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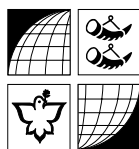
Working Paper 5

Women, Gender and Peacebuilding

Donna Pankhurst

August 2000

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1. Introduction

Any policy paper on peacebuilding comes up against the problem that we understand far more about how to promote conflict than even how to conceive of peace, let alone build it. To many people, peace is an inverse, or even a mere corollary, of conflict, but such a vague notion does not lead to clear understandings or definitions of what it is that people are trying to promote or achieve in peace building. This paper therefore begins by setting out a framework for concepts and understandings of conflict and peace, which can assist in formulating peacebuilding policies.

Most approaches to peacebuilding have either ignored or marginalised issues of gender and women. Women consistently remain a minority of participants in peacebuilding projects; receive less attention than men in peacebuilding policies; and gender analysis rarely informs peacebuilding strategies. This is in spite of the fact that there have been many United Nations and European Commission resolutions which, for more than a decade, have criticised such marginalisation and neglect, and which have called for gender issues and women's needs to be given much more serious attention in all policies relating to conflict and peace. Such resolutions were not drawn out of thin air, but built on at least two decades of practical experience in, and evaluation of, gender and women-focused policies in the area of development.

This paper charts a path for concrete, peacebuilding policies which take their key from these international resolutions and recommendations, and which would begin to redress this persistent gender inequality and widespread failure to tackle issues relating to women. It is founded on the view that groups of women often have a stronger commitment to the ending of violence and the maintenance of long term peace than groups of men, and thus often constitute a highly motivated and able group of stakeholders for peacebuilding, who nonetheless are often ignored.

By way of background, the paper also reviews the range of women's experiences during conflict; the usefulness of a gender analysis of conflict; and a gender analysis of peacebuilding, before drawing out the recommendations for future peacebuilding policies.

2. Conceptualising Conflict and Peace: Implications for Peacebuilding

2.1 Conceptualising Conflict and Peace

Most types of social, political and economic change involve conflict of some sort, and one could argue that many of the positive changes in world history have occurred as a result of conflict. The key issue for some organisations is to avoid or minimise its violent expression¹. Many of the conflicts today tend to be referred to as *ethnic conflict*, *social conflict*, or *civil conflict* and, where there is some cross-border activity or other state involved, *international social conflict*. They are also often described as being about *identity*, whether conceived in terms of an essentialist ethnicity, or regionalism, or tensions over state-formation. They are also sited at the margins of an increasingly globalised economy, and it is commonly accepted that this also has something to do with their 'root causes'. Although there is no common understanding of the conditions under which a conflict of interest leads to its violent expression, or of the dynamics of violent confrontation once begun, a useful working analysis of conflict deployed by International Alert recognises the importance of structural inequalities as underlying causes, and accepts that there are triggers which tip such situations into violent conflict.

A common aim is that the 'normal' state of affairs in society to which one should seek to return, or achieve, is one where *conflicts of interest*, and thereby clashes of identity, are not expressed violently. The resultant condition of society might then approximate to Galtung's *negative peace*², which is the way that the term peace is most commonly used; ie. the end of widespread violent conflict associated with war. Negative peace may nonetheless include prevalent social violence (against women, for instance) and structural violence (in situations of extreme inequality, for example). Moreover, this limited 'peace goal' of an absence of specific forms of violence can, and often does, lead to a strategy in which all other goals become secondary. Negative peace may even be achieved by people accepting a worse state of affairs than that which motivated them to fight in the first place, for the sake of the removal of prevalent organised violence. In many ways negative peace is therefore not a useful way of conceiving of peace, in spite of its widespread acceptance amongst governments and international agencies.

An alternative vision, of *positive peace*, requires not only that all types of violence are minimal or non-existent, but also that the major potential causes of future conflict are removed. In other words, major *conflicts of interest*, as well as their violent manifestation, have been resolved³. Positive peace encompasses an ideal of how society *should* be, and the details of such a vision often remain implicit,

and are rarely discussed. The key distinction from negative peace is that all forms of structural inequality and major social divisions are removed, or at least minimised, in positive peace, and therefore major causes of potential conflict are removed.

Some ideal characteristics of a society experiencing positive peace would include: an active and egalitarian civil society; highly and inclusive democratic political structures and processes; and open and accountable government. Working towards these objectives opens up the field of peacebuilding far more widely, to include the promotion and encouragement of new forms of citizenship and political structures to develop active democracies. It also opens up the fundamental question of how an economy is to be managed, with what degree and type of state intervention, and in whose interest. Such an egalitarian vision also requires equality between ethnic and regional groups, races and, as is far less often mentioned, *genders*. Indeed, it is not uncommon for people to assume that moves towards gender equality are neither essential, nor urgent in peacebuilding. This paper takes the position that moves towards gender equality are central to moves towards positive peace; as one of the main cleavages of inequality in all societies it has to be addressed as part of peacebuilding.

2.2. Implications for Peacebuilding

There is an implicit relationship between negative and positive peace, in that negative peace is often assumed to precede positive peace, but there is clearly no inevitable progression from one to the other. This kind of temporal distinction between different types of peace, also leads to different kinds of peace processes with some issues or activities being 'held back' for the longer term. The understanding gained from conceptualising peace and conflict shows clearly that policies have to be geared to positive peace, and to longer-term implications, if peacebuilding is to be successful. Just as violent conflict has to be seen as being related to structural and other wider forms of inequality, so peacebuilding has to include measures which challenge and help to change such major forms of inequality, one of which is gender inequality.

Peacebuilding in the longer term has to include an extremely wide range of measures to promote types of social, political and economic change which move closer to the ideals of positive peace in specific concrete circumstances. How we get from negative to positive peace is too abstract a question to lead to specific policies, but is a useful framework for considering what might be possible. For instance, in a situation where only a minimum of the population participate in a democratic process, or are able to

access their rights as citizens, locally specific strategies to make these processes more inclusive are required. Or, in a situation where macro-economic reform is underway, it is important to examine the differential impacts this is likely to have on different groups of people, and whether this is likely to intensify or lessen existing divisions in society, or potential 'root causes', of conflict. Gender differences normally feature strongly as one of the issues in need of consideration in these policy areas, but is rarely addressed.

Finally, a profoundly difficult challenge of peacebuilding is how to establish and handle innocence and guilt, which itself underwrites many people's understanding of the basis for a lasting peace, even negative peace. In some contexts people's desire for justice is actually greater than their willingness to work for negative peace. Sometimes a mere acknowledgement of crimes committed during conflict would be sufficient to bring people on side with peacebuilding, but this is often not provided satisfactorily at the end of a conflict. What is agreed at a peace settlement, and even promoted in the short term, may prejudice the chances of building positive peace in the longer term - even by accident - unless the goals of the latter are in focus. For instance agreements about amnesty (particularly where this is extensive) and truth commissions (being too limited) made in haste in the process of agreeing a settlement may - perhaps in error - prejudice the chances of achieving reconciliation and conflict resolution on the ground (Pankhurst, 1998). As we shall see, there are also key gender issues in this area of policy which are also rarely addressed.

2.3 Conclusion

Being clearer about the meanings of *conflict* helps to be clearer about the requirements for peacebuilding, and the distinction between *negative and positive peace*. Furthermore, keeping the goals of *positive peace* in mind helps to reveal connections between the short and longer term goals and activities. It also points to the need for a much wider set of policies which expressly move in the direction of *positive peace* by addressing the major inequalities and social divisions in society. Clearly, gender analysis is an essential component of such a strategic view, and policies aimed at increasing gender equality and reducing gender tensions, are highly significant, although in practice often marginalised or completely neglected.

3. Women, Gender and Conflict

This section introduces the special issue of the paper: the need for consideration of the roles, experiences, needs and capabilities of women, and for a gender-aware analysis, in developing peacebuilding policies. We begin by reviewing what we know of women's experiences of conflict, followed by a review of what can be learned from a gender analysis of conflict; and then finally a consideration of the implications of these perspectives for peacebuilding.

3.1 Women and War

For many years, women's roles in war and other types of violent conflict, were quite invisible throughout the world. Accounts of war, through news reporting, government propaganda, novels, the cinema etc, tended to cast men as the 'doers' and women as passive, innocent, victims. In poor countries wars were not portrayed in quite the same way, but stories of the courage and bravery of men as fighters have also tended to eclipse the active roles which women have played. As we have come to know more of the whole range of different women's experiences, it has become clear that there are many different ways in which women live through wars: as fighters, community leaders, social organisers, workers, farmers, traders, welfare workers, and in many other roles.

In many wars, some women have used their different roles to try to minimise the effects of violence, if not actively to try to end the wars themselves, by acting as peacemakers⁴. By contrast, however, some accounts of wars highlight the roles of women in motivating the men in their communities to fight⁵. This is particularly so where wars are about national identities, and as women in most societies take the major responsibility for passing on cultural identities to children they have also played active roles in supporting exclusive and aggressive ideologies about nationalism⁶. Accounts of some conflicts document the actual violence committed by women⁷. Nonetheless, in spite of the great contrasts in their experiences, also mediated by age, class and regional or ethnic background, there are striking commonalities.

In some wars, many women found that, even in the midst of the horrors of conflict, there were moments of liberation from the old social order. As the need arose for them to take on men's roles in their absence, so they had to shake off the restrictions of their cultures and live in a new way. The relative minority who joined actual armies (as nurses, administrators, or even fighters), were even sometimes able to persuade their political movements to take seriously the demands of women for

improved rights, and to accept women's political representation and other forms of rights in the post conflict situation. The allocation of places for women on the local Resistance Committees in post-1986 Uganda is a good example, with the establishment of a Ministry for Women also being common.

This is usually where the positive aspects of women's experiences of war ends, however. In the post-war peace women have often suffered a backlash from government and society against their new-found freedoms, and they have been forced 'back' to kitchens and fields, as in Zimbabwe, Namibia, Eritrea and Mozambique, for instance. The challenge to gender relations often becomes too great for patriarchal societies to maintain in times of peace, and women find their historical contribution marginalised in both official and popular accounts of war, and their freedoms in peacetime restricted or removed. This type of peace settlement might be called a 'gendered peace'⁸, where governments and / or warring parties establish new constitutions or peace processes which marginalise the needs of women (perhaps by neglect) or effectively limit or restrict the rights of women (in some cases explicitly through the legal system). Such experiences were felt bitterly by many of the women who were active in the fight for Algeria's independence, for instance, even before the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in that country restricted many women's freedoms even further.

Generational relations are also destabilised where children become soldiers⁹, which has been made so much more common by the presence of light weapons which can be used by almost anyone¹⁰. Many of these children in war-torn African societies (especially Sierra Leone, Liberia) have grown up without the respect for their elders which was normal before war, as the weapons have given them power over older, unarmed people. Women particularly feel the loss of this rare source of respect as elders, especially where young boys commit rape on older women¹¹. The experiences of girl children in conflicts are even less well documented than those of boys, but are often horrific, and specific to their gender¹². Their experiences as children have highly significant implications for gender relations in peacetime when they are older. In the struggle to re-form society after the intense disruptions which occur during conflict there are nonetheless sometimes opportunities to improve on the old order, perhaps especially where 'returning to normal' seems an impossible dream.

As the nature of warfare has changed over the years it has become even less possible for women to have a *choice*, in any sense, about whether they are innocent victims or courageous participants; they often find that they have to actively participate, even in violence, or suffer dire consequences, including

death. Where there is no front line, as conflict is fought out in people's homes, with light weapons, and where the reason for fighting is the very existence, or at least presence, of people with a differently defined identity (usually ethnic), women have been placed on one side or another whether they actively choose this or not. Women who are seen to 'break out' of the ethnic identity ascribed to them, by having mixed marriages, or being members of human rights organisations for instance, are often targeted for particular censure, if not actual violence (as has happened in several parts of former Yugoslavia¹³).

With these changes in the way war is normally fought, and the increasing predominance of civilians amongst the casualties, there is a continuing thread in the ways that women suffer in distinct ways; not because of any intrinsic weakness, but because of their position in society¹⁴. They are not normally leaders and, in this sense at least, are not as directly responsible for war violence as men, yet they suffer high rates of injury and death (although not usually as high as for men) and the particularly brutal war injury of rape (always with much higher frequency than men). Rapes committed during war have received more attention in recent years, but also seem to be on the increase. The proliferation of light weapons has also increased the threat of rape for women, as it is harder to resist male violence when faced with a gun¹⁵. Common effects for women, in addition to the direct suffering caused by the rapes themselves include: social stigmatisation¹⁶; physical and mental injury, as many war rapes are multiple and accompanied by other forms of violence; illness (from sexually-transmitted diseases, usually with negative impacts on reproductive health); as well as death itself (from HIV/AIDS, or assault because of the stigma attached to rape survivors¹⁷).

In countries recently emerging from internal wars, many women have experienced multiple rapes and associated injuries and infections, and many give birth to children conceived through rape, which leads to many kinds of severe problems, whether the children are abandoned, killed or are still being cared for. Health facilities which deal with the after effects of rape, and specialist support for such mothers and children, are still often given far less priority than policies to assist male ex-combatants, and are rarely available. Women are unlikely to make formal complaints about rape, during or after conflict, unless they are encouraged and supported to do so, as witnessed by the fact that there have been hardly any complaints submitted to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, in spite of the extraordinary numbers of rapes committed and the fact that the tribunal has made it very clear that rape is to be taken seriously as a war crime¹⁸.

Wherever there are Truth Commissions or other kinds of trials after a conflict, it is often harder for women to testify whilst they are still under the threat of domestic and sexual violence¹⁹. It is common after war for there to be no effective personal security for women and for rape, and other forms of sexual violence (including domestic violence), to remain prevalent or be on the increase (as is common at the end of a war). Measures to enhance women's personal security and support them in calling to account men who commit rape should also form part of peacebuilding²⁰, as perhaps should the training and promotion of women as investigators of such charges²¹. Violent acts committed against girls are even more hidden than those against adult women, and urgently require investigation along with support services for girls in most post-war situations²².

During and after conflicts, women tend to bear a much greater burden than men for the care of survivors, and always for children. As we have seen, during wars they often continue to carry the main burden for ensuring the provision of food and other tasks of caring for children and the infirm whilst also taking on a heavy burden of keeping social and political activities going where men are taken to fight in armies away from their homes. This is surprisingly common for the many different contexts in which conflicts occur, from remote rural villages in which most of the food has to be grown and/or gathered, to big cities where all kinds of resourceful innovations are developed by women to ensure that families have enough to eat, and some degree of care when they are sick.

After the conflict, women nonetheless rarely receive recognition for their contributions as providers and carers, let alone reward for their roles as social and political organisers. They usually receive much less support than male fighters in post conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation projects²³, whilst at the same time they face increased levels of domestic violence. Although peacebuilding initiatives to assist ex-combatants (including children) are important, especially with respect to minimising the use of violence in peacetime, it is also important that an overview of the use of resources includes the consideration of all women's needs, not least because the majority of caring and providing for the whole population is often provided by women after war, and so addressing women's basic needs benefits the whole society²⁴.

In the post war situation, the differences between women may reassert themselves again, especially in many countries where women are divided by an ethnic and/or regional identity²⁵. In addition, new

divisions have occurred, such as whether or not women still live with their husbands, or are widowed, abandoned or divorced. Marital status is highly significant in situations where past gender relations have meant that women do not have equal legal rights (such as in land and property titles, access to credit etc). Where the majority of the surviving population is female (as in Rwanda, where it is 70%) this can lead to severely heightened tensions between women, who compete over men and resources. Tensions also exist between women over whether or not their children survived the war, whether they were seen as collaborators, whether they have given birth to children of 'the enemy' after rape, who qualifies for aid and many other issues²⁶. It is therefore not unusual for there to be very little trust between women, as between many survivors, particularly where issues of accountability and retribution for what happened during the conflict are intense, as in Rwanda, where there are women who are working as teachers and nurses who are strongly believed to have actively participated in the 1994 genocide²⁷, for instance.

Perhaps the most difficult question which now faces those concerned with gender issues in post conflict situations, however, is not the ways to assess the extent of women's suffering, but how women fit into the complex picture of innocence and guilt, and what this means for post conflict peacebuilding. This is a profoundly difficult question to ask with regard to men, and there are great contrasts in the extent to which this is participated in by outsiders. Nonetheless, where peacebuilding is to take gender seriously, it also has to have an analysis of the *variety* of women's roles in conflict. The danger in ignoring women's active participation, as well as their collusion, in organised violence is that false assumptions might be made about the potential role of women in peace. Measures which attempt to assist people to handle such divisions without violence, if not resolve or overcome them, are rarely given consideration in peacebuilding strategies.

Women take on many different roles in wartime and have diverse experiences. Nonetheless their experiences tend to be distinct from men's and also share a set of common vulnerabilities. They are often exposed to a high risk of rape and associated violence during and immediately after conflict; their health and other basic needs are often neglected in peace processes; and they tend to bear the main burden for the care of survivors (adults and children). There is therefore a need for peacebuilding to incorporate policies which address women's specific health and economic needs. Moreover, measures which help women working together who have very *different* experiences could potentially strengthen peacebuilding enormously, but they are rarely given any attention or priority.

3.2 Gender and Conflict

The term *gender* denotes all the qualities of what it is to be a man or a woman which are socially and culturally, rather than biologically, determined. Gender includes the way in which society differentiates appropriate behaviour and access to power for women and men and, in practice, this refers to patterns in which women are generally disadvantaged over men. Most studies of gender address this problematic of the disadvantage directly, with attempts to measure, explain and review ways of challenging it, and therefore tend to focus almost exclusively on the behaviour and experiences of women. The differences between women are also explored in some studies, which helps to break down any tendency to see women as a uniform category²⁸.

Gender or Sex?

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

There are some 'grey' areas about what is and is not biologically determined which are still subject to debate, not least amongst feminists. Some people have argued that women tend to be less pre-disposed to aggressive and violent behaviour because of certain biological characteristics. These include lower testosterone

levels than men, and the way women's brain structure and development is different from men's. These and other characteristics are said by some to make most women less likely to behave in challenging and competitive ways than most men. No scientific study argues that *all* forms of different behaviour patterns and roles in society can be explained by biological factors alone.

3.2.1 Masculinity and Femininity

There is also a need to look at the other side of the equation; the ways in which men are socialised to become part of a male gender. Research which focuses on the construction of *masculinity* has also revealed cross-cultural tendencies and some of these are highly pertinent for studies of conflict²⁹. Egotistical, aggressive, dominant behaviour are common features of cultural definitions of masculinity, as is men's dominance over women at a general level³⁰. For our purposes, such propositions are significant in that they also tend to link violence with masculinity, rather than individual men. War of all types creates militarised societies, and in many different cultural contexts, militarisation is linked with masculinity - not as a socio-biological attribution but as 'cultural constructions of manliness'³¹. In some conflict situations, the more violent aspects of masculinity are played out in all aspects of men's lives to an extreme degree, in what Hague³² calls a 'hetero-national masculinity', with reference to the Serb and Bosnian Serb military. In other words, a culture of masculinity means that for a man to be a 'real' man he also has to be aggressive, egotistical, dominating and, at least be prepared to be, violent.

Following on from this analysis, feminist research has shown the ways in which many large institutions across the world are not gender neutral, but tend to be masculine in culture and practice. State bureaucracies and security services, and international bodies, all tend to be structured and function according to norms of masculinity, rather than to have a gender neutral culture of their own. For instance, they tend to be hierarchical in structure, and to militate against cooperative and consultative working patterns, and to encourage individualistic, competitive behaviour. They also typically have top-down leadership and management styles to match. Such institutions are also seen to depend on differences between women and men's economic and political roles remaining in place, and also being reinforced by the active use of symbols of masculinity and femininity, where the images of success and achievement tend to be those associated with masculine images of force and strength³³.

The key institutions which are responsible for organising war, as well as those which are meant to manage the peace, are also structured and function according to such norms of masculinity in these ways. If one accepts that masculinity has a lot to do with the violent expression of conflict, then this is a very serious problem which needs to be addressed in peacebuilding. The logical policy implication is that transformation of the masculine nature of such institutions is of central importance in any peacebuilding strategy.

By contrast, it is also very common, if not universal, in many contrasting social and cultural contexts, for the conceptualisation of *femininity* to include some of the 'opposite' qualities to masculinity: of seeking non-confrontational methods of conflict resolution; willingness to work for the good of the collective; and even passivity. Such qualities clearly have much greater potential for peacebuilding, and there is a long tradition of identifying female qualities with a rejection of war and conflict³⁴. One of the problems with this view of the female gender, however, is the way it is used to suggest that all women have these qualities, even though it is inaccurate (as it is inaccurate that all men act out their masculine roles in the same way).

It is certainly difficult to see how positive peace could be achieved without significant changes in the way certain institutions and policy-making bodies operate, such as government ministries and the security forces. In reflecting social norms, such institutions (private, state and international) typically are dominated by men, with few women being in responsible or decision-making positions. Such a pattern was, until very recently, almost globally universal but it has now come to be seriously questioned and challenged in countries of the North; not only because of the desire for greater equity between women and men for employment and power, but sometimes also in the hope that this would lead to changes in the way that such institutions operate.

What is not known with any certainty is what difference it would make if there were to be a far stronger presence of women in positions of authority in some of these institutions in countries which are vulnerable to conflict. There are no guarantees that a greater presence of women *per se* would even lead to a sustained challenge in the masculine culture of such institutions in the short term, let alone prevent conflict occurring. Unless one has a clear analysis of exactly *which* institutions are responsible for the fragility of peace (which, as we saw in Section 2, is not always the case), it is also not clear how to prioritise such change, and there is still a lot of work to be done here.

What can be said with some confidence, however, is that challenges to existing patterns of entrenched masculinity are highly *unlikely* to change without the representation and participation of women being considerably increased, and that this seems to be an essential precondition. There are some encouraging signs, from the corporate and public sectors of countries in the North, that change can occur once a critical mass of women (said to be around 30%) is achieved in key locations of major institutions. Nonetheless, increasing the number of women in key institutions is probably not sufficient to bring about changes in institutional culture in societies which still highly value norms of masculinity which embody aggression and violence. At least part of the responsibility for violent conflict has to rest with those who actively perpetuate society's social norms, and peacebuilding measures also need to challenge such concepts of masculinity directly.

3.2.2 Influencing Behavioural Change

One distinct advantage of looking at gender, masculinity and femininity, rather than merely at men and women, where the concern is to influence behavioural change in these ways, is that it becomes easier to focus on the relationships between women and men at a social, rather than personal level. Explanations for rape and other forms of violence, and the fact that men who support the idea of political equality still sometimes base their relationships with women on a highly unequal footing, for instance, can be better understood within a framework of masculinities and femininities which might be challenged, than as biologically driven inevitabilities. Furthermore, it more easily allows the relationships between women and men to be a focus for peacebuilding, rather than a type of explanation for violent conflict.

A gender-aware analysis opens up the possibility of changing gender roles. Moreover, the potential for promoting changes in gender relations after conflict may be increased because war does tend to shake-up and challenge gender relations in any case, as we saw in Section 3. Women often take on new roles during conflicts, and have to accept new experiences - with negative, and sometimes positive, repercussions for them. In some contexts it might also be possible for people to reclaim positive cultural traditions of masculinity which have been lost or undermined during conflict³⁵.

Some element of caution is required, however, as challenging the nature of gender relations head-on (whether by women in groups or as individuals, or by men, or by the state) is neither easy nor without risk. Such attempts can result in conflict, and even violence, as has occurred in several African

countries where liberation movements, and individual women, attempted to take forward the ideals of gender equality forged during armed conflict into the era of peace. In Zimbabwe, for instance, government legislation and attempts by women to speak out against unequal gender relations have triggered high levels of public antagonism towards women on several occasions since independence. Considerable care and support for women is therefore needed when such initiatives are taken.

3.3 Conclusion

A gender analysis suggests that social norms about masculinity strongly influence the prevalence of, and tendency towards, the violent expression of conflict in many places. Peacebuilding should therefore challenge these norms wherever possible. One way to begin this process is to increase the representation of women in key decision-making bodies and institutions.

4. Women, Gender and Peacebuilding

Section 3 suggested that in order to minimise the chances of a return to violence, peacebuilding needs to incorporate specific policies geared towards meeting women's needs, as an essential part of short term peacebuilding for negative peace and for longer term transformative processes. It also showed the need to find ways to challenge the dominance of masculinity within key institutions in order to promote longer term peacebuilding. In this Section, we further consider ways to promote institutional change, as well as other strategies to move towards positive peace. But we begin by considering further some of the implications of working with women for peace, and of developing a gender-aware perspective on peacebuilding. These considerations then lead to Section 5 which outlines policy recommendations.

4.1 Working with Women as Peacemakers

The common association of women, and the female gender, with peace, suggests that policies to work with women ought to be fundamental to peacebuilding³⁶. As we have seen, it is not uncommon to assume that women have special qualities which equip them better than men for peace, and better for peace than for war³⁷. For instance, International Alert's draft Code of Conduct stated that,

We explicitly recognise the particular and distinctive peacemaking roles played by women in conflict afflicted communities. Women and women's organisations are often reservoirs of important local capacities which can be used in peace-building activities ...³⁸

There are many examples where women have courageously intervened in battles to force peace (in Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan, for instance). Women have also taken up opportunities for peacemaking between groups of warring men³⁹. Under such circumstances they sometimes call on and express values, behaviour and codes which are explicitly associated with their gender. As one female peace activist commented in *Women as Peacemakers*,

Both men and women have the potential for peacemaking and the responsibility to build and keep peace. The women, however, seem more creative and effective in waging peace ... It is the women's emotional strength to transcend pain and suffering, and their predisposition to peace that provide them with greater potentials for peacemaking⁴⁰.

Similarly, commenting on the importance of coalition building in the peace process of the Philippines, another woman activist commented,

And here we see that women have played a large role. Perhaps because of their very lack of exposure to the way traditional politics has been played in this country and the way power has been used, there is in their attitude - and it is not because it's in our genes but because it is in our experience and culture - much less of a kind of 'ego-involvement' which has to be overcome in dealing with the sorts of questions that need to be answered and the consensus building that needs to be done in forging a peace for a people that have been so divided ...

Moreover, women have largely been the survivors and carers of survivors, so this seems to have given them a sustained intensity of wanting to resolve the peace question ... Furthermore, through the women, there are possibilities of introducing new paradigms in conflict resolution, because, as I say, we are practised in conflict resolution and conflict transformation in the domestic sphere, that perhaps need to be played out more to become an input into the way public negotiations take place⁴¹.

It is therefore often the case that ideas about some of women's distinctive qualities (whether these are thought to be biologically or socially determined) become identified with the way forward in peacebuilding, and strategies therefore focus on ways to enhance, support and extend the work that women are thought to be well-equipped to undertake.

4.1.2 Women's Organisations for Peace

The most obvious way to support women's activity in peacebuilding is often identified as supporting women's organisations⁴². There are many different types of women's organisations, with overlapping and changing agendas which have contributed (or have the potential to contribute) to peacebuilding. They have tended to take different forms in different countries at different times, which are not necessarily transferable through time and space. Nonetheless, there are some recognisable 'types', with common potentials and problems.

Some women's organisations have developed the capacity to work openly to protect and extend human rights (especially in many Latin American countries). Other women's organisations have extended the work they took on during conflict to ensure that the social fabric did not collapse, through various forms of community organisation and welfare provision (especially where groups were established in

camps of refugees or displaced people during conflict, (such as in El Salvador, Guatemala, Rwanda and Burundi). Others more directly focus on the need to talk about, and take action on, strengthening peace in the name of women (such as in Israel/the Occupied Territories, former Yugoslavia, and the Federation of African Women's Peace Networks and Femmes-Africa-Solidarité in Africa). Finally there are those women's organisations which explicitly attempt to challenge women's oppression and gender inequality in post-conflict situations (such as those which facilitate women's participation in war-crimes tribunals and truth processes). Many of these organisations also attempt to build bridges between groups of women with very different experiences of conflict, who might otherwise be separated by their ethnic, regional or political identities.

All of these types of organisations can therefore be of fundamental importance in addressing common weaknesses in existing peacebuilding strategies: the lack of attention to women's needs; the marginalisation of gender analyses; and the absence of efforts of challenge particularly 'unpeaceful' forms of masculinity in institutions and in society more widely. Furthermore, women's organisations have the potential to achieve many of the goals of peacebuilding: to increase women's (and thereby household) income⁴³; to increase women's abilities to participate in public, political processes and civil society more generally; to increase the number of women who become leaders and representatives; to reinforce efforts to challenge masculine cultures in institutions and society more widely.

This does not happen on a large scale at present because many of these organisations face great difficulties in their continued survival, let alone in achieving all of their objectives, and there is considerable need for extended external support. Such problems include chronic under-funding, which is commonly a more extreme problem even than for other types of community organisation. They also often require further training in the areas of management, leadership, and lobbying skills. In practice, new women's organisations often have to deal with not only marginalisation and stigmatisation by powerful government and non-government organisations, but also direct physical harassment from local men and security forces, which is especially likely in post conflict situations where gender tensions are usually already running high. In all these regards outside support could increase the chances of success of those organisations which have the potential to play a highly significant, if not central, role in peacebuilding.

There are nonetheless tensions in providing external support. The provision of funding for grassroots organisations can often create tensions and that is certainly potentially true for some women's organisations. In allocating scarce funds to such groups there is sometimes an expectation that they should 'deliver the peace' single-handedly, which is also unrealistic and unfair. Moreover, participation in such groups can sometimes lead to increases in women's workload which are unsustainable. Lessons from the development field suggest that those women's groups which stand the greatest chance of success, and make best use of external funding, tend to be those which have initially formed and established their objectives in the absence of, or with only minimal, external funding; those which acknowledge, rather than gloss over, the differences between women; and those which have clearly achievable objectives. They also suggest that where women's organisations are encouraged by the state as part of a policy to enhance women's roles in development, this has often been shown to be a way of avoiding taking women seriously in other ways, and so a strategy of supporting women's organisations has to be complemented by other gender-aware policies.

4.1.3 Increasing the Presence of Individual Women in Peace Processes

Supporting women as groups of individuals (rather than in organisations) is also a common strategy in trying to promote peacebuilding⁴⁴. A common request from peace activists and commentators (as cited in 4.1) is that there should be more of a female presence at the sites of peace-making, as well as at discussions which may take place as part of peacebuilding⁴⁵. There is a general tendency for the leaders of institutions and political organisations to be the only participants at peace settlements, with very little grassroots participation. Women in general are thus marginalised, as they are always poorly represented at leadership level. Outside parties have had some limited success in enabling women to participate in peace talks. For instance, the Life and Peace Institute was successful in ensuring that women's peace groups gained access to some of the Somalia peace and reconciliation talks (even though they only gained observer status).

Merely being invited to attend talks or peace conferences, or other peace fora, is insufficient, however, as very few women have the education, training or confidence to participate fully, even if they are in attendance. As one peace activist expressed it,

there is very much technically that women have to learn. In terms of the technical capability to discuss the issues, women are much less prepared because we have not had the luxury of all the education and study that men have had when they go out and take long years to discuss

these issues ... we are going to bring the women in and we are going to have to provide support to bring them in. It is not going to happen automatically⁴⁶.

There are lessons here from development policies which have attempted to expand the participation of women in the political process by offering them special training and educational opportunities. Providing training and support for women activists who might then be able to participate at peace talks and in decision-making bodies, and to train other women in turn, could, in time, have considerable potential spin-offs⁴⁷. Where levels of women's basic education are low, other approaches are required to increase women's participation, such as special meetings which solicit women's views.

It is important to be clear about the objectives in this type of activity, however. Training small numbers of women to participate will never be sufficient to tackle all the common forms of gender-blindness in peacebuilding strategies, not least because they will rarely, if ever, be in a position to speak for all women. Nonetheless such an intervention can yield very positive results in the longer term, by equipping increasing numbers of individuals to challenge injustice, and to work for peace, *where and as they can*.

4.1.4 Changing the Culture of Organisations and Institutions

The institutions most in need of reform vary in different post-conflict contexts. Nonetheless, it is commonly agreed that the security forces are almost always central⁴⁸; without adequate personal security (for women and men), it is very difficult for levels of violence to be reduced, or even sometimes for a return to war to be prevented. These institutions typically embody the aggressive values of masculinity outlined in Section 3, both in the way internal decisions are taken and management issues are resolved, as well as the way that services are delivered to the public. Several countries have begun to tackle these problems by focusing on reducing violence and corruption within the police force, and have incorporated the re-training of officers to deal with rape. Using women as key trainers and increasing the number of women employed, especially in more senior positions, are often seen to be useful strategies here.

In other types of institutions, such as government ministries and other parts of the civil service, the presence of greater numbers of women is also expected to change institutional cultures⁴⁹. It is commonly hoped that, by increasing the number of women employed, particularly in positions of

leadership and decision-making, the chances of more consultative processes of policy formation, and less confrontational methods of institutional conflict management and transformation, can be boosted.

These strategies for changing institutional cultures have similar weaknesses as does that of promoting women as peace makers (outlined in Section 4.1.3). Expecting relatively small numbers of women to take on the very extensive agendas of peacebuilding and transformation alone is not realistic. If, however, the numbers of women in key institutions can be increased considerably, and their training and continued support be tailored to their specific situations, there is great potential to bring about change. Finally, the chances of success are vastly increased where the responsibility for changing the culture of institutions is not left entirely in the hands of women, but also becomes the responsibility of men.

4.2 Mainstreaming Gender into Policies

There is a need to work gender mainstreaming alongside the 'special' policies geared towards women outlined in 4.1; the mainstreaming of gender has to take place in all policy contexts associated with post-conflict rehabilitation, development and peacebuilding⁵⁰. At its simplest, a gender-aware analysis requires the question 'Does this policy affect women and men differently?' to be asked of all policies and, if the answer is affirmative, to explore what can be done to prevent or correct women's disadvantage⁵¹. Asking this question may lead to a complete re-think in the way a policy is developed and implemented, or may only require a minor adjustment. Below we discuss some policy areas which have had damaging impacts on women where mainstreaming has not occurred, and / or where there is thought to be great potential gains to peacebuilding from adding a gender dimension.

4.2.1 Truth Processes and National Reconciliation

Truth commissions are coming to be seen as a central plank of peacebuilding, but they usually omit specific consideration of violence against women or handle it very badly. This is linked to the issue of reporting rape in the previous sections, but it is also important that all the issues which are within the remit of a Truth Commission are considered in relation to women, and not just rape⁵². Women's experiences tend to be marginalised or ignored, whether this is because it includes specific things which do not happen to men in the same way (sexual violence), or because women find it difficult to testify (perhaps exacerbated by the lack of personal security), or because commissioners, the government or the general public do not want to acknowledge the truth of women's war experiences

(described as part of the `backlash' in Section 2). The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission recognised some elements of all of these problems when it was well into its investigation and tried to address them by holding some hearings where only women were present, an act which many women regarded as successful in addressing the problem⁵³. The point is not merely to avoid omitting the particular sufferings of women, but also for their experiences to be integrated into the whole story.

In other countries, different kinds of truth processes work outside national truth commissions. At local levels, sometimes with the help of national or external organisations, communities of people record and mark their conflict histories in different ways. Some accounts tend to emerge more spontaneously than others, and it is common for women's experiences to remain undeclared in the absence of encouragement. Although it is difficult for supporting outsiders to shape such processes with sensitivity, it is not impossible and may be able to open up the possibility for women to articulate their histories too.

Another major peacebuilding theme is that of reconciliation. This is a highly problematic term which means quite different things to different people⁵⁴. Nonetheless there are some distinct activities which have become associated with the term in parts of Africa (notably Uganda, Kenya and Mozambique) under the banner of `traditional' reconciliation or conflict resolution techniques. Moreover, they are actively sought after by some external agencies and donors who wish to support indigenous institutions in peacebuilding. The actual activities entailed can vary even within one country, and the practices and institutions which they involve (such as elders, chiefs etc) have normally changed a great deal over time, in spite of the tag `traditional'. They may include public hearings, ritual blessings, symbolic acts of forgiveness, corporal punishment, and material compensation awarded to an injured party to be paid by the `guilty'. They may in some instances work to build understanding and consensus but in others can work to the benefit of the office holder and his family or community.

One thing which these `traditional' activities normally have in common, however, is that the office-holders are almost universally men, which is also normally claimed as part of the tradition, whether historically accurate or not, and they are not easily held accountable for their decisions or actions. Where these practices are seen to `work' they usually exclude women from active roles, and tend to be about peacebuilding between men, and so have little to offer women. As they commonly make

rulings on the relationships between communities of people, rather than simply individuals, women find that they are affected, and even bound, by outcomes which they had little or no influence over. There are therefore two gender-based reasons why donors should approach material support for so-called traditional reconciliation and conflict resolution mechanisms with caution. First, they are much more a reflection of highly gendered local politics and power relations than they are part of some value-free traditional culture. Second, women's needs are normally completely marginalised in their practice and may even be undermined by them.

4.2.2 Changing Political Structures and Culture

A great variety of approaches to peacebuilding are to be found in the realm of politics, but mainstreaming gender as a concern is also useful and necessary here. Nurturing a human rights culture through the establishment of and support for human rights organisations is a common mechanism used in peacebuilding. There is room for a very positive input from donors here, and as there is often a tendency for women's rights to be left out in human rights work, this is clearly an area which ought to be supported and integrated⁵⁵. It is more common for women than men to be unaware that they have human rights which are recognised internationally. Children's rights have received a lot of publicity in recent years, but they also tend to be marginalised within a lot of human rights organisations, and where they are taken up this is much more often over the issue of boys who were implicated in killing and other forms of violence during conflicts than it is about anything at all to do with girls' experiences. There is therefore considerable room for improvement in this area.

Attempting to make politics 'more democratic' is also commonly seen as important in peacebuilding, although it may be attempted by many different mechanisms. Increasing the representation of women is a common objective in such programmes, but it is often only when the mainstreaming gender question is asked about apparently gender-neutral changes that any problems with, or potential for, achieving this objective become apparent. For instance, requirements for the registration of voters may affect men and women differently if high degrees of literacy, or long distances to travel are necessary. Similarly, attempts to encourage civil society organisations to participate in public debate, or consultations with government, may marginalise the views of women where most organisations are dominated by men, and special activities to involve women may be required⁵⁶.

4.2.3 Economic Rehabilitation

It is very difficult to distinguish between economic policies which are to be promoted as part of peacebuilding and general economic policies, as unfortunately it is normal for little account to be taken of the particular difficulties and needs of post-conflict economies when policies are developed (by governments and international agencies). It is also normal for a gender analysis and perspective to be completely absent in economic policies, even though it is clearly necessary⁵⁷. A few governments and international organisations have recently begun to 'engender' budgets to ensure that at least there are no unforeseen consequences of tax and expenditure plans which penalise women more than men⁵⁸, but there is considerable potential for further development in this area.

The relevance of different kinds of economic policy for peacebuilding varies a lot with context, but there are some areas of policy which often have obvious implications for gender issues. For instance, it is very common for some kind of land reform to be considered necessary for peacebuilding. Nowhere in the world has a land reform been implemented where gender was not an issue, in spite of the fact that many studies on land reform have shown that there are economic advantages for society as a whole to granting women rights⁵⁹. At worst, women's rights are non-existent, with land titles being granted to men. More commonly, women have some access in their own right but this is less secure and dependent on their marital status. International donors have often been very influential in deciding the type of land reform which should be adopted and so there is a great deal of potential for gender to be taken up as an issue where land reform is considered as part of peacebuilding (as it probably will be in Rwanda for instance).

Welfare policies have to address immediate post-war problems and establish programmes for the longer term, and are also often developed in a gender blind way. For instance, in the immediate post-war context there are often some special measures to provide support for ex-combatants before, during and after the process of demobilisation. Although the details vary a great deal with context, it is very common for women (and child) ex-combatants to be relatively marginalised, if not completely neglected. Similarly the needs of women in society to be protected from the violent behaviour of demobilised (yet possibly still armed) male fighters are rarely considered. Furthermore, women ex-combatants' welfare needs rarely receive the same attention. (Eritrea is possibly the only example where they have come close to equality of treatment.) As women are the main carers of survivors, neglect of their basic needs has knock-on effects throughout society. An alternative approach, which

prioritised women's welfare requirements would have positive knock-on effects through society in times of peacebuilding.

Such neglect is sometimes a function of the broad macro-economic context where international assistance to governments is conditional on economic reform measures which tightly restrict health budgets. Strict limitations are certainly placed on the welfare budgets of many post-conflict governments by the stringency of World Bank structural adjustment loan conditions (and other bilateral lending). There is a growing lobby which argues that such conditions ought to be looser in post-war economies⁶⁰, to allow governments to address the specific needs to peacebuilding. As yet this argument has not been accepted by donors.

The same budgetary constraints also often restrict government spending on education and it is still the case that girls benefit less than boys in countries where rehabilitation of educational provision is taking place. There are many ways in which this perpetuates an already existing gender inequality and is therefore a useful point of intervention to foster positive change in gender relations. Moreover, where peace education is taken seriously as part of the new curriculum, there are two further potential knock-on benefits in terms of gender-aware peacebuilding. First this frees women from what might be seen as a private responsibility (that of educating their children for peace) and makes it a public activity, in which men could also play a part. Second, where peace education also contains explorations of gender issues, there is a direct, long-term input to helping to transforming gender relations *per se*, and thereby helping to build positive peace.

4.3 Working with Men to Change Masculinity

There is usually a lot of discussion about gender issues in situations of negative peace following a peace settlement. It is also often accompanied by violence against women and their marginalisation from the benefits of peace. Yet it is also a time when people are acutely aware that social relationships are sometimes unpredictable and are open to change. It is therefore sometimes a moment when outsiders can help to support peaceful debate about gender relations. Where the mainstreaming of gender issues into peacebuilding activities in these ways does occur, one might argue that fostering the space for 'making sense' of gender relations is almost essential. In this context outsiders might wish to support not only women in their efforts to challenge gender stereotypes, but also men. Working with men who are peace activists, community workers, parents and carers is seen as a useful

peacebuilding tool⁶¹, and men will normally be included, if not be central, in efforts to transform key institutions. Both approaches may help to challenge the construction of the negative types of masculinity.

5. Future Policy Directions

5.1 The Policy Context

As we have seen, peacebuilding is still often a vaguely-defined area of policy, especially where the focus is long-term. All too often there is an acceptance in practice of the very limited peace goals of negative peace. There is a need to change towards a focus on positive peace as the set of objectives for peacebuilding. This focus brings within the scope of peacebuilding almost all policies which relate to the economy and to social and political change comes. There is also a vast range of policies which should be taken into account when trying to avoid disadvantaging women, or even when trying to work with women as change agents in building more peaceful societies. Reflecting this broad scope, major international organisations have passed resolutions and developed policies on women and conflict which are very broad ranging.

Some of these international resolutions have existed for a long time, such as the *Forward Looking Strategies*, from the *UN Decade for Women Conference, Nairobi, 1985*. Others are very recent, such as resolutions from the *March 1998 UN Commission for the Status of Women*, which gave detailed resolutions on the following themes:

- A Ensuring gender-sensitive justice
- B Specific needs of women affected by armed conflict
- C Increasing the participation of women in peacekeeping, peace-building, pre- and post-conflict decision-making, conflict prevention, post-conflict resolution and reconstruction
- D Preventing conflict and promoting a culture of peace
- E Disarmament measures, illicit arms trafficking.

Such macro-level international agreements can sometimes seem very remote from people attempting to develop and implement policy on the ground, but they have been useful as frameworks and reference points where people petition their governments to enact reform, and where international actors seek to provide external assistance. The foregoing analysis has been informed by, and located

within, these broad international policy frameworks, and it is now possible to identify the key policy objectives for future policy.

5.2 Key Policy Objectives

Three key policy objectives emerge from the foregoing analysis:

i. Avoiding a gendered peace, where a gendered peace is a post conflict situation in which peacebuilding policies address the needs of women less adequately than those of men, or which result in a deterioration in the situations of women. The achievement of this objective would also have wider positive knock-on effects for society in general, because of the important post-conflict roles commonly played by women (e.g. caring for survivors, managing social networks, educating children). Furthermore, minimising, or removing such inequality also represents a move towards positive peace in itself (see Section 2).

ii. Working with women as change agents in society to tackle entrenched violent and aggressive behaviour which is rooted in forms of masculinity. This objective is highly compatible with objective i., and is expected to improve the situation for women as well as having positive outcomes for peacebuilding generally.

iii. Working with men as change agents in society to tackle entrenched violent and aggressive behaviour which is rooted in forms of masculinity. This objective is highly compatible with objectives i. and ii., although it requires quite a different set of activities. It is also expected to have positive outcomes for peacebuilding generally.

5.3 Specific Policy Recommendations

From the foregoing analysis it is possible to identify a range of policy recommendations which would work towards meeting the three main policy objectives identified in 5.2 respectively.

5.3.1 Policies to Avoid a Gendered Peace

Arising from the analysis in Sections 3 and 4 we can identify two broad areas of policy which would help to achieve this objective:

- a. Special policies for women which help them to improve their own situations, and which have interventions to respond to their specific needs;
 - The provision of physical and mental health services for women recovering from war injuries and trauma, including specialist support for women who are caring for children conceived as a result of rape and for those who have been ostracised from communities and families as a consequence of rape.
 - The provision of safe personal security, through the police force and/or other means, as protection from all forms of sexual and domestic violence.
 - Special legal and social support geared to women in order to aid their reporting and prosecuting of perpetrators of war crimes and human rights abuses (committed by women and men) during and after conflict.
 - Special investigation of, and support for, the needs of girl children survivors (which are often necessary because they are neglected even when boy children's needs are identified and addressed).
 - Special economic policies to increase women's access to income, where this is more restricted than that of men, and especially where women are largely responsible for survivors.
- b. Mainstreaming gender perspectives in all policy processes, to make sure that peacebuilding activities do not disadvantage women.
 - Political and legal changes need to be checked for their impact on gender equality (especially new constitutional rights; voting regulations; changes in land rights).
 - Identifying institutions in need of reform, which have not been able to incorporate a gender perspective, but which are responsible for promoting types of violent and aggressive behaviour which is rooted in specific forms of masculinity. This applies particularly to the police and other security forces.

- All economic policies need to be subject to gender analysis in order to assess whether or not there are differential implications for women and men. Key areas of policy where this is commonly crucial in immediate post conflict situations include: land reform; welfare and education policies, particular in contexts of macro-economic reform where budgets are under pressure from donors.

5.3.2 Working with Women as Change Agents in Society

Arising from the analysis in Sections 3 and 4 we can identify two broad areas of policy which would help to achieve this objective:

- a. Providing support for women's organisations involved in peacebuilding
 - Targeting women's organisations for support, especially those which: have wide participation and/or where the leadership has strong connections to poor sections of society; have a clear vision about what they want to achieve; and which are built on an acknowledgement of the divisions between women, and seek to build bridges between communities of women.
 - Supporting organisations which promote public debate about gender relations and cultural change (including violence, women's rights, children's rights).
 - Facilitating the input of women's organisations into key peace conferences and other decision-making bodies, especially where they are in close consultation with their constituencies.
- b. Increasing the presence of women, through education and training, in institutions undergoing reform, and increasing the number of women in decision-making positions.
 - Involving women in identifying key areas for institutional reform (especially in the areas of security and law enforcement).

- Training and education for women to enable them to become viable candidates for leadership and decision-making positions in a wide range of institutions (including government bureaucracies).
- Training for women to develop and promote methods of institutional reform and to act as trainers themselves (especially in methods of consultation, institutional mediation and conflict resolution for use within organisations).
- Supporting women who attempt to challenge and reform the practices of 'traditional' organisations involved in community peacebuilding and national reconciliation activities.

5.3.3 Working with Men as Change Agents in Society

Two types of policy are useful in helping to ensure that men as well as women are involved in building peace and in challenging violent and aggressive aspects of masculinity:

- a. Supporting men where they work as peace activists and potential role models;
 - Support for organisations in which men work as peace activists and trainers. (This directly contributes to peacebuilding but also helps to counteract any tendency to see this activity as 'women's work'.)
- b. Re-training men in key institutions undergoing reform (especially in security).
 - Training for men in gender awareness issues, and in the same skills identified for women in 5.3.2 so that they may directly contribute to peacebuilding and be better placed to assist in reforming gender relations.

Notes

1. e.g. Cairns, Edmund, *A Safer Future. Reducing the Human Cost of War*, Oxfam Publications, 1997. For most, however, a rather narrower conception of conflict is the norm, and derives from a kind of 'socio-psychological model' (Duffield, Mark, 'Evaluating Conflict Resolution. Context, Models and Methodology', in Sorbo, Gunnar, Macrae, Joanna and Wohlgemuth, *NGOs in Conflict - an Evaluation of International Alert*, Chr. Michelsen Institute, Bergen, 1997: Annex 1: 90). Here the root cause of the conflict is seen as being disagreement, or breakdown of communication, between individuals or groups. Violent manifestations of conflict are therefore viewed as irrational and, almost by definition, based on misunderstandings. In this quite common view, the word conflict may thus be used interchangeably to refer to the *conflict of interest*, or to the *violent expression of conflict*, which itself can lead to misunderstandings.
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15. Turshen, Meredith, 'Women's War Stories', in Turshen, Meredith and Twagiramariya, Clotilde (eds), *What Women Do in Wartime*, Zed Press, 1998: 7; Abdel Halim, Asma, 'Attack with a Friendly Weapon', in

- Turshen, Meredith and Twagiramariya, Clotilde (eds), *What Women Do in Wartime*, Zed Press, 1998: 85-100.
16. Twagiramariya, Clotilde and Turshen, Meredith, 'Favours' to Give and 'Consenting' Victims. The Sexual Politics of Survival in Rwanda', in Turshen, Meredith and Twagiramariya, Clotilde (eds), *What Women Do in Wartime*, Zed Press, 1998: 101-117: 104.
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 19. Goldblatt, Beth and Meintjes, Sheila, 'South African Women Demand the Truth', in Turshen and Twagiramariya, op cit: 27-61.
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