

# 'MEASURING GENDER' IN PEACEBUILDING

Evaluating peacebuilding efforts from a  
gender-relational perspective



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Layout by D. R. ink

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**Henri Myrntinen, Nicola Popovic and Lana Khattab**

**April 2016**

## Acknowledgements

The authors would like to explicitly thank the individuals and communities who shared their insights with us during the research. Special thanks are due to Dr Anne Menzel for the central role she played in the West Africa case study and subsequent input and support; Tani Cowper Roggen, Margarida Madureira and Nelina de Sousa from Paz y Desarrollo Timor-Leste for their support and enthusiasm; and Kurniawan Muhammad for his invaluable support. We also thank all of the International Alert staff and others who assisted in various ways, but especially Sarah Agarwal, Summer Brown, Michael Doe, Clara Magarino Manero, Jana Naujoks, Ruth Simpson, Ndeye Sow, Victoria Stamadianou, Phil Vernon and Marie Weiller.

This research was generously made possible by a grant of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. International Alert is grateful for the support of our strategic donors: the UK Department for International Development; the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency; the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The opinions expressed in this report are solely those of International Alert and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of our donors.

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## Abbreviations

<b>CSO</b>	Civil society organisation
<b>DME</b>	Design, monitoring and evaluation
<b>DPD</b>	Doing Politics Differently
<b>DRC</b>	Democratic Republic of Congo
<b>DV</b>	Domestic violence
<b>FGD</b>	Focus group discussion
<b>GEM</b>	Gender-Equitable Men
<b>KII</b>	Key informant interview
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and evaluation
<b>MSC</b>	Most Significant Change
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organisation
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>PyD</b>	Paz y Desarrollo
<b>RBM</b>	Results-based management
<b>SGBV</b>	Sexual and gender-based violence
<b>SNA</b>	Social Network Analysis
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNSCR</b>	United Nations Security Council Resolution
<b>WPS</b>	Women, peace and security
<b>WRO</b>	Women's rights organisation

## Executive summary

Peacebuilders have a duty to understand and demonstrate the impact of their work in terms of helping to create more peaceful, more inclusive and equitable societies. Gender is a key factor in conflict and peacebuilding, and in determining people's positions of relative power or vulnerability, and thus having a better understanding of how different women, girls, men, boys, trans- and intersex persons are affected can only help in better grasping both conflict and peacebuilding. In practice, however, the task of grasping one's impact on complex, long-term processes of societal change such as peacebuilding or enhancing gender equality is challenging.

This report aims to help peacebuilders to better capture the impact of integrating gender and dialogue into peacebuilding projects. It is based on a review of existing design, monitoring and evaluation (DME) tools and approaches to examining gender in a peacebuilding context, discussions with practitioners and academia, as well as case studies. The main objective of our project is to help identify innovative, comprehensive and realistic ways of measuring the interplay of peacebuilding projects and gender relations. We do not present one overarching gender indicator or one 'measuring gender' method that would be applicable in all cases, as this is an impossibility. Rather, we will examine different tools for measuring different kinds of gendered impacts of peacebuilding efforts on beneficiary individuals and communities.

For the case studies, we chose four projects that all fall under the broad 'gender in peacebuilding' category, but are otherwise quite different. Geographically, one was located in the Mano River region (Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone), one in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), one in Lebanon and one in Timor-Leste. Thematically, the projects cover women's political participation, economic empowerment, dialogue and attitudinal change on gender equality, and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

The projects were examined at different stages and different DME approaches were tested:

- in the Lebanon case, an ongoing project was used as a basis for devising a gender-sensitive design of a future project on more gender-equal political participation;
- the Timor-Leste project was accompanied<sup>1</sup> throughout its implementation period of 2012–2015, testing the adaptation of Gender-Equitable Men (GEM) scales;
- in DRC, the research team assisted with the design and development of indicators and in the initial phase of the project using a basket of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) approaches, including everyday peace indicators; and lastly
- the West Africa case study was revisited around five years after its completion in order to test Most Significant Change (MSC) and Social Network Analysis (SNA) approaches to examine medium-/long-term impacts.

In addition to the case studies, we present an overview of different DME approaches and methods that can be applied in peacebuilding projects. With all of the approaches, an adaptation to the given context is necessary and this needs to be based on a thorough understanding of the given context – an understanding to which the DME can and should contribute.

<sup>1</sup> This involves a range of activities, including working as a 'critical friend', adviser, monitor and informal capacity-builder. See International Alert, *Programming Framework for International Alert*, London, 2010, pp.17–18

Throughout, we argue for a comprehensive, nuanced approach to gender, which looks at women, men and other gender identities, and which examines gender in relation to other factors such as age and class. While this will initially require dealing with more complexity, it will allow for a more focused approach and effective use of resources down the line.

Proper DME is essential to better peacebuilding and to better understanding gender dynamics of peacebuilding, but it requires sufficient resources in terms of budgets, time and human resources.



# 1. Introduction

This report is the result of the Measuring Peace: A Review of Gender and Dialogue in Peacebuilding project implemented by International Alert from 2013–2015 and funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The aim of the project was to develop approaches to better capture the impact of integrating gender and dialogue into peacebuilding projects.<sup>2</sup> The research is based on a review of existing DME tools and approaches to examining gender and dialogue in a peacebuilding context, discussions with practitioners and academia, as well as case studies. For the gender component of the project, we have examined four case studies, which all fall under the broad 'gender in peacebuilding' category. The case studies chosen included three by Alert, as well as one project by the Spanish non-governmental organisation (NGO) Paz y Desarrollo (PyD).

The rationale for this project comes out of the tension between the need for peacebuilders to understand and demonstrate the impact of their work versus the challenging task of grasping one's impact on complex, long-term processes of societal change such as peacebuilding or enhancing gender equality. Working in complex, fluid, conflict-affected environments, where interventions may have immense impacts on people's lives, simultaneously heightens the importance of ensuring that programmes and projects 'get it right', and makes it more demanding to carry out project DME than in non-conflict-affected environments. The main objective of our project is therefore to help identify innovative, comprehensive and realistic ways for measuring the interplay of peacebuilding projects and gender relations. We will not present one overarching gender indicator or one 'measuring gender' method that would be applicable in all cases, as this is an impossibility. Rather, we will examine different tools for measuring different kinds of gendered impacts of peacebuilding efforts on beneficiary individuals and communities.

We deliberately chose to look at four very different kinds of projects falling under the general rubric of 'gender in peacebuilding', each at different stages of implementation and in different geographical regions. This has allowed us to capture some of the breadth of programming in this field and also allowed us to examine gender dynamics in different cultural, socio-economic and political contexts.

Geographically, one was located in the Mano River region (Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone), one in the DRC, one in Lebanon and one in Timor-Leste. Thematically, the projects cover women's political participation, economic empowerment, dialogue and attitudinal change on gender equality and SGBV (see Table 1).

In addition to covering different types of projects, of different sizes and in different geographical regions, the projects were also examined at different stages: the West Africa case study was revisited around five years after its completion in order to look at medium-/long-term impacts; the Timor-Leste project was accompanied by the research team throughout its implementation period of 2012–2015; in the DRC case, the research team was involved in the design and development of indicators; and lastly in the Lebanon case, an ongoing project was used as a basis for designing gender-sensitive DME for a future project. Field research was conducted in West Africa in 2014, and in the other countries in 2014 and 2015.

<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of this paper, we use the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) definition of impact as being the "positive or negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended". (OECD DAC, Glossary of key terms in evaluation and results based management, Paris: OECD, 2010, p.24). For other definitions, see for example D. Chingas, M. Church and V. Cortazzoli, *Evaluating impacts of peacebuilding interventions: Approaches and methods, challenges and considerations*, London: CDA/Saferworld/Search For Common Ground/UK Aid, 2014, pp.2–4.

**Table 1: Summary of 'measuring gender in peacebuilding' case studies**

Country	Thematic focus of project	Gender focus	Timing	Ways of working	DME approaches tested
<b>Lebanon</b>	Political dialogue project used as basis for examining gender and political participation	No explicit focus in original project; insights from project used to develop new measuring tools	Commenced in 2009, ongoing	Dialogue between leading members of political party youth wings	Individual interviews and analyses of political dynamics used as basis for developing broader survey tools
<b>Timor-Leste</b>	Attitudinal change on gender equality and SGBV	Mostly young men and women	2013–2015	Training, street theatre	Questionnaires, GEM scale-based baseline, visual indicators
<b>DRC (with activities also involving beneficiaries in Burundi and Rwanda)</b>	Economic, political and social empowerment of women; cross-border and intercommunal trust building; attitudinal change on gender equality	Mostly female cross-border traders, women's rights organisations (WROs), village communities	Four-year project, commenced in 2014	Dialogue groups, gender trainings, trust building	Quantitative data, household surveys, everyday peace indicators
<b>Mano River region (Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone)</b>	Women, peace and security (implementing the United Nations Security Council Resolution [UNSCR] 1325 locally and human security)	Women and girls generally, particular focus on WROs in Liberia and border area communities	Ended in 2009	Capacity-building (especially in advocacy), organisation of UNSCR 1325 workshops, street theatre and radio programmes on human security	MSC, SNAs, comparing long-term impacts with immediate post-project evaluations

Having four case studies at different stages of the project cycle also allowed us to look at various DME tools useful for designing a project (Lebanon), for a base- and endline (Timor-Leste), for monitoring an ongoing project (DRC), and for examining long-term impact and sustainability (Mano River).

The report will first discuss the need for and the challenges of measuring gendered effects of peacebuilding, followed by a discussion of the case studies, and then a more general overview of different DME methods and approaches for ascertaining gendered impacts of peacebuilding interventions.

## 2. (How) can we measure ‘gender in peacebuilding’?

Peace and conflict affect people differently, depending on their social status, gender, age, disability and other social markers, as well as the economic, physical and social opportunities available to them. Peacebuilding projects in conflict-affected areas that aim to establish and support sustainable peace need to be based on an understanding of the context they operate in, as well as their involvement and impact on this context. Often, gender is among the most salient factors in this respect.

### Why gender?

As an organisation, we consider gender – understood to encompass the ways in which we are, and are expected to be, women, men, girls, boys, trans- or intersex persons – to be a central element in both conflict and peacebuilding:

*“Gender is one of the factors that influence, positively and negatively, the ability of societies to manage conflict without resorting to violence. Since gender analysis can help us understand complex relationships, power relations and roles in society, it is a powerful tool for analysing conflict and building peace.”<sup>3</sup>*

Therefore, “building inclusive, sustainable, positive peace in societies affected by violent conflict requires analysing and addressing gendered power dynamics as well as gender roles and expectations”.<sup>4</sup> Gender roles, expectations and identities both affect conflict and peacebuilding, and are themselves affected by these processes.

Alert’s report *Re-thinking gender in peacebuilding*<sup>5</sup> outlines a gender-relational approach to peacebuilding and suggests entry points for gender-relational programming, based on the premise that “peacebuilding can be more effective if built on an understanding of how gendered identities are constructed through the societal power relations between and among women, men, girls, boys and members of sexual and gender minorities”.<sup>6</sup>

#### WHAT DO WE MEAN BY GENDER-RELATIONAL?

Gender roles, identities and expectations are socially, culturally and politically constructed through the power relations between men, women and those identifying with other gender categories – as well as through the power relations within these groups. They are also constructed in relation to each other: for example, the masculine is defined in relation to the feminine; the heterosexual in relation to what is societally defined as the homosexual. And gender identities, roles and expectations “do not exist in separation from other identity markers, such as class, age, marital status, disability, sexuality and the like, but are closely tied to these”.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> International Alert, *Programming framework for International Alert: Design, monitoring and evaluation*, London: International Alert, 2010, p.19, <http://www.international-alert.org/resources/publications/programming-framework>

<sup>4</sup> H. Myrntinen, J. Naujoks and J. El-Bushra, *Re-thinking gender in peacebuilding*, London: International Alert, 2014, p.10, <http://www.international-alert.org/resources/publications/rethinking-gender-peacebuilding>

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p.5

<sup>7</sup> See also J. El-Bushra, *Gender in peacebuilding: Taking stock*, London: International Alert, 2012, <http://international-alert.org/resources/publications/gender-peacebuilding>, and H. Myrntinen, J. Naujoks and J. El-Bushra, 2014, *Op. cit.*

Given the centrality of gender, in its interplay with other identity factors, to power dynamics and identities that form both conflict and peacebuilding, capturing gendered impacts of interventions is critical to better understanding the effects of these. This knowledge should, at least in theory, allow peacebuilders to better fine-tune and improve their interventions. While taking a comprehensive approach to gender is at first sight more complex than simply counting the women and men involved, more nuanced information can allow for more focused programming in the design stage and faster reaction to developments over the course of the project, as discussed in the case studies.<sup>8</sup> A more nuanced DME approach can also produce valuable research data – an important additional benefit especially for NGOs that often struggle to fund research.

### What are we measuring?

The challenges of analysing the impact of interventions around complex, dynamic and non-linear processes such as peacebuilding and increasing gender equality start with the fact that neither ‘peace’ nor ‘gender’ is in and of itself a quantifiable, measurable entity. What can be measured, however, are narrower categories such as more gender-equitable participation mechanisms, more peaceful/more gender-equitable attitudes or levels of violence, as well as changes in these. Measuring will be easier in some cases than in others: registering how many male and female combatants were demobilised or measuring increases in household incomes present their own challenges, but are more straightforward than, for example, measuring the gendered impacts of advocacy processes. Furthermore, many of the changes that work both on increasing gender equality and peacebuilding may take years or decades to manifest themselves.

The information gathered on ‘gender’ and ‘peace’ may be difficult to interpret and often requires the combination of quantitative and qualitative data, as usually neither on its own gives a full picture. A classic dilemma, for example, is that a quantitative increase in the reported number of SGBV cases to the police can mean either an increase in cases and/or more trust in the police and reporting processes. Qualitative data on the other hand often have their own inherent biases and usually do not on their own give a reliable picture of the extent or scale of a given phenomenon. The interpretation of quantitative data thus requires a parallel understanding of qualitative data and vice versa.

The application of traditional DME methods that have been developed to capture and track non-linear social change faces numerous challenges in conflict-affected settings. Getting reliable data is often difficult in environments where mobility may be restricted for project staff, respondents may be on the move (e.g. due to displacement), datasets may not be existent or accessible, and there may be barriers and very real risks to asking questions relating to sensitive issues, such as gendered power relations. At the same time, given the dearth of information and the reliance of various local and external peacebuilders on this kind of data to undertake potentially life-saving interventions (or avoid exacerbating conflicts and vulnerabilities), the pressure to ‘get it right’ is high.

### How do we measure?

In order to bring meaningful gender dimensions into these methods and processes, DME should integrate local understandings of gender identities of different social classes, religious beliefs, economic resources, education and ages, as well as their interplay with conflict and peacebuilding. Suitable approaches need to be either developed from scratch or identified from a pool of pre-existing methodologies, which are then tailored to the particular needs and ideally refined based on the experiences gained throughout the project.

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<sup>8</sup> See also H. Myrtilinen, J. Naujoks and J. El-Bushra 2014, *Op. cit.*

In peacebuilding settings, different needs and positions of power of different men, women and those not identifying with gender binaries are often in flux, something that should ideally be reflected in project DME approaches. However in practice, “gendered inequalities are ... often not analysed in relation to other social, economic and political inequalities, and the categories of ‘men’ and ‘women’ are often dealt with as if they were static and homogenous”.<sup>9</sup> In part, this is due to the real or perceived need to reduce complexity, a lack of time, personnel and financial resources, as well as at times a lack of information on or understanding of the particular gendered societal dynamics. The reams of data and their complex interplay can often be overwhelming, especially with short project cycles and when trying to meet the project deliverables. As we explore below, however, there are ways in which these challenges can be overcome or at least reduced.

Although it is the most common way of approaching gender-responsive indicators, simply disaggregating quantitative data by sex, while important and an essential minimum, gives only very limited insights into actual gendered power dynamics. One might, for example, have a village focus group discussion (FGD) with 80% women of different ages, but this does not mean much for women’s actual participation if the 20% of men dominate the discussion, and if only a few of the women (e.g. older, socially more respected) are allowed to speak.

Prior assumptions over the gendered nature of the issue can severely affect the research and the design of the intervention. These assumptions need to be checked and verified, and some may be so deeply engrained that stakeholders and implementers are not even fully aware of them. Examples of this have in the past been the neglecting of female ex-combatants in reintegration programmes, as the assumption has been that women did not participate in the fighting, or the lack of understanding of the existence of male survivors of SGBV, as the issue may be so taboo that it is invisibilised. Often, particular needs and vulnerabilities of LGBTI individuals and communities have also been overlooked.<sup>10</sup>

As peacebuilding interventions take place in particularly sensitive, dynamic and complex environments, conflict sensitivity and ‘do no harm’ approaches are essential and need to be built into the DME. Researchers and project designers, ideally together with beneficiaries, may need to revisit prior assumptions both early on in the design process as well as over the course of the project, paying special attention to potential risks and ways to mitigate these. These risks are often heightened in gender-related programming given the sensitivity of the issues, and therefore a key concern is the need to avoid potential backlash against intended beneficiaries. For example, projects aiming to empower women may put them at risk of violence if their male relatives have not been brought on board and sensitised.

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9 Ibid., p.7

10 Ibid. LGBTI-inclusive approaches have been pioneered in healthcare services (especially in HIV/AIDS work) and increasingly in humanitarian aid. See for example M. Shankle, *The handbook of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender public health: A practitioner’s guide to service*, London: Routledge, 2006; S. Bloom and S. Negroustoueva, *Compendium of gender equality and HIV indicators*, MEASURE Evaluation, November 2013; and D. Mustafa, G. Gioli, S. Qazi, R. Waraich, A. Rehman and R. Zahoor, *Gendering flood early warning systems: The case of Pakistan*, *Environmental Hazards – Human and Policy Dimensions*, 14(4), 2015, pp.312–328

### 3. Case studies

In order to better understand the effectiveness of various measuring instruments for gender in peacebuilding, the research team deliberately chose four different projects in different geographical locations, at different stages, with different thematic topics. The aim of this broad and diverse approach was to capture some of the diversity of gendered peacebuilding projects, and to test a range of measuring approaches at different phases of a project: in the design stage (Lebanon), base-/endline stages (Timor-Leste), for monitoring an ongoing project (DRC) and assessing long-term impact (Mano River region).

Importantly, this research is *not* an evaluation of the projects themselves. Rather, the projects were used as case studies to better understand *how* gender can be measured in different peacebuilding projects by using different measuring approaches. The process was not merely an academic exercise: in three of the four cases, the research was used to develop new approaches to DME in the case study projects themselves, in addition to informing the DME of other projects. In the fourth case, direct input was not possible as the project had long since been completed, but the insights gained flowed into other projects.<sup>11</sup>

#### 3.1 Politics as a gendered space in Lebanon

The gendered values and norms that define men's and women's roles in Lebanese society also have a direct influence on inclusive political participation. While there are no formal restrictions on women participating in politics, deeply embedded societal attitudes make it difficult in practice. At the same time, Lebanese women are also increasingly trying to balance the demands of employment with the domestic roles they are traditionally expected to fulfil. When forced to prioritise under these circumstances, women often sacrifice political activity.<sup>12</sup>

Both the political sphere, which is often considered 'dangerous', 'violent' and 'dirty', and political activity have long been dominated by men and subsequently coded 'masculine', with historically grown male-dominated power structures and networks of patronage.<sup>13</sup> Formal and informal political structures, access to positions within these, as well as political participation are strongly dominated by men. Often too, these are men with the necessary familial and patronage support, especially from male relatives.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, the political system is based on a confessional power-sharing agreement between political elites, and the political field at the national level is split more or less into two opposing blocs closely tied to stances on regional political dynamics (March 8 and March 14 alliances), reducing the room for manoeuvre and cooperation across political divides.<sup>15</sup>

11 This was the case for the West Africa research, as the project had ended five years prior. A few weeks after the completion of the field research, the three countries were hit by the Ebola epidemic. The research findings helped in part to inform the following study: A. Mukpo, *Surviving Ebola: Public perceptions of governance and the outbreak response in Liberia*, London: International Alert, 2015. The findings have also been used in the DME of other programming by Alert, as well as by other peacebuilding actors.

12 V. Stamadianou, *Perspectives of young women in political parties on women and politics in Lebanon*, in International Alert, *Emerging voices: Young women in Lebanese politics*, London: International Alert, 2011, p.27, <http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/publications/092011LebanonGenderFINAL.pdf>

13 For a historical overview, see for example M. Johnson, *All honourable men: The social origins of war in Lebanon*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2001

14 V. Stamadianou, 2011, *Op. cit.*, p.27

15 The Lebanese political scene is currently roughly divided into two main blocs, the March 8 and March 14 alliances. The March 8 Alliance refers to a coalition of political parties sympathetic to the current Syrian government, such as Hezbollah, Amal, Free Patriotic Movement and Marada. The name dates back to 8 March 2005 when several political parties called for a mass protest in downtown Beirut to thank Syria for helping stop the Lebanese Civil War. The March 14 Alliance is named after the date of the Cedar Revolution, which was triggered by the assassination of former PM Rafik Hariri and called for the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon and more independent leadership away from Syrian interests. It includes the Future Movement, Lebanese Forces and Kataeb.



The realities of Lebanese women’s roles in communities, access to education and representation (to some extent) in the labour market are not adequately reflected in the political arena. Out of 128 MPs, only four are female, and only 10 of the country’s 1,100 municipalities are headed by women. At the time of writing, women’s political participation in municipalities all over Lebanon encompasses only 4% and only one woman has a ministry seat in the government. Currently no quota system exists to overcome structural barriers to women’s political participation, and the confessional quota system presents an additional gender barrier. Given the limited number of seats available in the parliament for each confession and pervasive gender attitudes, these seats tend to be reserved for male candidates. While women do participate in political parties, this is often confined to administrative roles, such as secretaries or social events organisers, rather than decision-making ones.<sup>16</sup>

This case study was inspired by Alert’s Doing Politics Differently (DPD) project that has been carried out since 2009 and financed by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is designed to provide youth party leaders across the 19 main political parties in Lebanon with the skills, knowledge and space for collaborative engagement, which will promote increased capacity for conflict prevention and resolution at the political level. The project is structured around a series of Beirut-based and overseas events, supported by other activities including skills workshops and collaborative planning sessions. The project has been running for over five consecutive years and, taking the turnover at the youth wings of political parties into account, around 15–20 participants took part at any one time, with a cumulative participation of around 100 people, the majority of whom are men.

The initial plan was to develop a ‘gender component’ for the project and the research team conducted semi-structured one-on-one interviews with nine participants of the DPD project group. The aim was to gain an insight into project participants’ perceptions on key issues such as expectations placed on men and women in society and politics, and perceptions of political activity of women and men in Lebanon. Interviews also focused on the intersections of gender with other salient societal identity markers such as socio-economic class, intergenerational issues, urban-rural and geographical locations, and confessional affiliation – and how these affect political participation.

A number of challenges emerged. Given the small number of participants in the project (19 in total), sample sizes were extremely small and anonymisation proved difficult, if not impossible. Although no members of the group criticised other members, there was nonetheless a heightened risk of attribution that could potentially jeopardise the trust and cooperation gained over the course of the larger project. The small sample size also meant that any tool or methodology developed could not be representative of a broader constituency. Given the close linkages between youth wings of political parties and universities, the research team thus decided to focus on developing a tool to measure the gendered barriers to more inclusive political participation at universities. This tool was developed based on the experiences and insights shared by the interviewed DPD participants, on further interviews with politically active Lebanese, as well as triangulation with secondary sources.

Ultimately, the measurement tool developed for this case study is not linked to one specific project per se, but instead aims to be a tool that can be used for formative research or a baseline for future programming on barriers to more inclusive participation.

Students’ formal political engagement at the main universities happens predominantly through university clubs. Many of them are linked to the main confessional political parties in different ways, including but not limited to receiving funds for their campaigning and activities, running costs, holding meetings at main party premises and the like. A number of non-confessional clubs

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16 Women’s rights activists and politically active women, interviews with authors, Beirut, June 2015

and groups also exist, including the secular clubs at the American University of Beirut or its women's club, and the Saint Joseph University, which are two of the most prestigious universities in the country.

Some key findings from developing the tool and conducting a test run with university students are:

- Politics is perceived as a very masculine-coded sphere and has the connotation of the previous civil war, making it difficult for women, and men who do not adhere to the confessional party system, to be involved.
- Socio-economic class represents a barrier to being able to meaningfully take part in political activities for young people.
- Personal security and also intergenerational relations, such as conflicts with parents or close relatives, can present a barrier for young people.
- While opportunities to be politically active within structures that are more formal while at university are available, once graduated, one either becomes affiliated with a political party or engages with civil society. Many young graduates do not see any opportunities to be politically active in any formal way.

## Methodology

The choice of the methodology reflects both the *research topic* and its sensitivities, as well as the *practicalities* and feasibility of conducting the research.

Formal political activity is still strongly linked to the civil war, and the heads of a number of political parties either represent previous heads of militias or are their close male relatives. Engaging in party political activity is thus a sensitive topic for many Lebanese. Discussing the gendered aspects of Lebanese politics is perhaps even more sensitive, as it touches upon issues of gendered societal power dynamics, such as the closely entangled male-dominated confessional political, economic and social structures.

In contrast, Lebanese civil society is relatively strong and outspoken compared to civil society in other countries in the region. Moreover, a post-civil war generation of Lebanese is increasingly starting to voice their discontent with the current political set-up. Universities represent important sites of engagement with and contestation of political activity.<sup>17</sup> University students have been thus identified as a key 'target group' by international and national organisations working on promoting gender equality and political empowerment in the country, as they represent the next generation of Lebanese citizens and political actors, and are dynamic and relatively easy to access.

Alert's DPD project presented us with a good basis from which to start developing a tool to answer the following research question: What are the gendered barriers to more inclusive political participation for university students in Lebanon? A number of contextual sensitivities around both 'political participation' and 'gender' are worth highlighting as they influenced the choice of the methodology.

As the target group was educated in terms of political terminology and exposed to debates of gender equality, the questionnaire did not specifically mention the term 'gender' in order to avoid politically correct answers and instead increase the likelihood of getting more responses that are truthful.

Many students are politically active but outside of university premises and in non-formal activities and structures. During the span of the research, protests were being organised and held in Beirut against the garbage crisis,<sup>18</sup> and many students were very active in these.

<sup>17</sup> See for example J. Lemon, *Lebanese students want to move politics away from religion*, Al-Fanar Media, 8 September 2015, <http://www.al-fanarmedia.org/2015/09/lebanese-students-want-to-move-politics-away-from-religion>; and the Facebook page of the movement against the garbage crisis, led and supported by university students *مركت حيرت علط* ('You Stink'), [https://www.facebook.com/tol3etre7etkom/info/?tab=page\\_info](https://www.facebook.com/tol3etre7etkom/info/?tab=page_info)

<sup>18</sup> See M. Chulov and K. Shaheen, *Beirut rubbish protesters clash with police amid anger at political paralysis*, The Guardian, 24 August 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/24/beirut-rubbish-protesters-clash-with-police-amid-anger-at-political-paralysis>

Political activity at universities is highly individualised. One can be affiliated or assumed to be affiliated with a certain confessional group, and consequently with a certain club or party. One’s identity is known and one might be expected to behave in a certain way (e.g. not attend the 2015 Beirut garbage protests, as they are perceived as criticising the main political parties) or express certain things in public (e.g. criticism of certain political leaders or parties).

Consequently, the tool needed to be developed in the following ways:

- not mentioning ‘gender’ as such, but rather subtly referring to gender dynamics and coding the answers accordingly (this also meant that there needed to be prior knowledge of gendered barriers in order to include them in the questions);
- catering to the diversity of political activism at university and developing a tool that could be used by any student, e.g. active as part of a formal university club, active outside of university or not openly politically active; and
- ensuring individuals’ confidentiality and anonymity in responses. Addressing students either publicly or through focus groups would not work as their responses could potentially be biased.

For the research, semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs) were held with nine members of youth wings of political parties in Lebanon, five civil society representatives and 10 ex- and current university students. Given the sensitivities, the KIIs were very effective in building a relationship of trust between the lead researcher and the interviewees, which enabled a more open conversation about the issues and a narrowing down of what issues are recurring and worth including in the online questionnaire.

Based on the interviews and secondary research, the research team developed a confidential and anonymous online questionnaire that was put on SurveyMonkey. As the objective was to test the usefulness of the questionnaire as a research tool, it did not need to be statistically relevant, and included a mix of multiple-choice questions and comment boxes. Thirty-two questionnaires were received.

### Findings on how the methodology worked

The theme of the research was doubly sensitive. First, political participation is a highly sensitive issue as it touches upon institutional and systematic issues of social and confessional inequalities. Second, discussing gender inequalities can quickly become a heated issue as it touches upon notions of ‘traditional’ family structures and dominant expectations and understandings of how society should function. The methodology addressed these sensitivities by using KIIs as well as anonymous and confidential questionnaire responses, rather than other methods that might serve to showcase dominant social norms, such as FGDs. Using an online tool made it widely accessible for Lebanese students, who are generally digitally connected and literate, but would not work in all contexts. Furthermore, as targeted students were from elite universities that teach in English, the questionnaire was not translated into Arabic for this test run. A broader study, however, would require translation.

Although the run-up to the questionnaire was time and resource intensive, the background information gained allowed for carefully crafted and targeted questions. This included asking gender-specific and -related questions without directly using the word ‘gender’, although one question did specifically refer to perceptions of barriers towards women’s political participation.

Aside from the initial challenge of trying to bring a gender component into an already ongoing project and the extremely sensitive nature of the project setting and topics, the main challenges relating to the questionnaire were of a logistical nature. Given the differences in the nature and levels of political activity of university students, the tool measuring gendered barriers to political participation had to be split into two separate questionnaires: one for students who are currently

politically active and one for those who are not currently politically active. We wanted to avoid two web links to two different questionnaires, as the feedback from students was that this would make it look too confusing for potential respondents who would in turn be less tempted to fill it out.

The questionnaire was designed on and run through SurveyMonkey, which has a straightforward format but does not allow for an automatic redirecting to specific questions based on clicking a particular option. In other words, rather than being automatically redirected to a certain set of questions based on one initial answer, the two slightly different sets of questionnaires were located in one place. This meant that, based on a specific question that determined which one of the two questionnaires they were to fill out, respondents had to manually scroll down to the relevant set of questions. While this process was clearly explained and no negative feedback was received in this regard, this situation was not ideal and is to be avoided in future uses of the questionnaires.

### 3.2 Changing attitudes to SGBV/domestic violence in Timor-Leste

The Timor-Leste case study is unique in this project in as much as it was not carried out by Alert but by the Spanish NGO PyD.<sup>19</sup> The rationale for choosing an external project was that at the time Alert did not have a project itself that focused mainly on men and masculinities. Alert staff accompanied the project between 2013 and 2015 and provided support on M&E, including training for project staff.

#### Background

Timor-Leste, which regained its independence in 2002 after 450 years of Portuguese colonial rule, 24 years of Indonesian military occupation and an independence struggle, as well as two and a half years of a United Nations (UN) interregnum, has struggled throughout the independence years with high levels of SGBV and domestic violence (DV). While fully reliable data are not available for a host of reasons,<sup>20</sup> the indicative data that do exist point to high levels and broad underreporting, especially of cases culturally not seen as ‘major’ enough (‘no blood flows’), of SGBV and DV against men and boys, as well as SGBV against LGBTI persons.<sup>21</sup>

Both NGOs and the state have sought to address these forms of violence through campaigns, service provision and explicit criminalisation. The 2010 Law Against Domestic Violence made any form of DV a public crime that needs to go through the formal justice system. Dissemination of information and training about the law has been undertaken by NGOs, the state and international agencies in all districts, targeting local authorities, village chiefs, traditional leaders, communities and universities. In spite of these efforts, however, levels of violence have remained high and, contrary to the law, many cases are settled through informal mechanisms rather than through the formal judicial system. A new approach that has been pioneered in recent years in Timor-Leste, in terms of primary prevention and under which this project also falls, is working with men and boys on attitudinal change.

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<sup>19</sup> For more information, see <http://www.pazydesarrollo.org/en>

<sup>20</sup> For example, inadequate reporting and recording systems, strong social norms against reporting, varying understandings of what is/is not SGBV/DV, fear of retribution, fear of losing a family breadwinner if the husband is jailed, and lack of access to service providers. See H. Myrntinen, D. Guterres and P. Exposto, *Gender baseline study for Liquiçá district – RDPL II*, Dili: Agencia Española de la Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AECID), 2010

<sup>21</sup> See for example A. Kovar, *Approaches to domestic violence against women in Timor-Leste: A review and critique*, Human Rights Education in Asia-Pacific, Volume 3, 2012; and A. Swaine, *Traditional justice and gender based violence research report*, Dili: International Rescue Committee, 2003

## Project summary

The Education to Prevent Gender-Based Violence project part of PyD’s regional gender empowerment programme, financed by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (*Agencia Española de la Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo – AECID*), had the following key objectives:

- increase knowledge of the definitions of violence, gender and gender-based violence;
- promote critical thinking on gender relations that are conducive to SGBV and DV, with particular focus on masculinities;
- increase understanding of the value of healthy relationships, dialogue and self-control through communication and conflict-management techniques;
- encourage participants to take action to encourage changes in attitudes towards gender equality; and
- advocate for the inclusion of gender in education.

The project focused mainly on changing attitudes especially of young men, but also of young women and other community members, especially teachers, on gender equality and SGBV. It used training and outreach methods such as street theatre to bring about attitudinal change on these issues. The project lasted from 2013 to 2015 and focused on the districts of Baucau, Dili and Viqueque.

## Methodology

The M&E system for this project was based on a comprehensive baseline study using qualitative individual interviews, qualitative FGDs and a quantitative survey aiming to measure changes in attitudes of young men.<sup>22</sup> The latter included the measuring of gender attitudes through the GEM scale (see below), disaggregated by age, location, gender and education levels in a twofold process, aiming to capture:

- actual changes in attitudes and perceptions of young men from the baseline survey compared to the endline evaluation survey; and
- comparison of the change of attitudes and perceptions in the *sucos* (villages) where PyD implements activity with control *sucos* to identify change as a result of PyD’s education project, and *sucos* where there has been no direct PyD engagement.

These indicators were then revisited with a smaller sample in the endline study in 2015.<sup>23</sup> The aim of the baseline study was to conduct a qualitative study of perceptions held by young men and women (aged 15–24) on gender equality and expected masculine roles in East Timorese society, both in the private and public sphere. The focus was assessing the relation of violence to masculine identities and gender relations.

The study aimed:

- “To gather quantitative data regarding attitudes and perceptions of young men towards gender roles and masculinities and measure attitudes against the ... GEM Scale.
- To obtain quantitative information about media habits of young (15–24) Timorese men and preferred channels of communication.
- To obtain qualitative information about attitudes and perceptions of ‘influencers’ (journalists, local/national authorities and other public stakeholders) on gender and masculine roles in [East] Timorese society.
- To design the monitoring framework for the evaluation of [the Initiative].”<sup>24</sup>

22 S. Niner, A. Boavida dos Santos, M. Tilman and A. Wigglesworth, *Baseline study on attitudes and perceptions of gender and masculinities of youth in Timor-Leste*, Dili: Paz y Desarrollo, 2013

23 F. Galache, *Endline research: Education project for the prevention of gender-based violence in Timor-Leste*, 2015 (unpublished)

24 S. Niner, A. Boavida dos Santos, M. Tilman and A. Wigglesworth, 2013, *Op. cit.*, p.12

The baseline consisted of a total of 442 survey questionnaires based on the GEM scale, 16 FGDs and 22 individual interviews with village and sub-village heads and traditional leaders (*chefes de suco* (village administrators) and *aldeia* (hamlet administrators), as well as *lia nain* (informal leaders)), journalists, media, policy-makers and other stakeholders, such as representatives of ministries, agencies and national NGOs. FGDs were held with target groups in the Dili, Baucau and Viqueque research sites. Two male researchers managed the FGDs with the young men and two female researchers with the young women.

While the FGDs and interviews provided in-depth information on the perceptions of gender norms and dynamics in the target communities and in Timor-Leste more generally, arguably the key methodology in terms of assessing changes in gendered attitudes used was an adapted version of the GEM scale.

This approach has been developed by the Brazilian NGO Promundo “to measure attitudes toward gender norms in intimate relationships or differing social expectations for men and women”.<sup>25</sup> The 24-item GEM scale measures the respondents’ attitudes on issues pertaining to:

- the acceptability of violence;
- sexual and gender diversity;
- sexual relationships;
- reproductive health and disease prevention; and
- domestic chores and daily life.

As it is modular, the scale can be, and has been, adapted to different socio-cultural contexts or to focus on particular issues.<sup>26</sup> In this case, the scale was further elaborated to include questions measuring understanding of what constitutes violence and SGBV, as well as exposure to previous SGBV sensitisation initiatives. An additional section that sought to measure the prevalence of actual rather than attitudinal SGBV in relationships, which particularly the young men were in, needed to be discarded due to the unreliability of the data (see discussion below).

During the course of the implementation of the project, other M&E tools were also used, such as questionnaires on attitudes to SGBV/DV. These were used immediately prior to and after the street theatre productions to gauge the impact of the message on the audience. In a workshop facilitated by Alert, the possibility of using other forms of M&E, such as visual indicators, was also explored, but these were not tested in the project.

### Findings on how the methodology worked

One of the real strengths of the project, from the DME point of view, was the detailed, in-depth baseline study. By breaking down the respondents into discrete age groups (instead of using a more generic term such as ‘youth’), and examining education levels and locations (urban, semi-urban, rural) for the GEM survey, the baseline results allowed PyD to target the intervention more directly towards the age group where a hardening of gender attitudes was most visible. Interestingly, and going against common perceptions, a hardening of attitudes also correlated with rising education levels, prompting PyD to work more closely with teachers and the process of developing a new national curriculum, which was happening in parallel. The differences between the age groups and education levels in terms of susceptibility to external influences, both negative and positive in terms of increased gender equality, was also reflected in the endline survey.<sup>27</sup>

25 J. Pulerwitz and G. Barker, *Measuring attitudes toward gender norms among young men in Brazil: Development and psychometric evaluation of the GEM Scale*, *Men and Masculinities*, 10(3), 2008, pp.322–338

26 A. K. Singh, R. Verma and G. Barker, *Measuring gender attitude: Using Gender-Equitable Men Scale (GEMS) in various socio-cultural settings*, in UN Women, *Making women count: An annual publication on gender and evaluation by UN Women Multi Country Office for India, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Maldives*, New Delhi, 2013, <http://promundoglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Measuring-Gender-Attitude-Using-Gender-Equitable-Men-Scale.pdf>

27 F. Galache, 2015, *Op. cit.*



Early on in the baseline research, it became evident that the local understanding of key terms such as ‘domestic violence’ or ‘gender’ needed to be investigated further – something that was also evident during the roll-out of the initial phase of the street theatre productions.<sup>28</sup> In part, this is linguistic, as the Tetum words (in this case ‘*violensia domestika*’ and ‘*jeneru*’) are more or less direct loan words from Portuguese and have been in use only for a few years, thus not always being readily understood, especially by less educated or non-native Tetum speakers. On another level, however, local understandings of what is and what is not considered as violence may at times be at odds with national legal definitions or those used by NGOs. Project staff reported particular difficulties with regard to the terminology used to discuss masculinities.<sup>29</sup>

As briefly mentioned above, the additional section in the baseline survey that was meant to track actual SGBV in contrast to attitudinal SGBV did not work out as planned:

*“... [the additional section] included detailed questions about the prevalence of actual, rather than attitudinal, GBV. It was only to be filled out if the respondent had a wife or girlfriend and questions asked him to report on his actions of controlling behaviour or perpetration of physical abuse on his partner. This data returned had many anomalies. Most respondents filled out this section even though 94% of men noted they were unmarried and single (klosan) in civil status question on the first page. Even if we assume that all these young men, although they considered themselves officially or legally of single status, were in an intimate relationship they were reporting on (rather than supposing what they might do) there was often misunderstanding and confusion around discussion of girlfriends in FGDs. Therefore this data was unreliable and not included in the analysis here.”<sup>30</sup>*

The direct assessment and M&E methods, such as before/after questionnaires used for theatre presentations, tracked immediate learning (e.g. attitude surveys immediately before and after street theatre productions), but were less useful for assessing longer-term impact. The gap between knowledge, attitudes and practices was also evident when comparing the baseline and endline surveys, where increased knowledge on gender equality did not necessarily translate into more equitable attitudes and practices, which was something the GEM scale as a measuring tool was able to differentiate well, compensating in part for possible answer bias. However, not all attitudes measured by the GEM scale were actually addressed as part of the intervention, so the ‘match’ between the measuring instrument and project activities was not always perfect.

A key challenge for the project was in the changing cohort of participants and the ‘dose’ of the intervention they received, i.e. how long and intensely they participated in project activities. For a number of reasons beyond the control of the project, it was not always the same people participating in all activities throughout and it was even less possible to have complete overlap between those who participated in the initial survey and those who participated in the endline.<sup>31</sup> In terms of monitoring, this also poses the question of whether one wants to track individual change over the course of a project, or take a more structural approach and look at what is happening in particular age groups, seeing as over the course of the projects individuals will obviously ‘graduate’ from one age group to the next, and the youngest age groups in the endline will not have participated in the baseline or the project.

The endline showed a complex picture of different levels of change in different geographical settings, one that may in part be due to external factors, such as a sustained and highly militarised large-scale police operation in the district where gender attitudes were the ‘hardest’ in the survey,

<sup>28</sup> Research interviews with audience members and observations, Viqueque district, Timor-Leste, November 2013

<sup>29</sup> PyD staff, research interviews with authors, Dili, November 2015

<sup>30</sup> S. Niner, A. Boavida dos Santos, M. Tilman and A. Wigglesworth, 2013, Op. cit., p.18

<sup>31</sup> F. Galache, 2015, Op. cit. This was even true for before/after questionnaires for the 30–40-minute street theatre productions, as those who had been initially polled might wander off during the production while others would join the audience.

though these attitudes have also been reflected in other survey data for this district. This highlights once again the difficulties of gauging a project's contribution (or lack thereof) in dynamic societal settings.

The evaluation process also highlighted, as with other case studies, the importance of paying attention to language and terminology, and how these are understood by participants, both in terms of whether a term is understood and how it is understood. Measuring long-term impact and actual change in attitudes and practices, especially when cohorts are not closed, proved challenging.

On the whole, however, the adapted GEM scale proved useful. One of its key strengths is its adaptability, which allows for additional questions, but also for the leaving out of those that may not be directly relevant to the intervention at hand. It also allows for the differentiation between knowledge and attitudes/practices, thereby permitting the tracking of possible answer bias. The detailed disaggregation of the age groups and the use of other variables (education, geographical location) allowed for a more focused intervention.

### 3.3 Tushiriki Wote in the DRC

The provinces of North and South Kivu in eastern DRC have been marked by decades of violent conflict at different levels – between states, between state and non-state groups, between non-state groups, by state and non-state actors against civilians, as well as between and within communities.<sup>32</sup> These violent conflicts have often had a devastating impact on the women, girls, men and boys living in the region, including exposure to extremely high levels of SGBV.<sup>33</sup>

In 2014, Alert began a four-year project in the DRC called *Tushiriki Wote* (Swahili for 'Let's all participate'). The project builds and expands upon the groundwork done by two previous projects, one working on the economic empowerment of female cross-border traders in the provinces of North and South Kivu and the other on increasing women's participation in decision-making at all levels. The female cross-border traders include Congolese, Burundian and Rwandan women, with whom Alert has been working since 2009.<sup>34</sup> The women's participation in decision-making is the continuation of over a decade of working together with local women's organisations, including the current '*Rien sans les femmes*' (Nothing Without Women) campaign.<sup>35</sup>

*Tushiriki Wote* combines and expands on the work of previous projects that focused on community-level peacebuilding, both between various ethnic groups and within communities, as well as women's social, economic and political empowerment. The current project continues this work but also has an added element of engaging with men in the communities. The new phase includes working with the husbands of the female cross-border traders on changing gender norms and attitudes, and the work with the community dialogue clubs includes the use of a critical masculinities perspective to change prevalent patriarchal gender norms. In addition, the project

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32 For a background on the conflicts, see for example International Alert, *Ending the deadlock: Towards a new vision of peace in eastern DRC*, London: International Alert, 2012, <http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/publications/201209EndingDeadlockDRC-EN.pdf>

33 See for example C. Dolan, 'War is not yet over': Community perceptions of sexual violence and its underpinnings in Eastern DRC, London: International Alert, 2010, <http://www.international-alert.org/resources/publications/war-not-yet-over>

34 For more information on this work, see K. Titeca and C. Kimanuka, *Walking in the dark: Informal cross-border trade in the Great Lakes region*, London: International Alert, 2012, available at <http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/publications/201209WalkingDarkCrossBorder.pdf>; and N. Mwanabiningo, *Deriving maximum benefit from small-scale cross border trade between DRC and Rwanda*, London: International Alert, 2015, [http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/GreatLakes\\_CrossBorderTradeDRCRwanda\\_EN\\_2015.pdf](http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/GreatLakes_CrossBorderTradeDRCRwanda_EN_2015.pdf)

35 See also A. Ben David and M. Lange, *Rien sans les femmes: Increasing the political representation of women in DRC*, London: International Alert, 2015, <http://international-alert.org/news/rien-sans-les-femmes>. For an analysis of women's participation in the regional and national peace processes, see M. Cano, *Gender audit of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of Congo and the region*, Goma: International Alert/Kvinna till Kvinna, 2015, <http://www.international-alert.org/resources/publications/gender-audit-drc>

seeks to reach out to university students, border officials, female candidates for political office and local leaders to change attitudes towards gender equality. The project will run until 2018.

### Methodology

Given the number and scope of activities, a range of different indicators is necessary to track the impact on different beneficiaries and on different thematic issues. Some of these are relatively straightforward quantitative ones, such as changes in the **number of women in leadership positions** at different levels or the **number of associations** formed by cross-border traders, which are complemented by qualitative ones that allow for a better understanding of what these numbers mean, e.g. in terms of actual influence on decision-making.

Other indicators are complicated by circumstances on the ground. For example, while increases in household income are relatively easy to track among Rwandan cross-border traders who have bank accounts, more nuanced household income evaluations will be necessary to assess changes among Congolese traders who for the most part do not have bank accounts. In order to better capture the changes in income levels, in the gendered access to this income and its impact on families, we developed a ‘basket’ of **proxy indicators**, such as the amount of money available for schooling the children, for formal and informal healthcare, as well as the variety of foodstuffs consumed. These indicators were based on discussions with partners and beneficiary groups, followed by internal workshops where the project staff discussed the relevance and workability of these proxy indicators. Some indicators, such as the variety of foodstuffs, proved too complex to use and were dropped.

For the trickier qualitative task of measuring change in terms of increased gender equality and more trust within and between communities, we decided to use and adapt the approach of ‘**everyday peace indicators**’ developed by Roger Mac Ginty.<sup>36</sup> The idea of everyday indicators relies on using the appearance of things, sentiments or events, which may seem mundane but are indicative of deeper processes of social change and which beneficiaries can relate to easily. In the case of the female cross-border traders, for example, this includes an increase in invitations to traders from across the border to family events such as weddings, baptisms or the like. These indicators, however, need to be tailored to the particular context, even within the project.<sup>37</sup>

For the ‘everyday indicators’, we initially went through the final evaluations of the preceding projects to see what kinds of changes individual beneficiaries and beneficiary communities had reported.<sup>38</sup> Based on these initial indications of what could be used as indicators of tangible and longer-term change, we organised a series of FGDs in North and South Kivu with Congolese and Rwandan cross-border traders, local civil society organisations (CSOs) and representatives of local-level administration, as well as members of village-level dialogue clubs. The results of these FGDs were then discussed extensively in an internal workshop by the team and integrated as many everyday indicators as possible into the M&E framework of the project, as well as the terms of reference of the baseline studies in order to track inter- and intra-community relations, gender norms, attitudes to women’s empowerment (including social, political and economic empowerment, as well as mobility) and changing gender roles.

For the baseline reports of the project, a number of indicators were developed and used, with the relevant data, by means of questionnaires, FGDs and KIIs, as well as by using available published

36 R. Mac Ginty, *Indicators +: A proposal for everyday peace indicators*, *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 36(1), 2013, pp.56–63

37 See also H. Myrtilinen, *Borderland weddings, shared beers and ‘bewitched’ men as indicators of peace and conflict in eastern DRC*, *International Alert blog*, 26 November 2014, <http://www.international-alert.org/blog/borderland-weddings-shared-beers-and-bewitched-men>

38 F. Lenfant, *Evaluation report – Economic Empowerment of Women (EEW): Promotion of stability, prosperity and socio-economic development in the Great Lakes (01/10/2010–30/09/2012)*, and *improving conditions for cross-border traders in the Great Lakes Region (01/03/2012–31/03/2013)*, 2013 (unpublished); and F. Lenfant, *Rapport d’évaluation finale du projet: Femme, citoyenneté et consolidation de la paix à l’Est de la République Démocratique du Congo [Report of the final evaluation of the project: Woman, citizenship and peace in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo]*, 2014 (unpublished)

information.<sup>39</sup> In addition to sex and age disaggregation, for some of the questions other, more in-depth categories were used as well, such as looking at different expectations placed on unmarried, married, divorced and widowed women.

For the national-level impact of the project, changes to DRC's scores in the Institute for Economics and Peace's **Global Peace Index**<sup>40</sup> and the United Nations Development Programme's **Gender Inequality Index**<sup>41</sup> will be used.

In order to track women's socio-economic and political empowerment, **the number of women in local, provincial and national decision-making positions** (including administrative positions, elected officials and representatives, village chiefs, heads of unions and associations, heads of congregations) will be monitored, as will be the percentage of women who are able to cover **healthcare and education** for their family from their economic activities, as well as women's **financial capital**.

In terms of increased **gender equality**, the indicators monitored include:

- women's mobility (i.e. need to ask for permission to leave household);
- division of household chores;
- shared household decision-making;
- attitudes to women earning more than men; and
- perceptions of the acceptability of DV/violence against women.

Regarding **inter-ethnic and cross-border relations**, the indicators used for community dialogue groups are:

- levels of trust in members of other ethnic groups; and
- willingness to accept inter-ethnic marriages of one's own children.

For **cross-border traders**, the indicators are:

- cross-border invitations to family events and other celebrations;
- the possibility of buying on credit in the markets on the other side of the border; and
- feeling at ease on the other side of the border.

Regarding the **empowerment** of female cross-border traders, their relationships with customs and immigrations officers, as well as the number of traders' associations formed by them will be tracked.

For a broader view of **women's empowerment and involvement in political processes** in North and South Kivu, the following is measured:

- the number of targeted students entering into decision-making positions;
- the percentage of women from dialogue clubs attending family, community, civil society, church or political meetings, and participating, speaking and having their opinions taken into account; as well as
- the policies developed or influenced through joint advocacy at the provincial, national or regional level.

39 L. Davis and J. Hejman, *La participation économique et politique des femmes au Nord et au Sud Kivu et aux zones transfrontalières – Une étude de base pour Tushiriki Wote [Economic and political participation of women in North and South Kivu and border areas – A baseline study for Tushiriki Wote]*, 2015 (unpublished)

40 <http://www.visionofhumanity.org/>, accessed on 23 March 2016

41 <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii>, accessed on 23 March 2016

Lastly, the number of members in cross-border associations and the number of cross-border dialogue events arising out of the project will be monitored.

The baselines also examined the following indicators, establishing targets for them:

- number of meals consumed per day and diversity of nutrition;<sup>42</sup>
- access to potable water and healthcare services;
- access to land;
- attitudes to women’s empowerment and perceptions of independent women;
- expectations of what it means to be seen as an ‘ideal’ man or woman;
- gendered perceptions of places considered dangerous for women;
- perceptions of and relations between different ethnic groups;
- local-level conflicts, conflict-resolution mechanisms and gendered roles in these;
- relations between cross-border traders and authorities;
- knowledge of existing women’s rights; and
- perceptions of the prevalence and acceptability of SGBV in communities.

### Evaluation of the methodologies

As is often the case in such research, both the process of developing the indicators and conducting the baseline studies were confronted by a range of practical challenges, such as restrictions to mobility of the researchers due to weather or road conditions, and the need to respect the time constraints of interviewees who have other activities they need to attend to, as well as their mobility, especially in the case of cross-border traders.

More serious from a conceptual point of view was the role of fear among participants, e.g. bringing to the fore cases of intimidation by ‘rogue’ officials, issues around language and comprehension, and the bias inherent in respondents giving answers they expect the interviewer wants to hear. This was especially the case regarding inter-ethnic relations, where expressing negative opinions might be seen by respondents as being ‘bad form’, leading to results that the research team felt were overly positive. In response, more indirect indicators were developed, looking at inter-ethnic marriages, for example. Given the wide range of ethnic groups in the target area, though, the cross-checking of all permutations of intergroup relations was deemed to be unwieldy.

A further issue that came up was differences around the understanding of key issues, compounded by translation issues between local languages and Swahili. This required more careful articulation of terms such as women’s participation in meetings. Local understandings often tended to refer merely to the ‘presence’ of women rather than their participation, and therefore the indicator was expanded to include the voicing of opinions and having these taken into account.

The issue of dealing with contradictory information also came up, such as attitudes towards gender equality. As the baseline study authors point out:

*“This is fairly typical for these types of investigations and the results sometimes can seem contradictory, as in this case. The contradiction between the results does not however mean that they are useless – on the contrary it shows interesting avenues for further or complementary research.”<sup>43</sup>*

As the project is currently underway, it is not possible to give a definitive answer on how well or how poorly the indicators chosen will be able to reflect the impact of the project. Some preliminary conclusions can, however, already be drawn on the usefulness of the approaches

<sup>42</sup> This was based on the methodology outlined by the World Food Programme (WFP), Technical guidance sheet – Food consumption analysis: Calculation and use of the food consumption score in food security analysis, Rome: WFP, 2008, <https://www.wfp.org/content/technical-guidance-sheet-food-consumption-analysis-calculation-and-use-food-consumption-score-food-s>

<sup>43</sup> L. Davis and J. Hejman, 2015, Op. cit., p.15

chosen. Key challenges will be linking project-level activities with impacts on the broader level (e.g. provincial, national and regional levels). While the impacts of the intervention at the individual and community levels may be quite positive and transformative, broader dynamics (e.g. upsurge in armed violence, political or economic crises) may overshadow these gains and/or even force a suspension of certain activities. Given the complex dynamics at play in the region, attribution of outcomes to our project may in some cases be difficult.

The development and use of everyday indicators proved to be an opportunity to deepen our understanding of local dynamics, but also highlighted the need for carefully calibrating the indicators to the particular context we were looking at. For example, while the invitations to family celebrations are an indicator for increased trust across the border as these invitations have been rare, within the communities in North and South Kivu it cannot tell us much about community relations as there is a social obligation to invite all community members in any case.

As with other projects, taking into account intersectionality (i.e. the interplay of gender with age, ethnicity, location, social class and so on) will create a wealth of data, the analysis of which will give an in-depth picture of societal dynamics but something that will also require investing more effort into – and may well, as in the Timor-Leste case study presented here, result in seemingly contradictory outcomes.

On a practical level, the Tushiriki Wote programme officers have taken a very proactive approach to involving partners and beneficiaries in the ongoing monitoring processes, not merely for data collection purposes but more importantly to make the changes, which are taking place as a consequence of the project, more tangible to the stakeholders involved.

### 3.4 Women, peace and security in the Mano River region

The three Mano River Union countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone were heavily affected by a series of interlinked conflicts (the First Liberian Civil War 1989–1996, the Sierra Leone Civil War 1991–2002 and the Second Liberian Civil War 1999–2003), which jointly resulted in around 600,000 deaths and several million refugees and displaced persons. SGBV especially against women and girls but also against men and boys was a salient feature of the wars, as was the targeting of the civilian population.<sup>44</sup>

Guinea, while heavily affected by the conflicts, did not experience a direct conflict itself. In 2008, however, following the death of President Conté, the military took power in a coup d'état, protests against which in 2009 led to a violent military crackdown. The violence in Guinea also negatively impacted on the Alert project, forcing activities to be put on hold.

During the field research for this report, the Ebola virus started spreading in all three countries, and part of the research funds were used to examine the social, political and gendered impacts of the disease in Liberia.<sup>45</sup>

44 For general analyses of the Liberian and Sierra Leone conflicts, see for example S. Ellis, *The mask of anarchy: The destruction of Liberia and the religious dimension of an African civil war*, London: Hurst Publishers, 2001; and D. Keen, *Conflict and collusion in Sierra Leone*, Oxford: James Currey, 2005; for gendered analyses of the conflicts, see for example C. Coulter, *Bush wives and girl soldiers: Women's lives through war and peace in Sierra Leone*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2009; D. Hoffman, *The war machines: Young men and violence in Sierra Leone and Liberia*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011; regarding the post-war situation, see for example S. Abramowitz, *Searching for the normal in the wake of the Liberian Civil War*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014; for Guinea, see for example J. Philipps, *Ambivalent rage: Youth gangs and urban protest in Conakry, Guinea*, Paris: L' Harmattan, 2013

45 A. Mukpo, 2015, Op. cit. See also L. Kotilainen, *Study on the gendered impacts of Ebola in Liberia*, Monrovia: Finn Church Aid, 2015, [http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Study\\_gendered\\_impacts\\_of\\_Ebola\\_in\\_Liberia\\_Feb\\_2015.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Study_gendered_impacts_of_Ebola_in_Liberia_Feb_2015.pdf)



## Project summary

Alert has been working in the Mano River region, mainly in Liberia but also in Guinea and Sierra Leone, through a range of different peacebuilding projects since the mid-2000s. One of the main focus areas of this engagement has been to accompany and strengthen the implementation of UNSCR 1325 on women, peace and security (WPS) at the local and national levels. The case study we chose for this research was a three-year project (2007–2009) covering all three countries, which aimed to:

*“Assist women’s civil society organisations in identifying how to address shared priorities related to SCR 1325; enhance the capacity of CSOs to influence stakeholders at all levels to integrate gender and support women’s political, economic and social participation in peacebuilding; more coherent and strategic approaches at the international community and government levels for implementing SCR 1325 on the ground.”<sup>46</sup>*

The project was closely interlinked with other Alert programming in the region, including a regional project in the three countries focusing on the promotion of human security.<sup>47</sup>

Although the project was covering all three countries, by far the bulk of the activities was centred on Liberia, especially in the southeast of the country with a strong focus on the Grand Gedeh and River Gee counties. The project focused on the promotion of women in post-conflict societies by identifying women’s peacebuilding priorities, enabling rural women’s voices to be included in national policy by means of participatory workshops and assisting WROs through advocacy training, so they could advocate for their concerns.

Alert’s UNSCR 1325 project was evaluated when it ended in 2009 and the human security project was evaluated in 2010.<sup>48</sup> The criteria used by the evaluators included effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact. Five years after the evaluation, we revisited the projects in an attempt to assess longer-term impact, an exercise that was challenging but also – through the challenges – raised issues that are relevant to the applicability of the measuring approaches used.

The five-year gap allowed us to see some of the longer-term impacts that turned out, in some cases, to have been quite different in the immediate and in the longer term. However, the relatively long time span, combined with the broad focus of the project, also made the tracing and contribution of impact difficult. Five years after the project, memories had faded, key people had moved on, the context had changed (or, in some cases, had pointedly *not* changed) and finding information was complicated by data management issues, such as changes in knowledge management systems or the physical decay of data carriers (such as CD-ROMs) in tropical climates.

As mentioned above, the research was conducted in January–February 2014 just as the Ebola crisis, unbeknownst to the researchers, was beginning to unfold. Much of the rich content that came out of the interviews and FGDs in the three countries on gender issues, state–citizen relations, security perceptions and the like was therefore in part overtaken by events within a few weeks. That said, however, many of the underlying issues raised by the Guineans, Liberians

46 S. Ayoo, Evaluation report supporting women’s peacebuilding priorities: Implementing UNSCR 1325 in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, 2009 (unpublished), p.10

47 S. Ayoo and A. Mammo, Final evaluation of the human security inter-country project for Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone, 2010 (unpublished); see also R. G. Caesar, C. K. Garlo, C. Nagarajan and S. Schoofs, Implementing Resolution 1325 in Liberia: Reflections of women’s associations, London: International Alert/Initiative for Peacebuilding, 2010, <http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/publications/0111Liberia.pdf>; S. Schoofs, C. Nagarajan and L. Abebe, Implementing Resolution 1325 in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone: Charting a way forward, London: International Alert, 2010, <http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/publications/201009ImplementingResolution1325.pdf>; R. Reeve, Human security in the Mano River Union: Empowering women to counter gender-based violence in border communities, London: International Alert, 2010, <http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/publications/201005HumanSecurityManoRiverUnionEN.pdf>

48 S. Ayoo, 2009, Op. cit.; and S. Ayoo and A. Mammo, 2010, Op. cit.

and Sierra Leoneans whom we interviewed retained their importance, or were even exacerbated by the Ebola outbreak.

One striking feature of the field research was the degree to which the ‘language of WPS’, of discussing gender issues and women’s empowerment was present in everyday life in all three societies, but especially in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Whether it was in rural areas or urban centres, in roadside cafés or at police roadblocks, on public transport or in markets, mentioning that our research was looking at gender issues would almost inevitably lead to an animated discussion with women and men about whether ‘1325’ (as it was referred to in Liberia) or ‘50:50’ (as it was called in Sierra Leone, after a gender-equality campaign) had either gone too far or not gone far enough.

## Methodology

The research of the project consisted first of a desktop analysis of existing project reports and outputs, as well as a close analysis of the endline evaluations, augmented by interviews with key Alert staff who had been involved with the project and others who had been involved in 1325 work in the region.<sup>49</sup> Based on this analysis, the research team undertook field research in all three countries conducting interviews and FGDs, and analysing the findings using an adapted MSC approach as well as a form of an SNA. Inspired by visual anthropology and by discussions with partners and beneficiaries, an attempt was also made to use **visual indicators** with the aid of pocket cameras that were distributed, but this unfortunately did not work out due to technical difficulties. Nonetheless, the attempt provided good insights into the possibilities and challenges of such approaches.

## MSC

The MSC methodology has been developed for and relatively widely used in the development sector.<sup>50</sup> The approach focuses on a central question: “Looking back, what do you think was the most significant change in (a particular) domain of change?” Significant change stories are collected from a range of stakeholders and selected to provide qualitative input about the change brought about by the intervention. A selection committee then reviews the stories and the most significant ones are chosen to complement the quantitative data. In its full application, the approach consists of a multi-step, repeated process of collecting and assessing stories.<sup>51</sup>

This approach can be used both as a monitoring and as an evaluation tool.<sup>52</sup> In the former, it is carried out at regular intervals throughout the project cycle to monitor impact, while in the latter it is used to look at change over the entirety of a project. In both cases, it is usually used in conjunction with other, more traditional indicators (e.g. quantitative output indicators).

As Davies and Dart highlight, the approach can be useful for complex, social change-oriented projects with the potential for “diverse and emergent” outcomes, which have a participatory approach.<sup>53</sup> It is intended as a bottom-up approach, which allows for the capture of unexpected outcomes, an increased focus on impact and change, and discussions around the intended aims and consequences of an intervention.

Ideally, it also gives a more complex and detailed picture of what is occurring not only in and throughout the project but also around the project, and can be especially useful in trying to capture change that would not be immediately visible through quantitative data alone. The approach can have its drawbacks, as it can be very time and labour intensive, thus potentially

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49 This included, for example, former UN and international NGO staff who had indirectly worked with Alert on these issues in the region.

50 For an in-depth guide to using the MSC method, see R. Davies and J. Dart, *The ‘Most Significant Change’ (MSC) technique: A guide to its use*, Care International, Oxfam, Ibis, Lutheran World Relief, 2005, <http://www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.pdf>

51 *Ibid.*, p.8

52 *Ibid.*, p.58

53 *Ibid.*, pp.12–13

also leading to ‘research fatigue’ among staff and beneficiaries. Furthermore, the data can be very diverse, making comparisons between different kinds of stories of change very difficult and also quite subjective.

As the project we were analysing was a completed rather than an ongoing one, we employed the method in a one-off evaluation sense, rather than as a continuous monitoring process. The question of what impact the project had was posed in individual interviews and FGDs. As a result of how discussions often evolved, the talk often turned to the broader impacts of WPS programming over the past decade. Some of these discussions were wholly unsolicited and arose as soon as people in the market or police officers at checkpoints heard that we were conducting gender-related research.

### SNA

SNA encompasses a wide array of techniques and approaches (see also section 4), based on network and graph theories, often utilising large sets of data. The basic principle, however, is the same in as far as it is concerned with the analysis of relations and ties between various ‘nodes’, which may, for example, be people, institutions or organisations. The approach we chose to test was one that combined SNA with an analysis of influence between the various actors, inspired to a degree by the approach developed by Schiffer and Waale.<sup>54</sup>

The idea was to interview people involved directly in the implementation of the project at the time, as well as Alert staff, beneficiaries, partners and other national and international actors who were involved in similar work in the Mano River region and knew of our project, but were not directly involved. Through the interviews and FGDs, we sought to map who had been the main drivers of the WPS agenda, who was influencing whom and how Alert’s work was situated in this field.

### Visual approaches

Inspired by participatory visual anthropology approaches in which beneficiaries themselves use visual media (e.g. drawing, photography) to ‘tell their story’, we attempted to use photography as an approach. We distributed around half a dozen low-price cameras (under US\$50) with the only instructions being to capture ‘change’ that has come about due to WPS programming. Even though the approach failed due to technical issues with the cameras and data transfer, the discussions around the design of the approach and explaining the approach to beneficiaries raised useful questions regarding practical challenges and framing of research questions.

### Findings on how the methodology worked

Overall, tracing changes and linking these with Alert’s interventions proved difficult. In part, this was due to the overarching nature of what the project sought to achieve in the three countries, the flowing together of various projects and funding streams, the wide range of activities and the multiplicity of actors working more broadly on the WPS agenda in the Mano River region, especially in Liberia. Due to the time lapse of five years, identifying and finding the key actors involved was challenging, and attributing impact in an already complex playing field was made more tricky due to gaps in institutional memory, fluctuation in personnel, varying memories of how things unfolded among key staff and gaps in the documentation processes of recording results.

Nonetheless, the gap of five years also had its benefits. The longer-term view of the overall impacts differed in part quite starkly from the immediate impressions of the final evaluations of the projects. In 2009–2010, the greatest impacts of Alert’s work looked to be, by far, at the local level in southeastern Liberia and the least (or almost no) impact in Guinea in part due to the impacts of

54 E. Schiffer and D. Waale, *Tracing power and influence in networks: Net-Map as a tool for research and strategic network planning*, Washington DC: International Food Policy Research Institute, 2008, [http://ebrary.ifpri.org/utils/getfile/collection/p15738coll2/id/10491/ filename/10492.pdf](http://ebrary.ifpri.org/utils/getfile/collection/p15738coll2/id/10491/filename/10492.pdf). Further updated information on the approach can be found on the blog <https://netmap.wordpress.com/>

the political crisis there, with Sierra Leone situated in between the two. Five years later, the order was reversed: the partner organisations' respondents in Guinea saw Alert's contributions to their work as having been highly significant, while actors other than Alert were seen as having had far more of an impact in southeastern Liberia, with Sierra Leone again in between the two. This in part reflects the degree to which Alert was an actor among very many others in Liberia working on WPS, one among less but still relatively numerous WPS actors in Sierra Leone, but one of very few international organisations active in Guinea.

A striking difference was the degree to which NGO, UN and state representatives would be immediately able to answer our questions with very little prompting, while intended beneficiaries struggled with the methodologies. This was in no way because the latter were ill informed or had difficulty grasping the issues – on the contrary, even the inhabitants of the most remote village we visited were extremely well informed about political events and changes in the development field. The critique tended to be more fundamental: How, for example, can you pinpoint change when the overwhelming feeling is that nothing had changed since the end of the war?

In terms of the approaches themselves, both MSC and SNA proved to be relatively straightforward to use conceptually, but required a narrow definition of the scope of enquiry. For MSC, this meant, for example, a more careful delineation of what level the change/impact to be measured was to be at and from whose perspective. In the case of SNA, the issue to be examined had to be defined more closely, as the pathways of influence, the alliances of actors and their positions change with time and with different issues. Furthermore, in terms of the SNA, the nature of the WPS field at the national and international level complicated the analysis – individuals moved between institutions and roles (e.g. from NGO to UN, or government to academia or consulting), individual contacts often defined institutional contacts and individuals in institutions might not all share similar assessments of issues and dynamics. This stricter delineation of the research, however, proved difficult given the very broad approach of the project as a whole and the wide range of activities it covered. The MSC and SNA therefore might be more applicable to smaller, more focused projects; or, alternately, the analysis needs to be kept at a very general level to avoid drowning in an unhelpful level of complexity.

One of the main benefits of using (audio-)visual approaches is that they can offer a more accessible and multidimensional approach for capturing complex impacts of projects and their social contexts than for example logframes. Furthermore, these may well be methods of recording impact that are already being used, albeit informally by beneficiaries and partners, especially with the spread of mobile phone cameras. However, this context-specificity and the richness of the material requires that it is framed carefully to ensure that the message the photo, video or picture is supposed to convey is understood by the audience. While the act of documentation itself can be quite simple and quick, it may require an extensive allocation of time and resources afterwards. The costs of providing the equipment may also be prohibitive.

### 3.5 Key findings

The case studies provided a rich array of findings, both on the cases themselves as well as on the DME approaches tested. Some of the general findings, many of which will not come as a surprise, are:

- *Context-specificity matters.* Developing adequate DME methodologies that take into account particular gendered dynamics requires a solid understanding of the context. An indicator that works in one context may not work in another, even in the same community, as was the case with invitations to festivities in the DRC, which worked for cross-border relations but not for intra-community relations. Taking the time to understand the context allows for better DME and hence better programming – and the DME itself can help to better understand this context.
- *Comprehensive approaches to gender allow for more targeted programming.* Understanding the context, using gender as a lens to analyse the relative positions and needs of different individuals and groups, and examining gender in relation to other identity markers creates more data initially, but sharpens the focus of the project. This was most evident in the DRC, Lebanon and Timor-Leste cases, where the categories of ‘men’ and ‘women’ were broken down further to find key entry points.
- *Calibrate measuring approaches accordingly.* An understanding of the context and a comprehensive gender analysis allows for a better calibration of measuring instruments. An example of this would be the term ‘participation’: the in-depth analysis in the DRC and Lebanon allowed for a better understanding of what participation means in the local context, which women participate and how, and what broader barriers they face. Thus, rather than only looking at the numbers of women participating in politics, other indicators will look at the degree of participation and its impact (DRC), and how men and women jointly have constructed politics as a male-dominated space (Lebanon).
- *Navigating sensitivities.* Gender-related issues are often highly sensitive and the term ‘gender’ itself can be problematic in some contexts. As shown in the Lebanon and West Africa cases, referring openly to ‘gender’ could lead to either a shutting down of the conversation as it could be seen as implicitly criticising local practices or alternately lead to politically correct responses, which might not necessarily reflect people’s own practices or even beliefs. Thus, a careful navigation of sensitivities is needed, based on the abovementioned understanding of the context and its gendered dynamics.
- *Double-checking terminology.* In all of the case studies, to varying degrees, key terminology (e.g. ‘participation’, ‘change’, ‘conflict’, ‘violence’, ‘gender’, ‘trust’) may be understood differently by the researchers/project implementers and beneficiaries and other stakeholders. This makes it essential to invest an extra amount of time into double-checking how terms are understood locally and what connotations they might have – and what implications this might have for programming.
- *Using appropriate data collection tools and adapted DME methods.* In all of the case studies, a mix of data collection tools and DME methods was used, and these were adapted to the particular context. In addition to requiring, again, an understanding of the context, this may also require extra time, resources and flexibility, which need to be built into research and project design, timelines and budgets. This does not mean starting from scratch every time, but choosing from existing approaches and modifying these as needed. The time and resources invested should, however, lead to better peacebuilding interventions.
- *Resourcing for initial research time.* Allowing for enough time to develop the methodology increased its precision and validity, and permitted for a longer process for holding KIIs and reaching out to a wider range of informants. As in the DRC and Timor-Leste case studies, investing resources into the designing of the initial research tools and feeding this into DME frameworks allows for a more targeted and nuanced project.

## 4. Using DME for gender in peacebuilding programming and baseline research

Although the practical challenges of ‘measuring gender in peacebuilding’ are often great, a vast number of tools, toolkits, guidelines and the like have been developed by various NGOs, aid agencies, governments, think tanks, consultants and academia to assist in structuring these processes.<sup>55</sup>

Allowing for a more complex understanding of gender, firstly that goes beyond equating gender only with women and secondly looking at the interplay of gender with other identity markers, will initially create more – and more complex – data, and will ultimately also help in designing a more focused programming approach.

An example of the first point is the Lebanon case study discussed above, where existing dialogue was used as an entry point to develop a tool for designing a project for increasing women’s political participation. Although the ultimate goal would be increasing women’s empowerment, understanding the gendered barriers required examining beliefs and norms held by women and by men.

The Timor-Leste case study underlined the second point of how a nuanced baseline can help in better targeting an intervention. The primary focus of the project was on young men and their attitudes towards SGBV, but in the data collection process young men were not examined simply as a homogenous category. Rather, they were examined as particular age cohorts, and, in addition to age, education levels and locations (village/small town/urban area) were also considered. This more fine-grained analysis allowed the programme designers to pinpoint at which age gender identities and attitudes started hardening, and how these correlate with education levels and geographical locations.

### Preliminary research: situating DME in context

In designing a project, the overall context and key issues, as defined by the intended beneficiaries, need to be identified and put in relation to the implementing institution’s mandates and goals. In terms of taking a gender-relational approach, this means:

- examining the roles, needs and positions of different men, women and other gender identities in the situation in which one is intervening;
- understanding what role gender and gendered dynamics play;
- defining what the goals and aims of the intervention are and how gender and gendered dynamics might play a role in impacting these; and
- using these insights to design the intervention, as well as to develop indicators and M&E mechanisms.

In conflict-affected contexts, some or many of the factors influencing the analysis may need to be based on implicit assumptions and insufficient data. Given these challenges and often limited resources available for primary research, peacebuilders can use the processes of conducting formative research and baseline studies, as well as M&E processes, as a form of research in and of itself, to better understand a complex and changing operating environment, as well as the impact the project is having on that context, e.g. in terms of conflict sensitivity.

<sup>55</sup> See for example APFO/CECORE/CHA/FEWER/International Alert/Saferworld, *Conflict-sensitive approaches to development, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding: A resource pack, 2004*, [http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/Training\\_DevelopmentHumanitarianAssistancePeacebuilding\\_EN\\_2004\\_0.pdf](http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/Training_DevelopmentHumanitarianAssistancePeacebuilding_EN_2004_0.pdf); or D. Nyheim, M. Leonhardt, C. Gaigals, *Development in conflict: A seven step tool for planners*, London: FEWER/International Alert/Saferworld, 2001, <http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/library/tool.pdf>



## Formative and baseline research

**Formative research** refers to preliminary research that is carried out to better understand the context of the intervention and informs the design of the project. Once the project design is in place and the M&E framework and indicators have been defined, **baseline studies** are used to determine the status quo ante against which the project’s progress will be measured. Both the formative research and the baseline should be used to identify possible risks and possible strategies for adapting to these risks, and they can also be used as an opportunity to identify entry points (e.g. thematic entry points or key gatekeepers/allies), as well as other factors and dynamics that might impact the intervention. The data collected and the methodology used will depend on the type of project, but would ideally involve mixed methods to allow for a wide range of potentially relevant information to be gathered.<sup>56</sup>

In order to gather the necessary information, primary and secondary data are usually collected. For primary data collection, basic quantitative and qualitative social science research methods are usually used, such as surveys, questionnaires, FGDs and interviews, as well as participant observation. Regardless of the method applied, gender considerations should be kept in mind: Is there any demographic that has not been covered (e.g. widows, young women, trans- or intersex persons) that should be included? Is there a common understanding of key concepts and terms (e.g. ‘gender’ can often be an imported term that does not translate well into local languages)? Are there provisions in place that allow everyone to participate equally (e.g. can people with disabilities take part, is the time of day suitable for men/women, can childcare be provided for the duration of the interview/FGD, will especially younger women be allowed to access the interview site)? Do particular precautions need to be taken if the subject matter is sensitive (e.g. SGBV or asking about non-binary gender identities or sexual preferences)?

In terms of secondary data, a review of the existing legal framework, policies, demographic data, actors and programmes on the ground can be an entry point. However, especially around sensitive issues (e.g. SGBV or sexual and gender minority rights) and/or in conflict- or disaster-affected contexts, gaining reliable data may be extremely difficult, necessitating the use of innovative approaches and also increasing the pressure to ‘get the data right’, as whatever information is published will be used by other actors.

A regular reporting mechanism that can be used as a basis for a gender analysis is the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) reports**,<sup>57</sup> including **shadow reporting** by CSOs.<sup>58</sup> **Specific women, peace and security assessments** have been used prior to developing national action plans on UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions, and can be a valuable source of information.<sup>59</sup> There are also numerous country reports on the different provisions within resolution 1325 supported by the Global Network for Women Peacebuilders as well as the reports of the UN Secretary General. These data can contribute to an overview of more general and quantifiable data on gender and peacebuilding, as can more generic data gathered by international institutions such as UN agencies<sup>60</sup> or the World Bank.<sup>61</sup>

56 For guidance on baseline studies, see for example UN Women, *Baselines studies*, <http://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/959-baseline-studies.html>, accessed 23 March 2016

57 UN Women, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women [CEDAW], Country Reports*, <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/reports.htm>, accessed 23 March 2016

58 See for example the Afghanistan report on CEDAW, *Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Afghanistan: CEDAW/C/AFG/1-2, 2011*, <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw38/PSWG.pdf>

59 See for example N. Wamai, *UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in Kenya: Dilemmas and opportunities*, Dublin: Institute for British-Irish Studies, University College Dublin, 2013; and F. Raifi, *Implementation of NAP/AP 1325 in the Western Balkans: Kosovo, Assessment Report*, Pristina: Kosovar Center for Security Studies, 2013

60 These are for example the United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP’s) *Gender Inequality Index* (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii>) and general Human Development Report data (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>), or the UN Statistics Division’s *Gender Statistics* (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/default.html>).

61 The World Bank has made vast amounts of its data publicly available online at <http://data.worldbank.org/>.

Depending on the context, national, provincial or municipal data may be available, both from governmental and non-governmental sources. The usefulness and validity of these data should always be tested, especially in highly fluid contexts or when the data pertains to issues that are sensitive enough for respondents to be concerned about giving comprehensive answers. To do this, data from a variety of sources can be compared and triangulated, including information from grassroots organisations, other NGOs, state and international agencies, media and academics. It may make sense to pool resources with other actors working on similar issues.

However, ‘group think’ can be a common problem in peacebuilding contexts, leading to a distorted view of the context and a lack of local understanding. This is due to a number of factors, such as reliance on the same sources of information, a capital city and ‘main road’ bias, and self-reinforcing dynamics between various actors. There are, however, various ways to try to minimise these risks, as outlined, for example, by Robert Chambers.<sup>62</sup>

Creative methods may be used to gain otherwise unavailable data and can later be used as a monitoring tool. If, for example, no official statistical data are available, locally **specific proxies** may offer a way out. Take for example a society where socialising and gambling at the cockfighting pit is an integral part of male sociability, while taking care of household purchases is considered a woman’s task. If no official data are available on the gendered breakdown of household incomes, assessing how much money men are spending placing bets in cockfighting arenas compared to the amount of money women are spending on basic household goods may be a useful proxy indicator as to who has access to the household funds, although this then needs to be corrected against more general fluctuations in income levels. Additional information may come from other, unexpected sources, including popular culture, such as graffiti, songs and media analysis, as well as participatory observation.

### Theories of change

An increasingly common tool used in the design phase is to develop a **theory of change** for the intervention, which is based on an assessment of the issue to be addressed (that is ideally based on the needs and wishes of the beneficiaries), the intended outcome, the steps necessary to reach the outcome and enabling factors for this to happen. In some theories of change, risks and obstacles are listed as well, although sometimes this is done separately.<sup>63</sup> The theory of change should inform the development of indicators for change as well as the next stage of the research, the baseline study, in which the status quo ante for the indicators is defined against which impact is measured.

Theories of change can be relatively simple sentences along the lines of “IF event/process ‘A’ occurs, THEN this will lead to change/end state ‘B’, ASSUMING conditions C, D and E” to more complex theories of change with multiple levels of interaction. More complex theories of change are often visualised with the help of flowcharts. As with other parts of the DME process, theories of change for gender and peacebuilding projects should be thought through with gendered roles and dynamics in mind: How will the various phases affect different women, men, girls, boys, trans- and intersex persons? Will they be able to participate? Who might be left out? Who might be a potential spoiler?

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<sup>62</sup> R. Chambers, *Poverty unperceived: Traps, biases and agenda*, London: Institute of Development Studies, 2006, <https://www.ids.ac.uk/files/Wp270.pdf>

<sup>63</sup> For more on theories of change in peacebuilding, see I. Vogel, *Review of the use of ‘Theory of Change’ in international development*, Review Report, UK Department for International Development, 2012, [http://www.theoryofchange.org/wp-content/uploads/toco\\_library/pdf/DFID\\_ToC\\_Review\\_VogelIV7.pdf](http://www.theoryofchange.org/wp-content/uploads/toco_library/pdf/DFID_ToC_Review_VogelIV7.pdf); and H. Ober, *Peacebuilding with impact: Defining theories of change*, London: CARE International/International Alert, 2012, <http://insights.careinternational.org.uk/publications/peacebuilding-with-impact-defining-theories-of-change>

## 5. Evaluation methods and tools that measure gender relations in peacebuilding projects

Evaluations of peacebuilding projects tend to follow evaluation criteria initially developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)<sup>64</sup> focusing on: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact, and, in some cases, client satisfaction and value for money.<sup>65</sup>

Deciding which approach and tools are the most appropriate may depend on the following:

- context of the evaluation;
- purpose and audience of the evaluation;
- scope (outlining what is and is not covered by the evaluation);
- evaluation criteria in relation to gender and peacebuilding;
- key evaluation questions;
- work plan, organisation, time, personnel capacity and budget available;
- expected outputs and reporting mechanisms;
- use of evaluation results, including responsibilities for such use; and
- timeframe of the evaluation.

Increasingly, mainstreaming gender and accounting for it in DME frameworks has become a standard requirement. Although there is no one single way of measuring this, internationally recognised standards on how to include a gender perspective developed by the UN Evaluation Group are available to help guide these processes.<sup>66</sup> These principles provide broad, generic guidance and criteria on how to conduct a gender analysis, which then needs to be translated into the particular needs of a given context.<sup>67</sup> In general, a mix of different methods, both qualitative and quantitative, adapted to the particular conditions tends to be the best approach to assessments. A variety of quantitative and qualitative tools is listed in the brief below and summarised in the annex.

M&E should be an ongoing process that directly feeds back into the project implementation process, allowing for implementers, beneficiaries and donors to see whether activities are on track and whether adjustments need to be made. Furthermore, it is used for learning purposes and to better understand how to design and/or implement better programmes. Different kinds of interventions, different stakeholders and different stages all require different kinds of approaches. Beneficiaries are most concerned with the positive or negative impacts interventions have on their lives; donors often require standardised information that allows them to compare hundreds if not thousands of projects for compliance and efficiency; and in between the two, implementers need data on their activities, their ways of working and whether they are meeting set targets. In terms of time, different tools are needed for immediate monitoring (e.g. number of women in a workshop) compared to longer-term monitoring (e.g. did the participation of the women in the workshop lead to changes in their lives?).

64 OECD-DAC, *Evaluation feedback for effective learning and accountability*, Paris: OECD, 2001, [http://dmeformpeace.org/sites/default/files/Evaluation Feedback for Effective Learning and Accountability.pdf](http://dmeformpeace.org/sites/default/files/Evaluation%20Feedback%20for%20Effective%20Learning%20and%20Accountability.pdf)

65 United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), *Standards for evaluation in the UN system*, UNEG/FN/Standards, April 2005, paragraph 10

66 UNEG, *Integrating human rights and gender equality in evaluation: Towards UNEG guidance*, Guidance Document, UNEG, 2011

67 H. Myrntinen, J. Naujoks and J. El-Bushra 2014, *Op. cit.*

## 5.1 Gendered M&E

By far the most common indicators used for bringing gender into M&E is disaggregating data by sex, which yields vital information and should be kept as an absolute minimum. This should be applied to all data pertaining to persons, from the number of participants in a workshop to the recording of violent incidents, from income levels to accessing healthcare. Ideally, in order to allow for a deeper understanding of the interplay of gender with other factors, data such as age, income levels, dis-/ability, or in some cases caste or ethnicity would also be gathered to better understand dynamics. Sex disaggregation of data tends to be based on a binary understanding of sex (women/men), and in certain situations adding a third category may be necessary.<sup>68</sup>

Depending on the kind of data one needs, there are multiple tools available, though often they need to be adapted for the purpose at hand. Furthermore, often tools devised for gender analysis have a tendency to be focused mostly on women, and also often do not look at the diverse positionalities and needs of women of different ages, social classes, marital status and the like. While men and masculinities are occasionally examined in the tools, sexual and gender minorities are largely absent, with the exception of the tools designed to look at gender norms and attitudes.

We highlight here three different approaches to measuring gender that often are relevant to peacebuilding interventions:

- gender as a factor of power and access;
- gender and social networking; and
- gendered norms.

These tools can be useful at various points of M&E, be it to understand the situation in which one is intervening, the dynamics within a project/implementing institution or in assessing outcomes.

### Gender as a factor of power and access

Given the often similar thematic concerns and ways of working, tools developed in the development field can often be used, if adapted properly, to peacebuilding programming. In order to adapt development-related tools to peacebuilding settings, a gender-sensitive conflict analysis that can help to establish such a baseline prior to developing the project outline is needed.<sup>69</sup>

Among the various gendered analytical frameworks commonly used in development research are the **Harvard Analytical Framework**<sup>70</sup> and other gender analysis methods such as the **Moser Framework** and **Intrahousehold Disadvantages Framework**,<sup>71</sup> which specifically look at the gender roles and dynamics in a given context. Complementary to other M&E frameworks, these tools can help to include and measure a gender perspective within peacebuilding projects and programmes. They tend, however, to be mostly women-focused and less suited for ‘studying up’, i.e. examining those who wield power and privilege. Also, other societal identity markers sometimes need to be retrofitted into the analysis frameworks.

While the above frameworks can be useful especially for rural, classical ‘development-style’ approaches, they are less useful for advocacy-related approaches. One possible alternative, the **Advocacy Index**,<sup>72</sup> looks more specifically at the capacity around advocacy through different

<sup>68</sup> In societies with strong heteronormative norms, however, the mere inclusion of the category can be problematic.

<sup>69</sup> S. Naraghi-Anderlini, *Mainstreaming gender in conflict analysis: Issues and recommendations*, Washington DC: World Bank, 2006; and A. Treiber and A. M. Goetz, *Gender and conflict analysis*, Policy Briefing Paper, New York: UN Women, 2006

<sup>70</sup> A. Overholt, M. B. Anderson, C. Cloud and J. E. Austin, *Gender roles in development projects*, Connecticut: Kumarian Press, 1985

<sup>71</sup> For an overview of the various approaches and frameworks for assessing gender, see for example V. Bolt and K. Bird, *The intrahousehold disadvantages framework: A framework for the analysis of intra-household difference and inequality*, CPRC Working Paper No 32, London: Overseas Development Institute, 2003

<sup>72</sup> USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI), *OTI guide for interviewers*, <http://www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/aapep/publications/so-what/advocacy-index>, accessed 23 March 2016

indicators. The Index assesses a group’s capacity to identify timely issues, mobilise resources, formulate strategies, develop networks, and implement campaigns and follow up on them.

### Mapping actors and connections

SNAs,<sup>73</sup> as also discussed in the West Africa case study, can be useful tools for a number of different stages of DME. They can be used to better understand the baseline situation in a given context, map gendered networks and interactions, as well as position actors such as implementing organisations within the complex networks of local CSOs, development cooperation agencies, governmental agencies of different nations, NGOs and other actors. Based on network theories, these analyses of the interactions and relationships between different organisations or individuals can be visualised and analysed.

More an approach than a tool per se, **Social Relations Framework**<sup>74</sup> analyses can be used to assess how gendered patterns of exclusion or inclusion as well as inequalities are created, maintained and reproduced. This can be applied to institutions, criteria and concepts. It can be a useful approach for analysing gendered societal dynamics, wellbeing, social relations, institutional analysis, institutional policies, as well as their immediate, underlying and structural causes and impacts. However, it requires, as an approach, further grounding in the given context and the complementary use of other data.

Another possible approach is the **Cognitive Social Capital Assessment Tool**,<sup>75</sup> which is a quantitative method for collecting basic information about cognitive social capital.<sup>76</sup> This tool helps to measure people’s perceptions of the trustworthiness of other people and key institutions that shape their lives, as well as the norms of cooperation and reciprocity that underlie attempts to work together to solve problems.

### Measuring gendered norms and attitudes

Gendered norms and expectations play a key role in determining one’s degree of agency or vulnerability, access to resources, the expected duties one is to perform and other aspects that can be crucial to both increasing gender equality and working on peacebuilding. Gaining insights on norms and values, i.e. what beliefs are commonly held and what people want to be *seen* or *thought of* as doing, as opposed to what people *actually* do, can be challenging. Carefully designed and adapted interviews and FGDs can be used for smaller numbers of people, but larger-scale studies often require surveys and questionnaires. The DRC, Lebanon and Timor-Leste case studies discussed above all tested different approaches to measuring norms and attitudes.

A key challenge in working with norms and expectations is that there is often a mismatch between what a given society expects of individuals – or what individuals expect a researcher to want to hear – and actual lived reality. While some of these discrepancies, which are often important to gender in peacebuilding interventions, can sometimes be teased out through individual, in-depth interviews, other less intrusive methods can involve participatory observation. For example, if all members of a given community or organisation agree that women and men can participate equally in discussions, this can be double-checked by observing who gets to talk for how long, whose opinions are respected, who gets talked over or interrupted, and what the other members of the group are doing when someone is talking.

73 C. Butts, *Social network analysis: A methodological introduction*, *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 11, 2008, pp.13–14, <http://courses.washington.edu/ir2010/readings/butts.pdf>

74 International Labour Organization South-East Asia and the Pacific Multidisciplinary Advisory Team, *A conceptual framework for gender analysis and planning*, Philippines: ILO, 2008, <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/mdtmanila/training/unit1/socrelfw.htm>

75 World Bank, *Measurement Tools*, <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/EXTSOCIALCAPITAL/0,,contentMDK:20193049~menuPK:418220~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:401015,00.html>, accessed 23 March 2016

76 A report of the World Bank (P. Dasgupta, *Social capital: A multifaceted perspective*, Washington DC: World Bank, 1999) distinguishes between structural and cognitive social capital. The former involves various forms of social organisation, including roles, rules, precedents and procedures, as well as a variety of networks that contribute to cooperation. Cognitive social capital includes norms, values, attitudes and beliefs. Structural and cognitive social capital are complementary: structures help translate norms and beliefs into well-coordinated goal-orientated behaviours.

## 5.2 Monitoring and evaluating a project

A common set of guidelines for evaluations are the **OECD evaluation principles**, including specific guidance for evaluations in fragile and conflict-affected situations.<sup>77</sup> Continuous **process documentation**<sup>78</sup> can help project staff and stakeholders track meaningful events in their project, and discern more accurately what is happening, how it is happening and why it is happening. Following the theory of change, specific impact evaluations can establish whether the intervention had a welfare effect on individuals, households and communities, and whether this effect can be attributed to the particular intervention.<sup>79</sup>

While the classical project **Logical Framework** ('logframe') approach<sup>80</sup> and **results-based management** (RBM)<sup>81</sup> (see Table 2) are among the most common approaches in the area of development work and peacebuilding, they also have their limitations. Even though specific indicators<sup>82</sup> can measure the project progress at different levels within these frameworks (activity level, output level, outcome level), and even include a gender dimension, they often fail to look beyond the narrow scope of the project or programme.

**Table 2: Example of an RBM action plan**

Output	Activity	Indicator	Timeframe	Budget
Increased gender balance among staff	Review hiring procedures, track promotion opportunities	Number of female/male staff members	Ongoing	US\$ 10,000
Gender focal points	Appoint gender advisers	Gender advisers work in each district	December 2015	US\$ 50,000
Codes of Conduct	Draft Code of Conduct with gender-sensitive language	Code of Conduct adopted	August 2015	US\$ 5,000

Unintended consequences, long-term impacts and the effects on end-beneficiaries are, for the most part, not captured. Similar to the logframe approach or RBM, **action evaluations**<sup>83</sup> or **continuous improvement cycle**<sup>84</sup> assessments capture the sequences and links between activities and outcomes. In most cases, the initial assumptions that are based on a larger theoretical discourse that form the central hypotheses (for example: 'the inclusion of a gender perspective increases the effectiveness of the peacebuilding project') often remain unverified.

Midterm or end-of-project evaluations go beyond the general indicators of the monitoring or management tools. Gender-sensitive evaluations can be defined as "a systematic and impartial assessment that provides credible and reliable evidence-based information about the extent to

77 OECD-DAC, 2001, Op. cit.; and OECD, Evaluating peacebuilding activities in settings of conflict and fragility: Improving learning for results, Paris: OECD, 2012, [www.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/evaluating-donor-engagement-in-situations-of-conflict-and-fragility\\_9789264106802-en](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/evaluating-donor-engagement-in-situations-of-conflict-and-fragility_9789264106802-en)

78 T. Schouten, B. Mized, R. Al-Zoubi, M. Abu-Elseoud and F. Abd-Alhadi, The inside story: Process documentation experiences from EMPOWERS, Amman, Inter-Islamic Network on Water Resources Development and Management, 2007

79 Asian Development Bank (ADB), Impact assessment: Methodology and operational issues, Manila: ADB, 2006 <http://www.adb.org/documents/impact-evaluation-methodological-and-operational-issues>

80 USAID, The Logical Framework, Technical note, No. 2, Version 1.0, December 2012 [http://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/2012\\_12%20Logical%20Framework%20Technical%20Note\\_final%20%282%29.pdf](http://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/2012_12%20Logical%20Framework%20Technical%20Note_final%20%282%29.pdf)

81 United Nations Development Group (UNDG), Results-Based Management Handbook: Strengthening RBM harmonization for improved development results, UNDG, 2010, <http://www.un.org/files/UNDG%20RBM%20Handbook.pdf>

82 An indicator is "a measure that helps answer the question of how much, or whether, progress is being made toward a certain objective" (UNDP, Measuring democratic governance: A framework for selecting pro-poor and gender sensitive indicators, New York and Oslo: UNDP Oslo Governance Centre, 2006).

83 J. Rothman, Action evaluation, Beyond intractability blog, October 2003, <http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/action-evaluation>

84 Government of South Australia, Department for Communities and Social Inclusion, Continuous improvement cycle, <http://www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/services/community-development/australian-service-excellence-standards/about-us/continuous-improvement-cycle>, accessed 23 March 2016



which an intervention has resulted in progress (or the lack thereof) towards intended and/or unintended results regarding gender equality and the empowerment of women”.<sup>85</sup>

While these tools are useful in terms of how well a project has been able to meet its targets, they say little about the dynamics within the project or the implementing agency. If it is relevant to reflect on the institutional challenges and standing of the institution in the broader development context, **organisational capacity assessment tools**<sup>86</sup> offer concrete self-assessments for organisations. Assessing organisational capacities along a set of capacity components or parameters can include measuring gender responsiveness. Specific gender audit tools have also been developed for institutions that work on peace and security to measure their internal gender responsiveness and their gender sensitivities towards their end-beneficiaries.<sup>87</sup> Specific **gender audits**<sup>88</sup> can examine the level of an inclusion of a gender perspective in the work and working ways of an organisation.

### Tracing change and impact

One of the most salient, yet most difficult to measure issues in working on gender in peacebuilding is that of change and impact. Ideally, the way to trace change is to compare baseline data that capture the initial situation with the situation after the intervention, using set benchmarks and indicators. However, even though there may be measurable differences between the before-and-after capture indicating the desired change, the question of correlation and, importantly, of the project’s contribution to this can be difficult to ascertain.

A possible way to try to increase the degree of confidence in attribution is the use of control groups, although this often exceeds the budgets and capacities of peacebuilders. The use of randomised control groups are often close to impossible to implement in peacebuilding as beneficiaries are targeted strategically and controlling external factors can be impossible (as for example in the Timor-Leste case). Comparative groups are less rigorous, but less expensive and less complicated. Any final evaluation should seek to also examine the situation of non-beneficiaries, in addition to the before/after situation.

Apart from evaluation methods that focus on quantitative and conventional data collection methods and analysis, there are also alternative methods that can provide an understanding of change brought about by a peacebuilding intervention, such as the MSC approach discussed in the West Africa case study. **Process tracing**, on the other hand, can be used to assess if results are attributable to an intervention and/or consistent with theories of change.<sup>89</sup>

Several UN agencies have promoted **impact evaluations**<sup>90</sup> across the board. These evaluations establish whether the intervention had a welfare effect on individuals, households and communities, and whether this effect can be attributed to the concerned intervention. It aims to measure the specific attribution of an individual programme or intervention to a long-term impact and change mostly through non-experimental designs. This approach is particularly important in order to know if the long-term effects can be linked to the interventions.

85 UN Women, Evaluation policy of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, Second regular session of 2012, 28–30 November 2012, p.4, <http://www2.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2012/11/unw-2012-12-un-women-evaluation-policy%20pdf.pdf?v=1&d=20141013T121501>

86 For example, see this template for a self-assessment tool for non-profit organizations, [http://www.nonprofitoregon.org/sites/default/files/uploads/file/NP%20Org%20Self%20Assessment\\_0.pdf](http://www.nonprofitoregon.org/sites/default/files/uploads/file/NP%20Org%20Self%20Assessment_0.pdf), accessed 23 March 2016

87 N. Popovic, Security sector reform assessment, monitoring & evaluation and gender, Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), 2007

88 M. Bastick, Gender self-assessment guide for the police, armed forces and justice sector, Geneva: DCAF, 2011; see also InterAction, Gender audit: A tool for organizational transformation©, Washington DC: InterAction, 2009, <http://www.interaction.org/document/gender-audit-overview>

89 D. Collier, Understanding process tracing, *Political Science and Politics*, 44(4), 2011, pp.823–830; and K. Hughes and C. Hutchings, Can we obtain the required rigour without randomisation? Oxfam GB’s non-experimental Global Performance Framework, New Delhi: 3iE, 2011

90 ADB, 2006, Op. cit.

The “**social learning approach** stresses sources of influence, called ‘socialisation agents’, which transmit cognitive and behavioural patterns to the learner”, e.g. on gender awareness.<sup>91</sup> To measure the learning curve, knowledge, attitude and skills tests can be conducted. Such curves will be determined in relation to other variables such as gender, social status and, for example, political affiliation.

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91 D. Bellenger and G. Moschis, A socialization model of retail patronage, *Advances in Consumer Research*, Volume 9, 1982, pp.373–378, <http://www.acrwebsite.org/search/view-conference-proceedings.aspx?id=6027>

## 6. Conclusions

The success of gender-relational peacebuilding projects lies in the potential to assist local processes of social change towards more gender equality and inclusive, positive peace. Measuring and evaluating the impacts of these interventions is important for a number of reasons. First and foremost, peacebuilding interventions occur in highly sensitive environments, where the risks of doing harm are high and the consequences can be grave. Thus, there is an ethical case to be made for ensuring that we better understand the impact of our interventions and to use the insights gained to improve the way peacebuilding is done. Second, DME is necessary in terms of accountability to beneficiaries, as well as the donors whose funds, often public, are being used. Third, there is a research case to be made. Peacebuilding DME processes often produce valuable data on contexts where little data are available. The information generated can be of very high relevance to peacebuilding efforts more generally and be used by numerous actors as a basis for their work in the absence of other data, increasing the need to produce credible, reliable data.

As gender is a key factor in conflict and peacebuilding, and in determining people’s positions of relative power or vulnerability, having a better understanding of how different women, girls, men, boys, trans- and intersex persons are affected can only help in better grasping both conflict and peacebuilding. Gender in peacebuilding needs to be seen relationally and in conjunction with other factors such as age, dis-/ability, class, geographical location and marital status. This is often no simple task, especially given the plethora of practical constraints, but as the case studies have shown, the initial complexity allows for a more focused approach and effective use of resources down the line.

There isn’t one way of measuring gender or peace, or the impact of incorporating gender into peacebuilding. Nonetheless, there is no need to capitulate in front of the seeming complexity or to reinvent the wheel – while different kinds of projects and different contexts require different tools, there are a range of methods and approaches already available, be it from the development field or peacebuilding. These will, however, more often than not need to be adapted to the particular context of the intervention – and this adaptation requires an in-depth understanding of the context.

As stressed implicitly and explicitly throughout, proper DME is essential to better peacebuilding, but requires the requisite resources in terms of budgets, time and human resources. Investing in these should not be viewed as an optional ‘nice-to-have’, but as an essential part of better peacebuilding practice.

## Annex: Summary of various DME methods

Method	Type	Description	Use and purpose	Source of data
<b>Behaviour tracking</b>	Qualitative	Tracking of beneficiaries' behaviour and participation	Understanding behavioural patterns and changes	Observation, tracking of secondary sources
<b>Case study</b>	Qualitative	In-depth analysis of a situation and context	Understanding the context and situation beneficiaries find themselves in	Mixed methods and sources
<b>Content analysis</b>	Qualitative	Analysis of a given text such as media reports and articles	Understanding the written word and messages in a specific text	Text analysis of exercise documents and participant contributions, forum contributions
<b>Desk and literature review</b>	Qualitative	Analysis of the existing literature and documents around a topic	Assessing what materials are out there to be referred to and assessing the state of art on an issue	The internet, libraries and databases
<b>Evaluability assessment</b>	Qualitative	Approach paper, including an evaluation matrix, that sets out in a detailed and explicit manner the analytical and methodological approach of an evaluation	Analysing if and how an evaluation can be applied to a given context	Background information about the project/ intervention; selection of different methods and approaches
<b>Demographic data</b>	Quantitative	Institutional, often statistical data	Gaining basic data about age, sex, social class etc., of the beneficiary and background	Demographic health surveys, national statistics, Human Development Index, etc.
<b>FGD</b>	Qualitative	Group interaction moderated by facilitators	Gaining insight about the group's understanding and perceptions	Forum, group discussions
<b>Gender marker</b>	Quantitative	Marks activities, budgets or other components for their aspect of gender sensitivity	This is especially relevant when mainstreaming gender into multidimensional programmes or conducting gender budget analysis	Programme activities, action plans, budgetary information (public expenditure) as part of a gender analysis
<b>Gender &amp; Equality Organisational Self-Assessment</b>	Quantitative and qualitative	Institutional and participatory self-assessment (also called a gender audit in other contexts)	Helps the institution to reflect about its own gender dynamics, build capacity and stipulate awareness	Institutional data, documents and staff interviews/ surveys

<b>Observation</b>	Quantitative and qualitative	Systematic observation with checklists and notes through the facilitator	Observing the context of the learners and their behaviours and attitudes	Learners' comments, interactions and work environment
<b>Indicators</b>	Quantitative and qualitative	Measures that help answer the question of how much, or whether, progress is being made towards a certain objective, for example, capacity development	Can be applied in an RBM framework at different levels to measure activities, outputs and outcomes	Programme documents, participant surveys, observation
<b>Interview (focused)</b>	Qualitative	After having received a stimulus (training) the participants are interviewed. The interviewer has concrete guidelines and questions that will prove or disprove a hypothesis	Getting a deeper impression on an intervention or even on a participant	Beneficiaries and stakeholders
<b>Interview (narrative)</b>	Qualitative	Very free interview in which the interviewer keeps him/her interventions and questions to a minimum	Getting insights about the biographical narrative and events of a human being	Beneficiaries and stakeholders
<b>Survey</b>	Quantitative	Series of written questions that are categorised and analysed via numeric values	Testing knowledge, satisfaction and self-perception of learners	Beneficiaries and stakeholders
<b>Storytelling</b>	Qualitative	Participants' in-depth experiences in their lives and results of programmes	Understanding the impact on an individual level	Beneficiaries and stakeholders







