why do women get involved? What are their motives, values and objectives?
4. What do women do?
5. How do they do it? What are the steps that they take?
6. What are their achievements? Do they influence and shape policies?
7. What do they add to existing efforts?
8. What challenges do they face in doing this work?
9. Where do they access financial resources?
10. How can the experiences of women in one region help women in other conflict zones?
11. How can women be more effectively supported by the international community of donors and decision makers? What recommendations would they like to make?
12. What could they do better to be more effective in their peacebuilding work?
13. How does big business affect the survival of women and how does it affect women's work on peacebuilding? Does it impede or does it advance women's work on peacebuilding?
14. What are the links between big business, conflict and women?
15. How does Resolution 1325 impact on women working at the grass-roots level?

2. The Pillars Underpinning the Framework

The Framework is underpinned by five pillars that examine women's peacebuilding experiences as well as their relationship to the external local, national and international environment. The rationale for women's involvement in such activities – their motives, the values that guide them and their objectives – is central to the entire discussion and must be examined under each pillar:

1. Women's peace-related activities.
2. Impact of women's peacebuilding 'know-how'.
3. Challenges faced.
4. Lessons learnt that can be shared with other groups.
5. Guidelines for international actors keen to support women's efforts.

As noted earlier, the term 'peacebuilding' covers a myriad different activities and processes over time. To understand women's efforts it is worthwhile to consider their contributions in the following areas related to women's peace activities.

2.1 Women's peace-related activities

- What do women do?
- What issues do they focus on?
- How do they initiate their activities, plan, strategise and implement programmes?
- Do they collate their experiences, disseminate information and advocate? By what means?

In many instances women across the conflict divide unite their efforts to provide food, shelter and medical care for their families. While their objectives may not be overtly related to making peace, in practice the relations they build can provide a strong basis for longer-term confidence building. The range of activities may include the following:

Survival and basic needs
- Gathering and distribution of food/medical provision
- Provision of medical care – with particular focus on women's health issues
- Income generation
- Provision of shelter
- Counselling and de-traumatisation for victims of violence
- Care for orphans

Peacemaking
- Traditional modes of cross-community dialogue
- Making contact and building bridges across the conflict divide (e.g. using marital ties, women's informal networks)
- Creating spaces for dialogue
- Analysing conflicts, identifying needs and priorities and building consensus around critical issues
- Facilitating talks cross-community and/or national-level peace processes;
- Mediation
- Drawing up parallel Peace Accords, involvement in Peace Agreements, monitoring national processes

Advocacy
- Launching national, regional and international campaigns to raise awareness
- Single-issue lobbying (e.g. disarmament before elections, addressing IDPs)
- Documenting human-rights abuses, disseminating information
- Working with the media

Women in decision-making and leadership

Type of leadership
- At what levels and in what context are women most active and effective. Are these women from the grass-roots level or are they from a different level of society?
- What qualities do women require for each level? What are their strengths and what are their weaknesses?

Leadership qualities and style

- What kind of leadership do women expect? What are women willing to accept?
- What kind of leadership do women provide?
- What do women see as effective leadership?

Political participation/parties

- What role do women play in political parties?
- What are their objectives and achievements in joining political parties?
- What are the challenges and dilemmas that women face to become involved in political participation?

Role and impact as parliamentarians

- What are the challenges women face
- Means and abilities to influence agendas
- Contributions to government policy and legislation
- Programmes developed and implemented

Community outreach/rebuilding communities in post-conflict societies

- Healing/reconciliation/forgiveness
- Justice/accountability/reparation/restitution
- Peace education/awareness-raising
- Addressing issues of childcare and education
- Demilitarisation and reintegration of soldiers/disarmament
- De-traumatisation: working with victims of violence
- Demobilisation and reintegration of child soldiers and women combatants
- Counselling and training of women
- Uniting around women's equal rights issues – in legislation, education, employment and governance

2.2 Effect and Impact of Women's Peace Works

Assessing the impact of any peace initiative is very difficult. Yet assessing the impact of a given strategy or project is a critical step towards improving processes and approaches. There are three overarching factors to address:

- Quality of work undertaken
- Impact on beneficiaries and target audience
- Effectiveness and efficiency in terms of use of resources and skills

In addressing these issues the preliminary set of questions that frame the study must be taken into consideration. In other words, it is important to elicit 'if and how' the values that motivated women's peacebuilding actions have been sustained and perhaps extended to a wider range of people, whether their preliminary objectives have been met, they have contributed to their communities and peace processes as a whole, they have empowered women, shaped policies and influenced decision-makers, they could assist/guide/advise or inspire women in other regions, interact more effectively with international actors, seek to strengthen their approaches and learn the lessons that emerge.

The following questions focusing on both qualitative and quantitative issues can help elicit much of this information. For example:

How many individuals benefited directly from the programme? Were their indirect beneficiaries (e.g. families, the community)?

- What impact have activities had on women from different socio-economic backgrounds?
- Do women feel more empowered? In what way?
- What impact has it had on civil society as a whole?
- Have government policies/legislation altered as a result of a given programme?
- Have political parties been influenced?
- Have peace agreements been enhanced?
- What impact have women's peace efforts had on men in the community? Are they more accepted and respected? Are men's needs being met equally?
- Have structures and institutions altered to incorporate women's needs and views?
- Has the socio-political environment become more accepting of women's involvement in peace and security issues?
- What impact have activities had on the community at large?
- Do international actors have a better understanding of the issues? have they altered their policies and programmes to benefit locals more effectively?
- Are the new structures created sustainable?
- Is there a critical mass of women in positions of responsibility? What has been the percentage increase?
- Has there been an increase in public discussions of the issue/s?
- How many meetings were arranged?

Another set of questions can be considered to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of women's efforts. For example:

- What resources do women have available?
- Are women able to do their work with the available resources?
- Were the resources used efficiently? What difficulties did they encounter?
- Did they achieve their initial goals and objectives? If not, what factors contributed to their shortfall?

2.3 Lessons that emerge/guidelines for others

The lessons that emerge can be categorised in two sets. The first set is based on the know-how and actions taken that emerge as women's efforts are examined. The second is based on the weaknesses that are highlighted in the analysis. While the first set is important to help other women's groups in their planning and implementation of programmes, the second set must be addressed and rectified if women's peace efforts are to improve. It is thus important to elicit responses to the following set of questions:

- What difficulties did you face? How did you overcome them?
- Did you make assumptions that were later shown to be erroneous?
- Retrospectively, what action should/could have been taken to avoid problems? How would you do things differently?
- What advice would you give to others interested in implementing similar programmes?

3. Critical Issues to be Considered in Each Pillar

Beyond the questions noted above there are three critical issues to be addressed.

Building trust

Conflicts normally involve two or more parties. In an environment of fear and distrust, how do women cross the conflict divide to work together for peace? Can their efforts withstand criticism and opposition from their own and/or other communities? What structures and systems are in place to dispel suspicion and ensure communication even if the conflict itself is growing more violent?

Strengthening capacity

It is important to identify the skills and expertise that are needed to organise women's groups, run programmes and interact with policy-makers, funders and other constituents. This relates to both the skills and expertise of individual members and the organisation as a whole. Moreover there is a broad spectrum of skills that are needed. From strategy development to programme planning, negotiation and mediation, conflict resolution to advocacy, fund raising, dissemination and basic presentation. It is thus important to understand if and how women develop and build their capacities.

- How do they develop organisational strategies?
- What resources do they draw upon?
- What external support do they need and/or receive?
- How do they build capacities to work with mainstream political, religious, military and diplomatic structures?
- What in women's view is their most effective and efficient means of building capacity? Is it additional training? Learning on the job? Having access to education?
- What are their priorities in this respect?

Gaining legitimacy and credibility amongst other actors

A prime objective for women's groups is to gain legitimacy and credibility amongst other actors in the peacemaking arena. To a large extent credibility is a function of women's capacity, their activities and who they are perceived to represent. In other words, it depends on what they do, how they do it, the effect it has and who benefits from it. To secure their position in the processes and ensure the legitimacy of their voices, coalition building, networking and community outreach efforts are critical. It is thus important to understand how women's groups bridge the local/national divide, how they relate to and interact with mainstream civil-society institutions, how (if at all) they engage with political decision-makers locally and nationally and what strategies they develop to engage with the international diplomatic and donor community. Their interaction and cooperation with regional and international networks of women's peace organisations are also critical in their efforts to gain access to policy and decision makers. Yet, networks and coalitions alone cannot have the desired impact. For such structures to be effective, they must have clear strategies and objectives. It is thus essential to explore how networks operate, how the roles and responsibilities of members are defined, how strategic partnerships are formed and how women draw on and synergise different areas of experience and expertise.

Appendix II: Agenda of the Sharing Know-how Workshop

WOMEN BUILDING PEACE: SHARING KNOW-HOW
Charney Manor, Charney Bassett, Oxfordshire
5-8 November 2002

DAY ONE: TUESDAY 5 NOVEMBER

12:00 pm	Arrive Charney Manor
1:00 pm	Lunch
Afternoon	Facilitators (Ancil Adrian-Paul and Judy El Bushra)
3:00 pm	Welcome • Getting to know you • Programme, Aims and Objectives • Hopes, Fears and Expectations
4:30 pm	Tea
5:00 pm	Presentation of Framework document (Ancil Adrian-Paul) Discussion
6:30 pm	Supper

After-dinner Activities
Video, discussion sessions, other

DAY TWO: WEDNESDAY 6 NOVEMBER

Morning	Facilitator (Judy El Bushra)
9:00 am	Introduction to the day's work
9:05 am	Presentation from the Sudan (15 minutes)
9:20 am	Presentation from Georgia (15 minutes)
9:35 am	Presentation from Abkhazia (15 minutes)
9:50 am	Discussion (40 minutes)
10:30 am	Refreshments
11:00 am	Working Groups (A, B, C) There will be a series of questions that each working group will respond to Each group will choose a rapporteur and a facilitator
12:00 pm	Feedback and discussion Each group will have 10 minutes
1:00 pm	Lunch
Afternoon	Facilitator (Bineta Diop)
2:30 pm	Presentation from the Democratic Republic of the Congo
2:45 pm	Presentation from Colombia
3:00 pm	Presentation from Bougainville
3:15 pm	Discussion (30 mins)
3:45 pm	Working Groups There will be a series of questions that each working group will respond to Each group will choose a rapporteur and a facilitator
5:00 pm	Refreshments
5:30 pm	Feedback and discussion Each group will have 10 mins

After-dinner Activities
Videos, discussions, other

DAY THREE: THURSDAY 7 NOVEMBER

Morning	Facilitator (Nicola Johnston)
9:00 am	Introduction to the day
9:05 am	Presentation from Nepal
9:20 am	Presentation from Sierra Leone
9:35 am	Presentation from Uganda
9:50 am	Discussion (40 mins)
10:30 am	Refreshments
11:00 am	Working groups There will be a series of questions that each working group will respond to Each group will choose a rapporteur and a facilitator
12:00 pm	Feedback and discussion
1:00 pm	Lunch
Afternoon	Facilitator (Ancil Adrian-Paul)
2:30 pm	Presentation by Nigeria
2:45 pm	Presentation by Burundi
3:00 pm	Presentation by Sri Lanka
3:15 pm	Discussion
3:45 pm	Working Groups
4:45 pm	Refreshments
5:15 pm	Feedback and discussion

Supper

After-dinner Activities

DAY FOUR: FRIDAY 8 NOVEMBER

Morning	Facilitator (Judy El Bushra)
9:00 am	Introduction to the day
9:10 am	Working Groups
11:10 am	Refreshments
11:30 am	Feedback and Discussions
12:30 pm	Lunch
Afternoon	Facilitators (Ancil Adrian-Paul & Nicola Johnston)
1:30 pm	Preparation for Sharing of Outcome meeting (11 November)
2:45 pm	Evaluation; close of meeting
4:00 pm	Departure for London

Evening meal

Appendix III: Evaluation of the Sharing Know-How Workshop

1. What are the main things you have benefited/gained from this Sharing Know-how Workshop?

- The workshop have changed my view on the other countries and cultures. I have met very strong and successful women – real leaders. Their experiences are very rich and interesting. I should like to learn more form them. The problems and pain of women are very similar in different continents.
- There are a lot of women around the world, who are able to change life and are able to have an impact on the social and political processes.
- Knowledge of the struggles of other women in other regions.
- Efforts and achievements of women in other regions of the globe.
- The complexities of conflict and its impacts on women in Colombia, Georgia, Abkhazia and Bougainville.
- Experience sharing with colleagues from different countries and knowledge of women's response and mechanisms/strategies aimed at building peace at different level/conditions of conflict.
- Meeting people from completely new conflicts and hearing their stories e.g. Bougainville, Abkhazia.
- Learning new strategies to use in dealing with our conflict, and building peace at home.
- The framework will be useful.
- Best practices from different conflicts.
- Framework of actions/Resolution 1325.
- Different/various ways of dealing with conflict and peace building.
- I have benefited by sharing the global issues from the conflict countries especially on Resolution 1325 on women peace and security gain on environmental effects and sharing the economic problems the women faced and also peace building.
- Learned from best-practiced ideas. Good-network of women.
- Furthered my understanding of the women themes that cross many of the armed conflicts in the world.
- I discovered successful strategies adapted by women in other areas.
- Sharing and learning from other experiences is rich.
- The approach in which IA applied for the participants group work.
- IA should give more time for such kinds another programs because exchanging the culture already left behind from this seminar.
- I have enriched my knowledge about the conflicts across the world and how they affect women.
- Conflicts are diverse.
- The need of creating and consolidate women's organisations and networks so women can work together and share their experiences.
- After the meeting I have very huge respect for the women's movement in the world. I realized what a power women can be!!
- Some practices relating to the resolution of conflicts and the promotion of peace i.e. strategic steps for peace development.
- Information on Resolution 1325, which I can use as references in my work and those of the associations where I participate.
- Encouraged by the experiences from other countries, where perserverence remains despite problems.

2. What could be improved if IA organises a similar conference?

- Duration of meeting.
- Appropriate dates of arrival of participants to ensure participants are in a relaxed mood to contribute to discussion/deliberations.
- Enough time for participants to do their presentations as it would provide more insight into the intricacies into our conflicts.
- It was a very good chance to share and know the experiences of conflict and Peace Process, where women are engaging from their own country.
- I wish I had learned about the most successful project of each of the participants.
- Organize the meeting in the summer.
- Invite more women from other regions.
- Invite donor organizations to participate.
- Invite national government officials to participate also.
- Have some sessions for capacity building e.g. conflict resolution skills, negotiation skills, mediator, etc…It never hurts to refresh our knowledge of such issues, and learning new ways of presenting information.
- IA to get input from participants on what issues they want to see in the program.
- Would improve on inviting same women to the conference for continuity and also to conduct similar conference in House country.
- I would like to deepen my understanding of the following points (with the help of experts) – the impact of economic resources in conflict. – Conflict and arm – Deeper understanding of women experiences (e.g. the experience of black women).
- I would like to have more time for personal communications, private conversation. It was too little time to think over and reflect new information and impressions. More time, more space – it would improve the effect.
- IA should also with the group what their organization experience or previous org. that had attended similar workshop experiences.
- More time should be given for concrete analysis or discussion of relevant and important issues.
- To have a more specific agenda.
- To have the presence of experts in certain issues.
- More time for discussion.
- The organizers should provide/leave time for informal communication between the participants. There was no time for informal discussions and sharing.
- Excellent organizing—Ancil! Nothing more.
- If you could let us know what are the countries participating; in advance, we would be able to understand the background information and conflicts before; may be through some source of information. Thanks!
- It would be good in future to have facilities for telephone communication to be able to stay in contact with our home countries, but it was good that the premises chosen was quiet and calm.
- You thought about entertainments and showing us around the novelties of the country, including how to get around on the trains, dancing etc.

3. What gaps still exist which you would have liked more time on?

- More elaboration on the Resolution 1325.
- I would like to know more about women's role in the conflict escalation and transformation. Sometimes we prefer to think that women are only a peace resource, but they are a war resource too.
- Presentation of the participants was short time in the program otherwise every thing was perfect and felt no gaps.

- Presentation time was too short.
- Lack of time for building relationships.
- Nil.
- Training us to train on resolution 1325.
- Practical ways of using the framework and toolkit.
- Research by organisations on peace building. There needs to be training on this and also on documentation of peace building.
- How others faced the challenges.
- What mechanisms they used.
- How could we linked to out own problem.
- We did not look at the use of international human rights law in internal conflicts as used by women.
- We lacked the participation of women from post-conflict areas, who could have shared the retrospective analysis of conflicts in the countries.
- Time for each country conflict background.
- Women status and why are they victims in every society, maybe a concrete analysis is needed and more time to discuss this issue in every conference.
- How does the international community work on the identification of our conflicts?
- Resolution.
- I want to hear more examples (concrete) of successful projects that my colleagues have implemented.
- There have been repetitions in the work, even though this made it easier to understand, the methodology was a little tiring. For example repetition of what others had presented could have been cut to save us time.

Appendix IV: List of Participants at the Sharing Know-how Worskshop

1. Bineta Diop	info@fasngo.org
2. Shoba Gautam	ihricon@mos.com.np
3. Olga Ribeiro	rutapacifica@epm.net.co
4. Sarah Nyanath	sanyael@yahoo.com; naathc@yahoo.com
5. Marina Pagava	forum@access.sanet.ge
6. Brigitte NSHIMIRIMANA	nshimebrigitte@yahoo.fr
7. Theresa Akumadu	wopedheadoffice@yahoo.com
8. Nicola Johnston	nicolalivjohnston@global.za njohnston@international-alert.org
9. Ancil Adrian-Paul	aadrian-paul@international-alert.org
10. Judy El Bushra	elbushra@freeuk.com or judy@el-bushra.com
11. Helen Hakena	leitananehan@daltron.com.pg
12. Teresa Jaintong	bidp@daltron.com.pg bicwf@tiare.net.pg
13. Jessica Nkuuhe	isis@starcom.co.ug
14. Caroline Nagboo	c/o emem_o@yahoo.com
15. Gege Katana	kanagege@yahoo.fr
16. Natella Akaba	akabanatella@yahoo.com
17. Dharshini Croos	croos@wow.lk;cordaid@sltnet.lk
18. Lavinia Dumbuya	cgg@sierratel.sl

APPENDIX V: UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security

United Nations S/RES/1325 (2000)
Security Council Distr.: General
31 October 2000
00-72018 (E)

Resolution 1325 (2000), Women, Peace and Security
Adopted by the Security Council at its 4213th meeting, on 31 October 2000

Recalling its resolutions 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999, 1265 (1999) of 17 September 1999, 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000 and 1314 (2000) of 11 August 2000, as well as relevant statements of its President and recalling also the statement of its President, to the press on the occasion of the United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace of 8 March 2000 (SC/6816).

Recalling also the commitments of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (A/52/231) as well as those contained in the outcome document of the twenty-third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly entitled 'Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the twenty-first century' (A/S-23/10/Rev. 1), in particular those concerning women and armed conflict.

Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the primary responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Expressing concern that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and increasingly are targeted by combatants and armed elements, and recognising the consequent impact this has on durable peace and reconciliation.

Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and stressing the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution.

Reaffirming also the need to implement fully international humanitarian and human-rights law that protects the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts.

Emphasising the need for all parties to ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programmes take into account the special needs of women and girls.

Recognising the urgent need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and in this regard noting the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (S/2000/693).

Recognising also the importance of the recommendation contained in the statement of its President to the press of 8 March 2000 for specialised training for all peacekeeping personnel on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations.
Recognising that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in the peace process can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security.

Noting the need to consolidate data on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls.

1. **Urges** Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict.

2. **Encourages** the Secretary-General to implement his strategic plan of action (A/49/587) calling for an increase in the participation of women at decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes.

3. **Urges** the Secretary-General to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf, and in this regard calls on Member States to provide candidates to the Secretary-General, for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster.

4. **Further** urges the Secretary-General to seek to expand the role and contribution of women in United Nations field-based operations, and especially among military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel.

5. **Expresses** its willingness to incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations and urges the Secretary-General to ensure that, where appropriate, field operations include a gender component.

6. **Requests** the Secretary-General to provide to Member States training guidelines and materials on the protection, rights and the particular needs of women, as well as on the importance of involving women in all peacekeeping and peacebuilding measures, invites Member States to incorporate these elements as well as HIV/AIDS awareness training into their national training programmes for military and civilian police personnel in preparation for deployment and further requests the Secretary-General to ensure that civilian personnel of peacekeeping operations receive similar training.

7. **Urges** Member States to increase their voluntary financial, technical and logistical support for gender-sensitive training efforts, including those undertaken by relevant funds and programmes, *inter alia*, the United Nations Fund for Women and United Nations Children's Fund, and by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other relevant bodies.

8. **Calls** on all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, *inter alia*: (a) 'The special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction'; (b) 'Measures that support local women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements'; (c) 'Measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary'.

9. **Calls** upon all parties to armed conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls as civilians, in particular the obligations applicable to them under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and the Protocol thereto of 1967, the Convention Security Council – 5 – Press Release SC/6942 4213th Meeting (PM) 31 October 2000 on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979 and the Optional Protocol thereto of 1999 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the two Optional Protocols thereto of 25 May 2000, and to bear in mind the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

10. **Calls** on all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict.

11. **Emphasises** the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes including those relating to sexual violence against women and girls, and in this regard, stresses the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible from amnesty provisions.

12. **Calls** upon all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, and to take into account the particular needs of women and girls, including in their design, and recalls its resolution 1208 (1998) of 19 November 1998.

13. **Encourages** all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependants.

14. **Reaffirms** its readiness, whenever measures are adopted under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, to give consideration to their potential impact on the civilian population, bearing in mind the special needs of women and girls, in order to consider appropriate humanitarian exemptions.

15. **Expresses** its willingness to ensure that Security Council missions take into account gender considerations and the rights of women, including through consultation with local and international women's groups.

16. **Invites** the Secretary-General to carry out a study on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in peace-building and the gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution, and further invites him to submit a report to the Security Council on the results of this study and to make this available to all Member States of the United Nations.

17. **Requests** the Secretary-General, where appropriate, to include in his reporting to the Security Council, progress on gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping missions and all other aspects relating to women and girls.

18. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.

Appendix VI: Bibliography

Abu-Dayyah, S. (2002) *Women's reproductive rights and health care status in the Palestinian Occupied Territories* Paper presented to the conference on sexual and reproductive needs and rights of women displaced by war and armed conflict, Ghent, 2002

ACORD (2002) *Gender-sensitive programme design and planning in conflict situations* (http://www.acord.org.uk/b-resources.htm#GENDER)

Adrian-Paul, A. (2003) 'Legitimising the role of women in peace-building in the United Nations: a campaign approach' in NGOs *at the table: strategies for influencing policy* INCORE

Adrian-Paul, A. (2003) *Women building peace: know-how sharing workshop synthesis report* International Alert mimeo

AVEGA (1999) *Survey on violence against women in Rwanda* mimeo, Kigali

Bennett, O. et al (eds) (1996) *Arms to fight, arms to protect: women speak out about conflict* Panos London.

Bosmans, M., et al (2002) *Reproductive and sexual rights of refugee and internally displaced women as cornerstone of respect for human rights* International Centre for Reproductive Health, Ghent University, Belgium

Bouta, T. and Frerks, (eds) (n.d.) *Women's roles in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction: literature review and analysis* Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Clingendael

Byrne, B. (1996) *Gender, conflict and development Vol. 1: Overview* BRIDGE report no. 34, IDS, prepared for Netherlands Special Programme on WID

Callaway, H. (1987) 'Survival and support: women's forms of political action' in Ridd and Callaway (eds) *Women and political conflict: portraits of struggle in times of crisis* New York University Press

CIDA (1999) CIDA's *policy on gender equality*

CIDA (2001) *CIDA and the Canadian human security strategy: conflict, peace and development* (draft)

Cockburn, C. (1998) *The space between us: negotiating gender and national identities in conflict* Zed Books, London

DFID (n.d.) *Poverty reduction and the empowerment of women: target strategy paper*

Diop, B. (n.d.) *Engendering the peace process in Africa: women at the negotiating table - lessons learned from Femmes Africa Solidarité's experiences in the Mano River and Great Lakes Region* mimeo, paper produced for International Alert

El-Bushra, J. and Piza-Lopez, E. (1993) *Development in conflict: the gender dimension* Oxfam/ACORD, Oxford

El-Bushra, J. and Piza-Lopez, E. (1994) 'Gender, war and food' in J. Macrae and A. Zwi (eds) *War and hunger: rethinking international responses to complex emergencies* Zed Press with Save the Children UK, London

El-Jack, A. (2002) 'Gender perspectives on the management of small arms and light weapons in the Sudan' in Farr and Gebre-Wold (eds) *Gender perspectives on small arms and light weapons* Bonn International Centre for Conversion, Bonn, Brief 24

Enloe, C. (1993) *The morning after: sexual politics at the end of the cold war* University of California Press

Eno, J. (2000) 'Women's strategies for peace: gains and losses' in International Alert and AAWORD *Conflict transformation in Africa: African women's perspectives*

European Parliament (2000) *Resolution on the participation of women in peaceful conflict resolution* (2000/2025 (INI))

Femmes Africa Solidarite (2000) *Engendering the peace process in West Africa: the Mano River Women's Peace* Network Geneva

Farr, V. and Gebre-Wold, K. (eds) (2002) *Gender perspectives on small arms and light weapons* Bonn International Centre for Conversion, Bonn, Brief 24

Fodul, N. (2002) 'Sudan case study' in ACORD *Gender-sensitive design and planning in conflict-affected situations*
(http://www.acord.org.uk/Publications/G&CResearch/annex3sudaneng.pdf)

Galtung, J. (1995) 'Twenty-five years of peace research: ten challenges and responses' in *Journal of Peace Research 22*

Gardner, J. (forthcoming) 'Women and leadership in Somaliland 1991 – 2001' in Gardner and El-Bushra (eds) *Somali conflict and peace: the perspectives of Somali women* ICD/CIIR, London

Gardner, J. and El-Bushra, J. (eds) (forthcoming) *Somali conflict and peace: the perspectives of Somali women* ICD/CIIR, London

Gautam, S. (2001) *Women and children in the periphery of the people's war* Institute of Human Rights Communication, Kathmandu, Nepal

Griffen, V. (ed) (2000) *Marginalised women: documentation of refugee women and women in situations of armed conflict* Asian and Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur

Ibanez, A. (2001) 'El Salvador: war and untold stories – women guerrillas' in Moser and Clark (eds) *Victims, perpetrators or actors? Gender, armed conflict and political violence* Zed Books, London

International Alert (1999) *Women, violent conflict and peace-building: global perspectives* (Report of the international conference, London, May 1999)

International Alert (2001) *Gender and peace support operations: opportunities and challenges to improve practice*

International Alert (n.d.) *Documenting women's peace-building know-how: a framework* (revised 2002)

International Alert and AAWORD (2000) *Conflict transformation in Africa: African women's perspectives* (Report of the workshop in Dakar, May 2000)

Jacobs, S., Jacobson, R. and Marchbank, J. (2000) *States of conflict: gender, violence and resistance* Zed Books, London

Jacobson, R., Jacobs, S. and Marchbank, J (2000) 'Introduction' in Jacobs, Jacobson and Marchbank (eds) *States of conflict: gender, violence and resistance* Zed Books, London

Jusu-Sheriff, J. (2000) 'Sierra Leonean women and the peace process' in D. Lord (ed) *Paying the price: the Sierra Leone peace process* ACCORD, Conciliation Resources, London

Kanogo, T. (1987) 'Kikuyu women and the politics of protest: Mau Mau' in Macdonald et al (eds) *Images of women in peace and war* Macmillan

Kelly, L. (2000) 'Wars against women: sexual violence, sexual politics and the militarised state' in Jacobs, Jacobson and Marchbank (eds) *States of conflict: gender, violence and resistance* Zed Books, London

Lindsey, C. (2001) *Women facing war: ICRC study on the impact of armed conflict on women* International Committee of the Red Cross, Geneva

Lumoro, I. (2002) 'Uganda case study' in ACORD *Gender-sensitive design and planning in conflict-affected situations*
(http://www.acord.org.uk/Publications/G&CResearch/annex5somaliaeng.pdf)

Macrae, J. and Zwi, A. (eds) *War and hunger: rethinking international responses to complex emergencies* Zed Press with Save the Children UK, London

Maier, K. (1993) 'Women fall victims to Somalia's prejudice' in *Independent 5* January, London

Manchanda, R. (1999) 'Trapped by extremism: women in the Kashmiri context' in International Alert *Women, violent conflict and peace-building: global perspectives* (Report of the international conference, London, May 1999)

McGreal, C. (1993) 'Renamo conceals child 'brides' of boy soldiers' in *Guardian* 11 June, London

Modise, T. (2000) 'Human security meets military security: South Africa's experience' in International Alert *Women, violent conflict and peace-building: global perspectives* (Report of the international conference, London, May 1999)

Molyneux, M. (1998) 'Analysing women's movements' in C. Jackson and R. Pearson (eds) *Feminist visions of development: gender analysis and policy* Routledge, London

Moreno, C. G. (1993) 'The effects of conflict on women' in El-Bushra and Piza Lopez *Development in conflict: the gender dimension* Oxfam/ACORD, Oxford
Moser, C. and Clark, F (eds) (2001) *Victims, perpetrators or actors? Gender, armed conflict and political violence* Zed Books, London

Mukamulisa, T. and Maukarubuga, A. (2000) 'Femmes de Rwanda: faire face aux défis' in International Alert and AAWORD *Conflict transformation in Africa: African women's perspectives* (Report of the workshop in Dakar, May 2000)

Mukhta, P. (2000) 'Gender, community, nation: the myth of innocence' in Jacobs, Jacobson and Marchbank (eds) *States of conflict: gender, violence and resistance* Zed Books, London

Nibigira, C. (1999) 'Bridging the divide in Burundi' in International Alert *Women, violent conflict and peace-building: global perspectives* (Report of the international conference, London, May 1999)

Ntwarante, A. and Ndacayisaba, M (2000) 'Expériences des femmes dans la résolution des conflits au Burundi' in International Alert and AAWORD *Conflict transformation in Africa: African women's perspectives* (Report of the workshop in Dakar, May 2000)

Nur, I. (2002) 'Somalia case study' in ACORD *Gender-sensitive design and planning in conflict-affected situations*
(http://www.acord.org.uk/Publications/G&CResearch/annex5somaliaeng.pdf)

Ochieng, R. (2002) 'A gendered reading of the problems and dynamics of SALW in Uganda' in *Gender perspectives on small arms and light weapons* Bonn International Centre for Conversion, Bonn, Brief 24

OECD (2001) *Helping prevent violent conflict* DAC Guidelines

OECD (1998) DAC *Guidelines for gender equality and women's empowerment in development co-operation*

Panchavichetr, P. (1993) 'The impact of armed conflict on gender relations: Cambodia' in El-Bushra and Piza-Lopez *Development in conflict: the gender dimension* Oxfam/ACORD, Oxford

Pankhurst, D. (n.d.) *Mainstreaming gender in peace-building: a framework for action* International Alert, London

Pankhurst, H. (2002) 'Eritrea case study' in ACORD *Gender-sensitive design and planning in conflict-affected situations*

Peacock-Taylor (1999) *Mission report: achieving sustainable human development through strengthening social capital in Bougainville* mimeo, UNDP Bougainville Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Development Project

Peterson, V.S. (1993) *Global gender issues* Westview Press, Boulder

Rajner, B. (1999) 'Politics, reconstruction and women in Bosnia-Herzegovina' in International Alert *Women, violent conflict and peace-building: global perspectives* (Report of the international conference, London, May 1999)

Rehn, E and Sirleaf, E. J. (2002) *Women, war and peace: the independent experts' assessment on the impact of armed conflict on women and women's role in peace-building* UNIFEM, New York

Ridd, R. and Callaway, H. (1987) *Women and political conflict: portraits of struggle in times of crisis* New York University Press

Roulston, C. (1999) 'Women's community action in Northern Ireland' in International Alert *Women, violent conflict and peace-building: global perspectives* (Report of the international conference, London, May 1999)

Seyoum, L. (1999) 'Equality and women's rights: Eritrea's post-conflict experience' in International Alert *Women, violent conflict and peace-building: global perspectives* (Report of the international conference, London, May 1999)

Sharoni, S. (2001) 'Rethinking women's struggles in Israel-Palestine and in the North of Ireland' in Moser and Clark (eds) *Victims, perpetrators or actors? Gender, armed conflict and political violence* Zed Books, London

Shiner,C. (1994) 'Children starve in city of orphans' in *Observer* 20 February, London

Sorensen, B. (1998) *Women and post-conflict reconstruction: issues and sources* UNRISD War-torn Societies Project Occasional Paper no. 3

Turshen, M. (2001) 'The political economy of rape: an analysis of systematic rape and sexual abuse of women during armed conflict in Africa' in Moser and Clark (eds) *Victims, perpetrators or actors? Gender, armed conflict and political violence* Zed Books, London

Turshen, M. and Twagiramariya, C. (1998) *What women do in wartime: gender and conflict in Africa* Zed Books, London

Twagiramariya, C. and Turshen, M. (1998) '"Favours" to give and "consenting" victims: the sexual politics of survival in Rwanda' in Turshen and Twagiramariya eds *What women do in wartime: gender and conflict in Africa* Zed Books, London
UN Security Council (2000) Resolution 1325

UNIFEM (2003) *Report of the Learning Oriented Assessment of Gender Mainstreaming and Women's Empowerment Strategies in Rwanda, 2 – 12 September 2002*, New York

Vickers, J. (1993) *Women and war* Zed Books, London

Warsame, A. (forthcoming) 'Responding to crises and economic opportunities: the case of Somali women traders' in Gardner and El-Bushra (eds) *Somali conflict and peace: the perspectives of Somali women* ICD/CIIR, London

Zarkov, D. (2001) 'The body of the other man: sexual violence and the construction of masculinity, sexuality and ethnicity in Croatian media' in Moser and Clark (eds) *Victims, perpetrators or actors? Gender, armed conflict and political violence* Zed Books, London

Useful Websites

- ACORD: www.acord.org.uk/b-resources.htm#GENDER
- Conciliation Resources : www.c-r.org
- European Network on Conflict, Gender, and Violence: www.umaine.edu/conflict
- GENIE: www.genie.ids.ac.uk
- International Alert : www.international-alert.org/women
- International Committee of the Red Cross: www.icrc.org
- International Council for Research on Women :
- www.icrw.org/projectspartners_projects.htm#peacebuilding
- International Women's Tribune Centre: www.iwtc.org
- ISIS/WICCE: www.isis.org.ug
- Reliefweb: www.reliefweb.int/library
- Siyanda: www.siyanda.org
- UNHCR : www.unhcr.ch/
- UNIFEM: www.unifem.undp.org/resources
- University of Bradford Institute of Peace Studies:www.bradford.ac.uk
- Women's International League for Peace and Freedom: www.peacewomen.org/
- Women Waging Peace: www.womenwagingpeace.net/content/researchcenter
- Womenwatch: www.un.org/womenwatch

INTERNATIONAL ALERT

Gender and Peacebuilding Programme
International Alert
346 Clapham Road
London SW9 9AP
United Kingdom
Tel. +44 (0) 20 7627 6800
Fax. +44 (0) 20 7627 6900
E-mail: aadrian-paul@international-alert.org
Website: www.womenbuildingpeace.org

1-898702-26-8