



SFU

MORRIS J. WOSK
CENTRE FOR DIALOGUE



**How can Canada best
support women in the
field of conflict and
atrocity prevention?**

2017/18 JACK P. BLANEY AWARD FOR DIALOGUE
OTTAWA EXPERTS ROUNDTABLE FINDINGS

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(SFU/Greg Ehlers)

This event was organized by Simon Fraser University's Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue in partnership with the Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies at Concordia University and the Women Peace and Security Network – Canada, as part of the proceedings for the 2017/2018 Jack P. Blaney Award for Dialogue, awarded to Alice Wairimu Nderitu.

1. INTRODUCTION

On March 1, 2018, key actors from civil society, government, local organizations and networks gathered for an Experts Roundtable on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. The objective of the session was to explore strategies for how Canada can best support and protect the capacity of women in the field of conflict and atrocity prevention. Simon Fraser University's Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue convened the event in partnership with the Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies (MIGS) at Concordia University, and the Women, Peace and Security Network – Canada, as part of the proceedings for the 2017/18 Jack P. Blaney Award for Dialogue, awarded to Alice Wairimu Nderitu. It took place under the patronage of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Prevention of Genocide and Other Crimes against Humanity, and the Raoul Wallenberg All-Party Parliamentary Caucus for Human Rights.

Participants engaged in a wide discussion around the following questions:

- Are there specific capacities that Canada can bring to protect women human rights defenders (WHRDs) working on the front lines, both in the field and in exile?
- What is Canada's niche in this space? What can Canada do to build on what it has

done in the past while aligning with other experts and actors in the field?

- What is the most effective support that Canadians, through their governments, civil society organizations and businesses, can offer to protect, support and enhance the impact of women and women's organizations working for conflict and atrocity prevention?
- How can the implementation of the 2017-2022 Canada National Action Plan (C-NAP) take into account the lessons from women who have survived armed conflict?

Participants identified a broad set of recommendations on **how Canada can practically support women in the field of conflict and atrocity prevention**, then worked in teams to frame where Canada can have the greatest impact for each area of recommendations.

The purpose of this report is to reflect the key themes and ideas that emerged from the dialogue, which was held in camera. This document does not represent a consensus statement. Policy recommendations have not been verified, but are instead the product of breakout groups and may not reflect the views of all participants.

2. BACKGROUND: Women and the imperative of preventing conflict and mass atrocities

The needs and rights of women and girls in conflict and other complex emergencies are reflected in several United Nations Security Council Resolutions, as well as in international and regional guidelines and policies. The landmark UN Security Council Resolution states that women and girls account for “the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and increasingly are targeted by combatants and armed elements.”¹

Resolution 1325 also recognizes the importance of the role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflict for achieving sustainable and durable peace. It calls for the “equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance

and promotion of peace and security” and for the integration of a gender perspective in the formulation of peace agreements as well as in peacekeeping operations.

A 2012 study on the role of civil society actors in the success of peace accords shows that “inclusion of civil society actors in the peace settlement increases the durability of peace.”² According to a report published by the Council on Foreign Relations “evidence shows that security efforts are more successful and sustainable when women contribute to conflict prevention and early warning, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and post-conflict resolution and rebuilding.”³ More recently, the 2015 Global Study on the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 quoted a study published by the International Peace Institute: “Women’s participation has

1 The on-going conflicts in Syria and Myanmar offer useful examples here. In Syria, women and girls have experienced forced displacement and gender-based violence such as sexual abuse, early forced marriage, domestic violence, imprisonment and torture, economic disenfranchisement, and kidnappings. Forced displacement makes women particularly vulnerable to violence as they face a loss of livelihood and usually have less access to education, healthcare and employment as well as rights to housing, land and property. After seven years of Syrian conflict, a [high percentage of displaced women reside in refugee camps](#). In Myanmar, the Rohingya Muslim minority group is currently the target of ethnic cleansing. More than 680,000 Rohingya – [60 percent of whom are women](#) – have fled to neighboring Bangladesh in search of refuge. In his [final report](#), Canada’s special envoy to Myanmar, the Honorable Bob Rae, explicitly states that the Burmese military has committed sexual abuse against women and girls. Similar allegations were made by Human Rights Watch and the UN Security Council. The UN Secretary General has now placed the Burmese army in his annual list of parties that have committed sexual violence in armed conflict.

“an agreement is 35 percent more likely to last for fifteen years if women participate in its creation”

- International Peace Institute

an even greater impact in the longer term: an agreement is 35 percent more likely to last for fifteen years if women participate in its creation.”⁴

While they are underrepresented in formal peace negotiations, women often play an important role as architects in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace building processes. However, this is insufficient because women are largely underrepresented in other formal peace processes, such as in Syria. Women’s contributions can be seen at the community level, where they act as negotiators and mediators, document human rights violations,

lead informal efforts such as peace protests, and often provide early warning signs.

While grassroots efforts confirm that women have the will to contribute, women are not equally represented in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace building processes (see page 5). For example, a Council on Foreign Relations report shows that women are underrepresented as mediators and peace negotiators, and that only 19 percent of peace agreements signed between 1990 and 2017 make reference to women.⁵

NATIONAL CONTEXT

Responsibility to Protect (R2P)

Canada has been a leader on mass atrocity prevention. In 2000, Canada launched the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, which later saw the birth of the concept of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). R2P states that the international community has a duty to intervene when a state is unwilling or unable to protect its civilians. The concept sought to redefine international law by stating that state sovereignty entails a minimum respect

2 Desirée Nilsson. 2012. “Anchoring the Peace: Civil Society Actors in Peace Accords and Durable Peace.” *International Interactions*, 38:2, 243-266, DOI: [10.1080/03050629.2012.659139](https://doi.org/10.1080/03050629.2012.659139)

3 Jamile Bigio and Rachel Vogelstein. 2016. “How Women’s Participation in Conflict Prevention and Resolution Advances U.S. Interests”, Council on Foreign Relations Press, <https://www.cfr.org/report/how-womens-participation-conflict-prevention-and-resolution-advances-us-interests>

4 Marie O’Reilly, Andrea Ó Súilleabháin and Thania Paffenholz. 2015. “Reimagining Peacemaking: Women’s Roles in Peace Processes”, International Peace Institute, <https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/IPI-E-pub-Reimagining-Peacemaking.pdf>

5 “Women’s Participation in Peace Processes”, Council on Foreign Affairs, <https://www.cfr.org/interactive/womens-participation-in-peace-processes>

for human rights. In 2005, Canada played an important role in pushing all UN member states to endorse the R2P doctrine.

Even though R2P has its detractors, Canada has proven that it can take a leadership role on issues of conflict prevention, international law and human security. As we face growing human rights violations against civilians around the world, Canada can reaffirm its commitment to R2P by promoting innovative solutions to conflict and mass atrocity prevention, including by adopting a gendered approach to peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

The Elsie Initiative

The Canadian Government launched the Elsie Initiative in November 2017 with the aim of promoting the inclusion of women in peacekeeping operations. It is part of Canada's commitment to UN Security Council Resolution 2242 (2015), which focuses on the link between women's inclusion in peace processes and a more stable and long-lasting peace.

The Elsie Initiative consists of three components: training and technical assistance to countries that contribute troops or police to peacekeeping missions with the goal of increasing deployment of women peacekeepers; financial assistance as an incentive for countries to include more female peacekeepers; and research, monitoring and evaluation to ensure the implementation of these policies.

Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP)

Launched in June 2017 by the Minister of International Development and La Francophonie Marie-Claude Bibeau, Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP) has several ambitious development goals. This feminist approach sees the empowerment of women and girls and promotion of women's rights as fundamental to the eradication of poverty and the creation of positive development. The FIAP's core action areas are:

- Human dignity (humanitarian action, and access to education and healthcare)
- Growth that works for everyone (sustainable agriculture and renewable energy)
- Environment and climate action
- Inclusive governance
- Peace and security (inclusive peace processes and combatting gender-based violence)

The policy focuses on building local capacity and giving women & girls the tools required to fully participate in society. Women and girls are not only recognized as the most vulnerable to issues such as poverty and climate variability, but are also seen as important drivers of change.

INTERNATIONAL EXAMPLES OF WOMEN IN THE PEACE PROCESS

Kenya experienced widespread violence following the contested 2007 elections. More than one thousand people were killed and many more displaced. The 2008 Agreement on the Principles of Partnership of the Coalition Government created a power-sharing system, a transitional government and constitutional reform. Women served as mediators (33 percent) and negotiators (25 percent) in the formal peace processes, and as civil society group advisers. Kenyan women also formed the Women's Consultation Group responsible for providing recommendations, many of which were later included in the peace agreement and led to the creation of investigation commissions that addressed gender-based violence. Finally, women were also involved in the drafting of the new constitution introduced in 2010.

In Columbia, women contributed to the peace process at the national and local levels. Women made up 20 percent of the government negotiating team and 43 percent of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) involved in building the 2016 comprehensive peace agreement. Women ensured that the agreement included guarantees to the rights of women and indigenous populations, promoted the political participation of women, and created measures to prevent gender-based violence. At the local level, women were involved in local cease-fires by talking to soldiers and negotiating peace. While the peace process remains frail today as a result of mistrust of the population towards the FARC, women's organizations have made considerable efforts to build support for the peace agreement and reconciliation.

Even in Syria, where conflict is ongoing at the time of this report, the United Nations Women created the Syrian Women's Advisory Board to the UN Special Envoy to contribute to peace talks. The first of its kind, the Board is responsible for providing recommendations to the Envoy, offering innovative solutions, proposing a gender perspective and facilitating civil society expertise.

3. 2017-2022 CANADA'S NATIONAL ACTION PLAN: Where are we?

SUMMARY FROM THE DIRECTOR GENERAL, PEACE & STABILITY OPERATIONS PROGRAM, GLOBAL AFFAIRS CANADA

Canada's first National Action Plan (C-NAP) for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) was launched in 2010 and expired in March 2016.

To give context to the dialogue, Larisa Galadza, Director General, Peace & Stability Operations Program at Global Affairs Canada, discussed the new 2017-2022 C-NAP, which contains the Government of Canada's specific commitments to advance the WPS agenda. "It is ambitious, inclusive and has more accountability built into it than the previous plan," Director General Galadza noted. Important differences include a hardwiring of the relationship with civil society through the creation of an Action Plan advisory group, co-chaired with the Women, Peace and Security Network – Canada. Canada's vision for WPS is part of the Government of Canada's feminist agenda that prioritizes gender equality and the rights of women and girls.

The new C-NAP is not as time-based as the previous one, allowing for more effort to be spent on programming rather than making a case for more money. "The new planning horizon allows us to be more agile, and more risk tolerant in the peace and stabilization processes and in prioritizing women, peace security as a thematic priority without interruptions in the continuity in achieving key objectives," Director General Galadza explained.

The objectives of Canada's National Action Plan are to:

- Increase the meaningful participation of women, women's organizations and networks in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post conflict state-building
- Prevent, respond to and end impunity for sexual and gender-based violence perpetrated in conflict and sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers and other international personnel, including humanitarian and development staff
- Promote and protect women's and girls' human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in fragile, overt- and post-conflict settings
- Meet the specific needs of women and girls in humanitarian settings, including the

upholding of their sexual rights and access to sexual and reproductive health services

- Strengthen the capacity of peace operations to advance the WPS agenda, including the deployment of more women and fully embedding the WPS agenda into Canadian Armed Forces operations and police deployments

The 2017-2022 C-NAP has support throughout Global Affairs Canada, as well as from the Prime Minister, a range of federal departments, Parliamentarians and Canadian citizens more broadly. Lead partners include: Global Affairs Canada; the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces; and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Supporting partners include: Public Safety Canada; Status of Women Canada; Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada; and the Department of Justice. Implementation coordination includes: the peace support operations advisory board; women, peace and security champions; and the Action Plan advisory group.

The implementation plan defines the Department's specific priorities, targets and activities for the achievement of the C-NAP objectives and implementation of the WPS agenda.⁶ It is organized per program or branch and will form the basis for monitoring and reporting, as well as the engagement of Global Affairs with civil society.

**“It is ambitious,
inclusive,
and has more
accountability
built into it than the
previous plan”**

- Larisa Galadza,
Director General, Peace &
Stability Operations Program,
Global Affairs Canada

6 The implementation plan can be found online at: <http://international.gc.ca/world-monde/assets/pdfs/cnap-ip-ad-eng.pdf>

4. HIGHLIGHTING THE VOICES of women with first-hand experience in active conflict and atrocity prevention

The dialogue started with a Roundtable discussion amplifying the voices of women with lived experience in active conflict and atrocity prevention. They included women from Sisters Trust, the Nobel Women's Initiative, the South Sudan Women's Foundation, as well as Alice Wairimu Nderitu, the recipient of SFU's 2017/18 Jack P. Blaney Award for Dialogue.

Many participants stressed the need for security and support for Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs), both those on the front lines and in exile.

In the field, WHRDs face harassment, anger and attacks, frequently along ethnic or religious lines, and are often considered traitors in their own community. For those in exile who continue to organize for peace, harassment can take on different forms, notably online. Participants urged Canada to focus on measures to protect the digital and physical security of human rights defenders both in their home countries and in exile.

Participants stressed the importance of the role of WHRDs across pre-, overt- and post-conflict stages. They encouraged Canada

to offer flexible support, including funding, for women organizing in conflict. "When you barely come with shoes or laptops," explained one speaker, "it's difficult to organize."

Members of the roundtable agreed that peace is political: "There are people who use peace to get into political office so it's important to consider how an Action Plan will be implemented." They urged governments to take ethnic and religious tensions into consideration and remember that conflict exists because of relationship breakdown. Dialogue is critical but it isn't always easy.

Dialogue is also important between women, not just between women and men. There was an emphasis on the fact that women don't always agree: "This respecting of diversity and perspectives is one of our strengths, but it is a challenge and hard to listen. It takes more time, it means things are slower, but it's important. We get a stronger outcome in the end if we make diversity a strength instead of saying 'we don't agree, so you're not invited to our meeting.'" Throughout the prevention and peace processes, participants emphasized the

importance of human-to-human engagement, relationship building, outcome and process.

Many participants noted that women are not just victims of war, they can also be actors in perpetrating crimes, and in bringing about peace. Drawing from her own experience mediating conflict, Nderitu explained how it can be instructive to sit with people who have either killed or instructed people to kill. “When we sit with them, they will always

“It takes more time but it’s important. We get a stronger outcome in the end if we make diversity a strength”

- Dialogue Participant

insist on starting the meeting with a prayer. The other thing of note is how well-read they are. They’ve read the Art of War, not just the books on conflict prevention,” she described.

Women are often excluded from post-conflict recovery processes due to assumptions around gender roles. For example, actions related to land, economic recovery or employment skills tend to be geared to men, while women’s skills are frequently dismissed or minimized. Roundtable participants stressed that women have a role to play in

many sectors. At the same time, participation by male allies is essential in changing the culture. One participant put it this way: “We have a community that talks about human rights, but when women speak, they don’t support them. We have men and women who believe that women should not be powerful.”

WHRDs need support structures to help them engage in peace processes as they face multiple barriers that make it difficult for them to exert a presence and navigate the system. For instance, getting observer status at the UN is challenging, and Action Plans on UNSC Resolution 1325 aren’t always followed. “If you’re not armed, you don’t get priority,” said one participant.

The importance of employment for women in exile was another area of consensus for participants. Many WHRDs who have been active in atrocity prevention or peace and security work in their countries have been forced to flee, some of them to Canada. They bring their networks and experiences with them, but if they don’t have Canadian experience, they often can’t get a job. Among other things, this limits their abilities to continue their human rights work.

5. WHERE CAN CANADA have the greatest impact?

A) KEY SECTORS

Participants at the Ottawa Experts Roundtable identified the following key sectors where Canada possesses the capacity to have a practical impact:

- UN accountability
- Peace support operations
- Women mediators
- Educating male peace mediators
- Flexible financing support to local women's organizations
- Structures to support women getting involved in political life
- Women-led civil society organizations
- Community dialogues
- Women, peace and security approach to crimes against humanity
- Women's access to education
- Relationship/partnership building & support to women's organizations across their work
- Reporting that enables investment in local women's organizations by the UN (donor expectations)

- Sexual violence (exploitation and abuse)
- Sexual reproductive rights
- Transitional justice and accountability (i.e., truth & reconciliation commissions and investigations)
- Responsibility to Protect

B) CANADA'S NICHE

A number of participants suggested that Canada's "brand" is human rights. Canada should continue to be a champion for human rights, but should scale up efforts when it comes to speaking out, reminding countries of commitments they've signed and monitoring their progress.

Others noted that Canada's strengths include building bridges, facilitating dialogue and creating spaces where different stakeholders (diaspora, human rights defenders, etc.) can meet both in Canada and conflict affected countries. Canada can play a catalyst role in WPS initiatives, even if it cannot contribute as much as other countries.

C) EXPLORING STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Building on the ideas that emerged during the first roundtable discussion, participants explored some possible strategies and recommendations on how Canada can protect, support and enhance the impact of women and women's organizations working for conflict and atrocity prevention.

The discussion began with an acknowledgment that there are various levels of conflict, and a general consensus among the participants that the focus on conflict prevention in civil society is being lost. When it comes to WPS initiatives, many participants criticized the disproportionate emphasis on the overt conflict stage. During overt conflict, the global community reacts with a sense of alarm, however, when women's organizations see the warning signs and point out the risk factors, the global community does not respond with the same urgency.

"Making war safer for women is not the way to do it," explained one participant. Responding is about seeing the signs and preventing the conflict from happening in the first place.

Improve early warning systems

Women can be particularly well-placed to detect early warning signs of conflict. Canada can operationalize their knowledge by giving them a platform, support and security.

When people feel that conflict is going to happen, they need to know where to go

and where to be heard. For instance, one participant suggested that cheap, prepaid cellphones could be distributed to women with a number they can call to report early warning signs of conflict.

Because violence can become normalized, preventative strategies should:

- Teach individuals to identify the indicators before conflict breaks out (i.e., hate speech, blocked roads)
- Ensure that warnings reach the right person to take action (often this is not the police, but a religious or community leader)
- Use technology, such as mobile phone apps, that can track incoming messages and information to ensure appropriate follow-up and action
- Work with communities to build relationships
- Train community members

Targeted, flexible funding

Canada can fund grassroots women's organizations to monitor and reduce conflict in communities. This will help to strengthen women's networks and organizations and establish connections and relationships at the local, rural level (away from major cities). Canada should allow for flexible funding for women in conflict-affected countries to be responsive at key moments in the pre-, overt- and post-conflict stages, and enable them to seek safe spaces while continuing and enhancing emergency financial assistance (humanitarian, legal, etc.).

Support skill building and training

Canada can help support ongoing and sustained skill building for women's organizations in a way that supports movement and relationship building. Instruction could include conflict analysis, negotiation, mediation, empowerment tools, leadership and decision-making. Efforts should involve training women on how to prevent conflict in their own families and communities, and should include women at multiple levels of the mediation effort, working as mediators, in mediation support units and in policy making and mandate creation. Many participants emphasized that skill building and training efforts should employ local experts to lead training.

Seek better mechanisms to bring women into multilateral organizations and processes

Canada can help identify, mobilize and bring the right women forward for the case at hand early in the process. The Executive Director of CANADEM noted that their organization offers a roster mechanism capable of filling this gap.

Learn from conflict organization methods

One of the most efficient ways of mobilizing against and preventing violence is to use the same methods that help organize conflicts and genocide. Participants questioned, how could Canada use the same tools that are used to start conflict, but instead to prevent or end it?

Support the data collection of systematic sexual violence

Systematic rape is often used as a weapon of war. The war in the Balkans taught the world the importance of data in relation to sexual violence and accountability in the International Criminal Court (ICC) and truth and reconciliation commissions during the post-conflict phase. Canada can support women's movements and women's organizations in their efforts to collect evidence and data related to the violence against women that takes place during conflict. This data can be presented at domestic, UN and international levels for post-conflict reckoning and to ensure accountability. Women should be included at every stage of data collection and reporting.

Directly include women in Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) efforts

Too often women are ignored in DDR work because they are not seen as 'fighters' in the same way as men, and not considered to be in need of demobilization or reintegration. This fails to take into account that women are not always just victims of violence; sometimes they are actors as well.

Focus on local engagement at a multilateral level

Canada can train local women as peacemakers to ensure that peace is kept in their communities, and can work to include them in negotiation and peace processes at higher levels. It is important to address barriers women face in participating in formal peace process,

such as by creating alternative avenues of participation (i.e. leveraging information technologies such as Skype).

[Incorporate the full range of experiences of women in conflict](#)

Conflict and atrocity prevention efforts should avoid using language and strategies that pairs women and children. It is also important to include women in many roles, including in the fields of justice, land, economy, police reform and media.

Canada can help involve diverse voices in creating targeted solutions for conflict, including women of different ages and socioeconomic backgrounds, and women from both urban and rural communities. Additionally Canada can help to bring together conflicting parties and communities to build innovative relationships around common causes and goals.

Canada can also support women human rights defenders in the diaspora. Networks are often ripped apart during overt- and post-conflict contexts. Canada can continue to support networks, coalitions and women's movements in conflict-affected countries, while taking into account mobilization happening outside the country and working to build bridges between women on the ground and in exile.

[Make space for the use of art and stories in the post-conflict stage](#)

One participant shared her example from Kenya, where in the context of post-election

violence women came together to create travelling exhibits. She explained that it was a very visceral way for people to connect to what had happened. She suggested arts-based initiatives that draw out the experiences of women in conflict, including combatants.

D) DRILLING DEEPER: POSSIBLE PILOT PROJECTS

Participants spent time in breakout groups discussing how the recommendations discussed above could be translated into direct action. The following possible pilot projects were explored:

[Women human rights defenders: Protection by presence](#)

In order to take a proactive role in supporting Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs), Canada could increase its focus on protection by presence. Such a project could include keeping a national register of women leaders, WHRDs and peacemakers, including those in exile. This could be carried out by an external roster mechanism, funded by Canada and administered by a local NGO. Additional actions could include making personal links with WHRDs, attending their meetings, naming them in documents and implementation plans and highlighting their work in the media. The goal would be to amplify their influence and provide security: if these women were to disappear, diplomatic action could be taken and Canada could press for accountability. Canada could also train foreign affairs officials

on different ways to ‘creatively’ defend local WHRDs (see EU guidelines).

Women in media

Participants noted that the media plays a dual role in conflict-affected societies: informing communities while shaping or influencing norms and values. Governments can be complicit in or actively use media to disseminate hate speech that incites or stokes conflict. Participants discussed how Canada could encourage the dissemination of alternative messages to support peace.

One suggested pilot project was a community-based media company that would address peace and conflict issues from a women’s perspective. Participants proposed a radio station run and managed by local women’s organizations as well as local peace and human rights organizations, with support from content and technical media experts from Canada and other countries. The idea would be to establish a diversified audience and tackle a range of local issues, with the ability to monitor developments and respond to emerging trends and early warning signals.

One participant mentioned that Canada used to lead in the space of media and elections, and that Canada had previously supported five similar projects in Afghanistan. Many wondered whether there is any institutional memory or capacity remaining that can be harnessed for future activities.

Law reform

A successful peace process is not only about ending violence but also about setting the stage for the future of a country with stable justice and legal systems and infrastructure. Canada could work with local governments to ensure the property rights of women as economic actors in society, with particular reference to land, bank accounts, receiving grants and estate inheritance. Participants stressed that this is not just about solid legal architecture, but about making sure that laws are implemented and that judges uphold jurisprudence. Indicators of success could include women inheriting wealth and land, establishing credit or being able to take their children out of the country.

Rethinking funding and reporting

All government organizations have their own vocabulary, and building capacity and credibility with the Canadian government is a long-term strategy. Participants noted that donors require disaggregated indicators, logic models, granular reporting and financial accountability to ensure that spending is consistent with government priorities. However, local organizations in conflict-affected areas have limited capacity to do this work. Participants wondered whether there was a way to lessen the burden on grassroots organizations and change how local organizations report to donors. Participants discussed possible projects wherein Canada’s high commissions could support local women’s organizations in writing reports in appropriate language for a government audience and submitting

funding requests. Creating the role of “small grants coordinator” could also reduce the administrative burden for groups to interpret data and submit reporting.

Other actions

Canada could update its guidelines on supporting human rights defenders to reflect aspirations of Canada’s Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP). Human rights guidelines are a WPS tool but Canadians need to think about how to bring the silos together to reflect this.

At the Global Affairs level, Canada can help build institutional memory that is

solid in terms of analysis, and in terms of understanding both geopolitical and internal trends. Participants noted that this kind of institutional memory is critical, yet missing. Investing in this area will allow for meaningful interventions when it comes to atrocity and conflict prevention.

Canada could consider championing certain countries, or pairing Canadian women with women in a conflict affected country. “Maybe you pair Montreal with Bujumbura, or certain organizations with others and in that way can have a multiplier effect in which we can sustain Canadian institutional experiences,” one participant suggested.

6. CONCLUSION

The day ended with an acknowledgement that this dialogue was not conclusive, but rather a first step into thinking about how Canada can build on existing work to support and protect the capacity of women in the field of conflict and atrocity prevention.

Participants were left with inspiring words from Alice Wairimu Nderitu, recipient of SFU's Jack P. Blaney Award for Dialogue 2017/18 as she shared her theory of change:

"If I am able to influence an agenda in which dialogue between parties in conflict and women's inclusion in peace processes is carried out consistently over an extended period of time with an ever-increasing larger group of people, I will, as a woman and human being, have contributed to preventing violent conflict and genocide."

"If I am able to influence an agenda in which **dialogue** between parties in conflict and **women's inclusion** in peace processes is carried out **consistently** over an extended period of time with an ever-increasing larger group of people, **I will, as a woman and human being, have contributed to preventing violent conflict and genocide.**"

APPENDIX I: Agenda

MARCH 1, 2018, 10AM – 3:30 PM
CENTRE BLOCK 356-S

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 9:45 | Arrival |
| 10:00 | Opening and Aboriginal Welcome |
| 10:15 | Introductions, Context and Overview of the Agenda |
| 10:40 | Building on the National Action Plan |
| 11:00 | Opening Discussion 1: What do Women in the Field Need? |
| 11:45 | Practical Strategies to Support Women on the Front Line in Conflict and Genocide Prevention |
| 12:30 | Lunch |
| 13:15 | Drilling Deeper – Moving to Action |
| 14:15 | Open Discussion 2: How Should the Recommendations Be Advanced? |
| 14:50 | Reflections |
| 15:00 | Final Plenary |
| 15:20 | Next Steps |
| 15:30 | Adjourn |

APPENDIX II: Participant list

*The information presented in this report reflects overall discussion themes and is not a consensus document.

Adit “Elizabeth” Abit, Founder
South Sudan International Youth Ambassadors

Marie-Pierre Arseneault, Manager
International Human Rights Training Program, Equitas

Jean-Nicolas Beuze, UNHCR Representative in Canada
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Margaret Capelazo, Gender Advisor
CARE Canada

Frank Chalk, Professor of History
Concordia University

Celine Cooper, Rapporteur

Ali Ehsassi, Chair, MP (Liberal)

Larisa Galadza, Director General
Peace and Stabilization Operations Program, Global Affairs Canada

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APPENDIX III: Notes from the Swedish Ambassador

The following information and ideas were shared with participants by Sweden's Ambassador to Canada as an input to the Experts Roundtable session:

WPS PRIORITIES

A hands-on approach to implementation. The women, peace and security agenda is too often an agenda of good words rather than effective measures. The normative framework is there. The UN Security Council has adopted 8 resolutions to promote women's participation in peace processes and put an end to conflict related sexual violence. Country-by-country we need to interpret the agenda and take actions, internationally, nationally and locally.

Need for data, reporting and expertise. Data segregated by sex is essential to inform analysis and decisions. As a member of the UN Security Council we continuously request information on women's participation in peace processes and underline the importance of sex disaggregated data. We promote the deployment of specific gender expertise.

A priority during our term in the UN Security Council. We integrate the women, peace and security agenda into all country contexts. We use the different tools of the Security Council, such as resolutions, presidential statements and sanctions to reinforce the agenda. We chair the informal working group on women, peace and security.

National Action Plans. National Action Plans has proven effective to integrate the women, peace and security agenda into national policies and bilateral cooperation. In Sweden, national authorities and CSOs cooperate to implement the plan. We have chosen twelve focus countries for our bilateral cooperation; Afghanistan, Myanmar (Asia), DRC, Liberia, Mali and Somalia (Africa), BiH and Ukraine (Europe), Colombia (LA) and Iraq, Palestine and Syria (Mena).

Integrated conflict and gender analysis. Women and men are differently affected by armed conflict. An integrated gender analysis of all issues concerning peace building such as security, disarmament, exposure to violence, political participation etc makes efforts more effective.

Support to women's civil society organisations. Women CSOs provide the foundation of much of the peacebuilding work that women are engaged in at the local level. They are at the forefront

to increase women's participation in peace building and include a gender perspective in peace processes. Sweden works closely with CSOs both at home and abroad as a vibrant civil society is an essential part of a dynamic democracy. As a member of the UN Security Council we have invited women CSOs to brief the council and insisted that other member states do the same.

Gender perspective on humanitarian response. Women, men, girls and boys face different challenges in emergencies. Sweden has chaired the international initiative Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies and contributed to 67 partners making 310 concrete commitments. One of Sweden's own commitments is to only fund humanitarian actors that base their work on sex disaggregated data.

Inclusive processes. A successful peace process is not only about ending armed violence. It also sets the stage for the country's future, including questions of justice, education, health, reconciliation and resource allocation. To successfully achieve this, both women and men must actively participate in decision-making processes at all levels, in times of peace and in times of war.

Technical support and capacity building. As part of our capacity building work as well as advocacy for inclusive peace processes, we have created a Swedish network of women mediators to encourage and create cooperative networks with women peacebuilders and mediators from across the globe.

Gender equality contributes to sustaining peace. Gender equal societies are more likely to foster more peaceful and inclusive societies. Inclusive processes and broad participation creates more legitimate peace accords that are more likely to last longer. No country can afford to disregard half of its population.

OTTAWA EXPERTS ROUNDTABLE WAS CONVENED BY SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY'S MORRIS J. WOSK CENTRE FOR DIALOGUE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MONTREAL INSTITUTE FOR GENOCIDE AND HUMAN RIGHTS STUDIES (MIGS) AT CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY, AND THE WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY NETWORK – CANADA.



