

Forum: UN Women

Issue #UW-03: Ensuring a safe and inclusive participation for women in the creation of peace and security

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Introduction

In the last decade, there has been an increase in the conflict and violence that requires a higher inclusive approach to sort out those issues. Women all around the world have been affected by hostilities and insecurity. Nonetheless, their participation in the creation of peace and security has been limited.

Women are usually excluded when it comes to peace negotiations, which results in the weakening of the legitimacy and efficiency of those mediations, and also enables them to sustain violence against women and girls. Although there is a recognition in the importance of women in relation to the creation of peace and security, there are several barriers that make their involvement in the issue arduous.

In the past few years, there have been several attempts to promote the fight against gender-based violence and discrimination regarding peacebuilding. However, in the majority of instances this remains symbolic and uneven, in fact between 1992 and 2019 seven out of ten negotiations did not include a female mediator and signatories.

Ensuring a safe and inclusive participation for women in the creation of peace and security requires significant strategies and interventions to decrease the amount of obstacles women face concerning this issue. Therefore, it is essential that men get involved in the matter, helping create more policies that address the problematic from the root and collaborating to create more inclusive and safe environments for women in the moment of peacebuilding.

It is important to highlight that women's perspectives and views, as well as men's, are paramount in the construction of peace and security to build strong and restful communities. Different perspectives and thoughts must be valued so that every voice can be heard and represented, allowing to create more effective solutions.

Definition of Key Terms

VAWG

The acronym refers to Violence Against Women and Girls, it refers to the different types of violence to the female figure. It can be manifested in physical, psychological and sexual harm.

Gender-based violence

Harmful acts directed to an individual or a group because of their gender.

Gender Equality

Refers that men and women will have the same opportunities, rights, resources and responsibilities.

Women empowerment

The encouragement of women's self-worth, referring to their capacity to make their own decisions and have an impact on society.

Inclusivity

The fact of not excluding anyone regardless of their gender, race, sexuality, etc.

Women's Rights

Throughout history it refers to the promotion of equality of women with men.

Gender-sensitive policies

Measures that take into consideration the role a gender plays and the particularities they have, so that policies can be created in a way that can eliminate inequalities between women and men.

Intersectionality

The appreciation that each person has their own experience in relation to discrimination.

Issue Overview

The problematic of ensuring a safe and inclusive participation for women in the creation of peace and security is a form of spreading gender equality and building more solid communities.

As women are faced with different barriers that make their decision-making in concern with peace and security it is important to address those inequalities and allow women empowerment.

There should be a focus on this problem as the lack of representation of women in peacebuilding can result in their needs being neglected and are unlikely addressed effectively. Without a female figure in negotiations, decision making will be dominated by male preferences and points of views, therefore, the resolutions are not likely to take into account other views and priorities of different members of society.

Historical Background

The historical background of the issue remotes to the very beginnings of society where gender inequalities and discrimination characterized society, and nowadays, still does.

Women have been left aside in almost every aspect, being peace and security no exception. This was supported by the different laws and morals that society used to have, in which the female role was denigrated, their access to education was poor and their resources were limited.

Over the years, women have fought to overcome those inequalities, they have made their voices heard and understood. However, most of the time their opinions are undervalued and ignored.

In the last 20 years, there has been an advance in the issue. Several policies and resolutions have taken place, for instance, the Landmark resolution on Women, Peace and Security (S/RES/1325). It stated that women must have an active involvement in the creation of peace and security. There are several resolutions that continue this idea of protecting women's rights and allowing them to have more participation in peacebuilding.

Nevertheless, all these positive advancements are not enough, and women continue to face troubles to accomplish their wishes, have access to education and stand up for their rights in negotiations.

Latest Events

African Women Leaders Network (AWLN)

The association was established in 2017 to encourage women's leadership of Africa. The objectives of the organization is to build support for women leaders and spread positive responses towards them. They have actively participated in several countries, such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Nigeria, places post-war in order to expand the organization's mission and vision.

Women Peace and Security Index

This report was published by Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security and the PRIO Centre on Gender, Peace and Security together with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It shows the development and result over a year on the issue of women's involvement in the creation of peace and security. The data can be found layed out in several charts and shows each country's position in the WPS index.

Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (SRSG/SVC)

In March 2022, the UN appointed Pramila Patten as a special representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. It has the purpose to promote women's role in the matter of sexual violence, which data has proven to be women the most affected by them. It seeks to change people's perspective in the matter of sexual violence and show female empowerment.

Major Parties Involved

United States

The United States of America has created several programs that support the issue, for instance, The U.S. Civil Society Working Group on Women, Peace and Security (U.S. CSWG). This network includes over 60 organizations with competence on how conflict affects women and what is their impact on the creation of peace and security.

The organization, together with the different resolutions of the UN, recognizes the importance of the female role in the construction and the prosperity of communities post-war. Some of their strategies include supporting the preparation of women to participate in negotiations, help with the preservation and protection of women and girl's rights, and promote empowerment and equality.

Canada

The Canadian government has been committed to the protection and promotion of women and girl's rights. It recognizes the essential role of women leaders in peacebuilding in places of conflict or where vulnerability is very high.

The country has adopted a foreign policy that supports women empowerment where women are fully involved in the issue. Therefore, it has developed an agenda that tries to meet the necessities women face regarding the issue.

United Kingdom

The government of the United Kingdom is a fervently supporter of the project Women, Peace and Security. Over the years, it has created several National Plans that address the particularities of the matter and in what ways they can solve the essential needs of women and girls.

The United Kingdom's Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan 2023 to 2027 intends to create a more representative and safe group to solve conflicts. Also, the plan promotes the empowerment of women and explains the importance of women to create resilient communities.

Sweden

The Swedish government is devoted to the issue of gender equality and has adopted a feminist foreign policy. It is also keen on supporting women's rights and Sweden's government is continuously developing new action plans in order to apply the UN Security Council Resolution regarding Women, Peace and Security.

Norway

The parliament of Norway is invested in the issue of Women, Peace and Security and recognizes the importance of women in order to create safe environments post-war. As a result

of their preoccupation on the matter, they have developed several policy areas in which they reinforce the promotion of women mediators in an international environment.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of Event
1992-2019	13% negotiations, 6% mediators and 6% signatories were women in paramount negotiations
1992-2019	7/10 negotiations did not include a female figure
2020	23% of women participated in negotiations
2021	19% of women participated in negotiations
2021	2/5 peace process were led by women
2021	32% agreements contained facilities in relation to women, girls and gender
December 2021	26% of women are national parliamentarians. But in countries post-war their representation is below 21%
July 2022	Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund's provided support to 32 organizations concerning the issue, in several countries; Afghanistan, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Mali, South Sudan and Syria
July 2022	In 27 countries women were Head of State

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

Landmark resolution on Women, Peace and Security (S/RES/1325)

This resolution from October 31st 2000 expresses the importance of the women's role in the purpose of solving conflicts. It reinforces the idea that women should have equal participation as men and asks UN member states to protect women and girl's rights.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1820 (2008)

This resolution from 2008 expresses the concern of Member States about sexual violence, specially during armed conflicts. It calls for measures to be taken place and wants to ensure the protection of women and girl's rights.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1889 (2009)

The 2009 resolution of the United Nations Security Council reinforces the ideas exposed in S/RES/1325 and intends to increase women's participation in decision making regarding the creation of peace and security.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 2122 (2013)

Together with the older resolutions, in 2013, the United Nations reiterates its commitment to S/RES/1325 and make their devotion to the matter even stronger, stating that further measurements must be taken place in order to create safe and inclusive participation of women in peace-building.

Past Action

United Nations

The Un has launched several resolutions that increase the importance of the matter and tries to address women and girl's conflict, such as gender-based violence and sexual abuse. It also demands the participation of female figures in parliaments and peacebuilding negotiations to create stronger and restful communities after post-war.

National Action Plans

Several countries have created National Action Plans over the years and continue to do so, in order to address the matter and have a clear focus on the measures that must be taken in order to alleviate the barriers women face, specially those concerning their participation in the creation of peace and security.

Possible Solutions

Fortunately, there are different solutions to solve the issue and create better conditions for women. Some of these solutions could be integrating different gender perspectives in the several phases of the peace process. Moreover, training could be provided in order to allow women to have resources to enhance their participation in the creation of peace and security, this could go hand-in-hand with providing more funding to the different organizations that support women and are committed to the implementation of different measures to increase their participation.

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