Submission by the
Women, Peace and Security Network-Canada
to the Global Affairs Canada
International Assistance Review
July 29, 2016

A key piece of the peace and development puzzle is women and girls.
- Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau[1]

If you are not investing in women's organizations, then you are not working on women, peace and security.
- Participant in July 21st Consultation on WPS

This brief is submitted by the Women, Peace and Security Network-Canada (WPSN-C). We are a network of over 65 organizations and individuals.[2] Given the diversity of our membership, every member may not agree with every point, however there is broad consensus on the overall direction and recommendations.

This submission builds on the brief, *A Feminist Approach to Canada's International Assistance*, prepared for the International Assistance Review by Inter Pares, Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights and Oxfam Canada (all members of the WPSN-C).[3] It also draws on the informal consultation hosted by WPSN-C on July 21st, 2016.

Context

Sixteen years after the passage of United Nations Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, there is a clear global consensus: "Women's empowerment contributes to the success of peace talks and the achievement of sustainable peace, accelerates economic recovery, strengthens our peace operations, improves our humanitarian assistance, and can help counter violent extremism."[4]

Despite the growing body of evidence on the clear links between women's participation, gender equality and effective security, implementation and progress on the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda

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[1] Marie-Claude Bibeau (2016). "In Colombia, there can be no development without Peace." *Globe and Mail*. July 5th, 2016 http://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/in-colombia-there-can-be-no-development-without-peace/article30740573/

[2] https://wpsn-canada.org/ We can be reached at wpsncanada@gmail.com

[3] Inter-Pares, Action Canada for Sexual Health & Rights & Oxfam Canada (2016). *A Feminist Approach to Canada's International Assistance.* http://www.oxfam.ca/sites/default/files/file_attachments/a_feminist_approach_-_final.pdf

[4] UN Women (2015). *Fact Sheet – The Global Study on 1325: Key Messages, Findings and Recommendations.* Page 1.

has been slow, too slow.[5] Women's participation in peace talks is still rare.[6] Resources have not followed commitments by UN member states and UN entities.[7] National Actions Plans, viewed as a key accountability mechanism, lack funds and political heft.[8] Activists report that "almost nothing" has changed for women on the ground.[9] Recent UN documents acknowledge that victims/survivors of conflict-related sexual violence continue to lack confidence in national institutions, including the police and judiciary to provide justice and adequate responses.[10]

The current context in Canada, and in particular the International Assistance Review launched by Global Affairs, offers an opportunity to make concrete and positive changes to address these challenges. Statements by the Prime Minister and the Minister for International Development are encouraging. A feminist approach to international assistance, in particular peace and security programming, offers the win-win potential of contributing to lasting peace and to strengthening the empowerment of women and girls. However, as our brief points out, changes and investments are required. We urge Global Affairs Canada to take up the challenge and forge a bold, new path.

Recommendations

Seven recommendations are presented in this brief:

1. Adopt a feminist approach to peace and security.

2. Bring a feminist lens to the understanding of conflict and security and ensure that this perspective underpins all policies, approaches and overall programming directions.

3. Improve and expand both targeted programming and feminist mainstreaming in Canada's international assistance in peace and security programming.

4. Invest in women-led, grassroots women's organizations and movements.

5. Invest in conflict prevention.

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[5] Radhika Coomaraswamy *et al* (2015). *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Security Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*. UN Women. http://reliefweb.int/report/world/preventing-conflict-transforming-justice-securing-peace-global-study-implementation. The Global Study on the Implementation of 1325 provides an excellent overview of progress, challenges and recommendations to move forward. Despite its length, we strongly recommend that Global Affairs staff responsible for the IAR review the analysis and recommendations in this key document.
[6] Oxfam (2015) *Women, Peace and Security: Keeping the Promise.* http://www.oxfam.ca/sites/default/files/file_attachments/bn-women-peace-security-unscr1325-030915-en.pdf
[7] Louise Bosetti & Hannah Cooper (2015). *Where are the Women? How the UN is falling short on gender and conflict*. Centre for Policy Research. United Nations University. http://cpr.unu.edu/where-are-the-women-how-the-un-is-falling-short-on-gender-and-conflict.html
[8] One report is that of the more than 60 NAPs, only 12 have dedicated budgets. See WILPF (2016). *How to #MoveTheMoney from War to Peace: Reflections on Women, Peace and Security Financing Workshop and Side Event*. http://wilpf.org/how-to-movethemoney-from-war-to-peace-reflections-on-women-peace-and-security-financing-workshop-and-side-event/
[9] Julienne Lusenge (2015). *Statement during the Open Debate of the Security Council on Women, Peace and Security, October 13*. http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/conferencessummits/3rd-international-conference-on-financing-for-development-addis-ababa-ethiopia-13%E2%80%9316-july-2015/press-conferences/watch/julienne-lusenge-ngo-working-group-on-women-peace-and-security-security-council-7533rd-meeting/4555272465001
[10] United Nations (2016). *Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence*. 20 April 2016. S/2016/361. http://www.stoprapenow.org/uploads/advocacyresources/1464291095.pdf

6. Ensure Global Affairs Canada is 'fit for purpose' to adopt a feminist approach.

7. Strengthen Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

Adopt a Feminist Approach to Peace and Security

A feminist lens to peace and security policy, programming and investments would:

- Reflect and acknowledge numerous perspectives on feminism as well as value diverse views and voices.

- Support the vision in *A Feminist Approach to Canada's International Assistance* that feminist principles include an *intersectional approach* (recognizing that multiple aspects of identity are important), *agency* (including emphases on autonomy, choice, empowerment and meaningful engagement), and *process* (making links, learning, collaborating and including). This document also notes that a feminist approach must go hand-in-hand with a rights-based approach, including sexual and reproductive rights.

- Include an additional principle of peace-seeking and peacebuilding, emphasizing the centrality of non-violent conflict resolution, alternatives to military solutions and conflict prevention. One of the generally accepted pillars of the WPS agenda is conflict prevention. The importance of investing in stopping armed conflict before it erupts has been highlighted by recent international reviews.[11] Gender-sensitive early warning mechanisms and indicators allow for implementation of responses that address the needs of all individuals.[12]

- Ensure consistency in our domestic and foreign policy as well as a holistic approach to WPS. Women, peace and security issues are relevant in humanitarian assistance, in defence policy and our diplomatic priorities as well as tackling gender inequalities and discrimination at home.

WPS issues cannot be seen as a programming silo. The WPS Agenda clearly calls for a consideration of gender perspectives and gender equality results across all programming issues – from small arms and light weapons to economic recovery. From landmine clearance to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programs. From security sector reform to peace support operations. From transitional justice to supporting peace pluralism. There are gender equality issues that should be considered across all peace and security programming and there are opportunities to build in results related to the WPS agenda even when this is not the primary focus of the policy, program or project.

Are the terms 'gender mainstreaming', 'a feminist approach', and a focus on women's empowerment and the WPS agenda the same or contradictory?[13] This question, arising throughout the consultations, points to the different emphases of each these methods. However, they do share a core concern with understanding and addressing hierarchical structures of power within social, political, economic and institutional contexts that produce gender discrimination and inequalities. In the context of peace and

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[11] In addition to the *Global Study on 1325*, the other two major reviews had similar recommendations: United Nations (2015). *2015 Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture – The Challenge of Sustaining Peace.* http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/pdf/150630%20Report%20of%20the%20AGE%20on%20the%202015%20Peacebuilding%20Review%20FINAL.pdf and United Nations (2015). *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations on Uniting Our Strengths for Peace: Politics, Partnership and People.* http://www.un.org/sg/pdf/HIPPO_Report_1_June_2015.pdf

[12] WILPF/Peacewomen (2015). *The Pieces of Peace: Peace Through Gendered Conflict Prevention.* http://wilpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/WILPF-PeaceWomen_Pieces-of-Peace.pdf

[13] It also important to point out that there are often different definitions for each of these terms.

security policies and programming, these different terms and methods all highlight the centrality of a gender approach, that is, an approach that examines the operation of gendered hierarchical structures of power that shape the varied conditions and experience of in/security and peace for women and men, girls and boys. Such an approach might, for example, consider how gendered access to secondary schooling can affect rural women's linguistic skills (and ability to speak the colonial or dominant language) and hence their ability to contribute to peace negotiations.

Bring a Feminist Lens to the Understanding of Conflict and Security and Ensure that this Perspective Underpins Policies, Approaches and Overall Programming Directions

To date, much of Canada's consideration of WPS issues has come too late in the programming cycle and been confined to a small programming and policy niche. There is a need to draw on current research and evidence that documents the links between gender inequalities, gender norms (including masculinities, particularly militarized masculinities), gender relations and armed conflict.[14]

There is a clear need to address the root causes of gender inequalities and their links to peace and security in the very conceptualization of what Global Affairs hopes to achieve and support. Tinkering with projects that have already been designed is much too late in the project and programme cycle.

It is also clear that more work is needed to understand the gender dimensions of key security issues including the climate change, resource access/conflict nexus and addressing violent extremism.[15]

Ensuring the application of a feminist lens includes:

- Robust attention to gender equality issues across the social, political and economic spectrum in *policy* development and the setting of programming directions (not as an afterthought in already designed initiatives).

- Defining explicit gender equality results (that are more than the inclusion of women) in country programming frameworks for conflict-affect/fragile states.

- Including an explicit gender equality/WPS pillar in funding mechanisms.[16]

- Requiring focused and rigorous gender analysis (GBA+) as part of programme and project development and ensuring that this analysis actually influences programme design.

- Assessing and evaluating the achievement of gender equality results and feeding back lessons into project and policy development. This involves ensuring attention to gender equality issues in all evaluations, lessons learned exercises and reviews.

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[14] See, for example, Tsjeard Bouta, Georg Frerks, and Ian Bannon (2005). *Gender, conflict, and development*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank. http://heller.brandeis.edu/coexistence/pdfs/gender/30494.pdf ;
Judy El-Bushra (2003). "Fused in combat: gender relations and armed conflict." *Development in Practice* 13, 252-265. Doi: 10.1080/096145203200007321; and Maya Eichler (2014). "Militarized Masculinities in International Relations." *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Fall/Winter, Volume XXI, Issue 1.

[15] See, for example, UNEP, UN Women, PBSO and UNDP (2013). *Women and Natural Resources: Unlocking the Peacebuilding Potential*. http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/UNEP_UN-Women_PBSO_UNDP_gender_NRM_peacebuilding_report.pdf and United States Institute for Peace (2015). *Charting a New Course: Thought for Action Kit – Women Preventing Violent Extremism*. http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/Women_Preventing-Violent-Extremism-Charting-New-Course%20%282%29.pdf

[16] Experience has shown the importance of an explicit gender equality/women's rights funding priority to signal that this is a political priority and to ensure that resources are dedicated to relevant issues and organizations (rather than a poor after thought in other funding streams).

- Making connections and breaking down silos. For example, effective responses to sexual and gender-based violence will require long-term multi-sectoral approaches (livelihoods, healthcare, literacy, legal support, etc.).

Simply "integrating more women" into an already defined programme or project is not consistent with a feminist approach.

Improve and Expand Both Targeted Programming and Feminist Mainstreaming in Canada's International Assistance in Peace and Security Programming

We support a standalone pillar on women's rights and gender equality (or women's rights and women's empowerment) as well as robust feminist mainstreaming across all international assistance as called for in *A Feminist Approach to Canada's International Assistance*.

We also call for a similar approach within peace and security programming. Both programing that explicitly targets WPS objectives (or gender equality/women's empowerment outcomes) **and** robust attention to gender analysis and gender equality results across all peace and security programming are needed.

As an interim accountability mechanism, we recommend a specific target for peace and security initiatives and initiatives in fragile contexts that have gender equality as their primary objective (15%).[17]

These recommendations are relevant across all Global Affairs programming windows that relate to peace and security even if they are not officially considered 'peace and security programming.' Priority should be given to more initiatives that focus on gender equality objectives and improved gender mainstreaming in programming done by geographic programs in conflict-affected and fragile states, humanitarian assistance in complex emergencies and by partnership programs providing funding to Canadian NGOs as well as funding going to multilateral institutions that is focussed on fragile and conflict-affected states.

Invest in women-led, grassroots women's organizations and movements

There was a strong consensus among Canadian NGOs testifying at the House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development during their study on WPS that Canada could do more to support and fund grassroots women's rights and peacebuilding organizations.[18] These organizations are often doing dangerous and courageous work, yet they are often overlooked by the international community.[19]

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[17] This target would be tracked using the 'gender equality marker,' However, as noted elsewhere, significant improvements in quality assurance and consistent use of this marker are required. It is also important that GAC rectify the inconsistencies in how data is reported to the OECD-DAC. See Brian Tomlinson (2013) *Briefing Paper: Canada's Aid Marker for Gender Equality.* AidWatch Canada. http://aidwatchcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Briefing-Paper-4-Canada%E2%80%99s-Aid-Marker-for-Gender-Equality.pdf

[18] See the testimony and briefs at http://www.parl.gc.ca/Committees/en/FAAE/StudyActivity?studyActivityId=8817286

[19] The OECD-DAC notes "Women's organizations in fragile contexts lack access to sustainable funding despite their vital role in building peace. IN 2012-2013 USD 130 million went to women's equality organizations and institutions – a tiny amount compared to the USD 31.8 billion of total aid to fragile states and economies." See OECD-DAC Network on Gender Equality (GenderNet) (2015). *Financing UN Security Council Resolution 1325: Aid in Support of Gender Equality and Women's rights in Fragile Contexts*. https://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/Financing%20UN%20Security%20Council%20resolution%201325%20FINAL.pdf

It is not enough to have initiatives that identify women and girls as project beneficiaries. The catalytic benefits of investments in women's peacebuilding will be reaped only when international assistance supports women-led initiatives, women's movements and the agendas of women's organizations. These are the engines of change.

We support the establishment of a specific ambitious funding mechanism aimed at women's rights organizations and women's movements as proposed in *A Feminist Approach to Canada's International Assistance*. This fund should approach the investments made in recent years in maternal/new born health. We suggest that a specific 'stream' within this mechanism be dedicated to women's organizations working on issues related to peace and security.

Given that the work of women peacebuilders and women's human rights defenders is often dangerous, financial support must also be accompanied by diplomatic support.[20] Partnerships with Canadian organizations and global movements can provide solidarity and protection for these brave activists.

Invest in Conflict Prevention

The very core of the WPS agenda stresses the importance of conflict prevention and investments in peace:

> *When women took their demands for a woman, peace and security (WPS) agenda to the Security Council in 2000, they were demanding that prevention of war be a key aspect of the Security Council's agenda along with a recognition of the capacities of half the world's population to resolve the complex challenges of global peace and security.*
>
> *They were seeking a fundamental shift in how these goals are secured. Their objective was, at its core, the prevention of armed conflict and a roll back of the escalating levels of militarization making homes, communities and nations less rather than more secure.[21]*

Yet the first version of Canada's National Action Plan on WPS was very weak on conflict prevention. In many cases the focus was on preventing sexual and gender based violence, rather than on emphasizing broader investments in conflict prevention. In order to be true to this original priority, we urge GAC to prioritize investments that explicitly support conflict prevention (including through the integration of a strong gender analysis and an emphasis on WPS aims).

Ensure Global Affairs Canada is 'Fit for Purpose' to Adopt a Feminist Approach

A key question arising in discussions during the consultations on Canada's International Assistance has been whether Global Affairs is 'fit for purpose' to ensure a consistent application of a feminist approach across all international assistance in general and in peace and security programming specifically? The resounding answer was no. Participants in these discussions heard that staff lack tools, knowledge and time to apply a feminist approach in their daily work. They also heard that there are insufficient specialists to provide expert technical advice and support; and that projects and programs are not likely to be rejected by senior management on the grounds that the gender analysis is not good enough or that there are no gender equality results.

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[20] Jess Tomlin & Lauren Ravon (2016). "When Feminism is a Killing Word." *Huffington Post Canada* http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/jess-tomlin/standing-up-for-feminism_b_11145782.html

[21] Radhika Coomaraswamy *et al* (2015).*Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Security Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*. UN Women. Page 194. http://reliefweb.int/report/world/preventing-conflict-transforming-justice-securing-peace-global-study-implementation

A feminist approach to WPS must include building internal capacities, including:

- Clear messages from senior management on the importance of and obligatory nature of a feminist approach.

- Investments in capacity building and learning – both at the technical/specialist level and the basic understanding for all staff. All staff should know how to make the case for a feminist lens and counter resistance from partners.

- Strengthened accountability mechanisms within Global Affairs Canada for implementation of policy commitments.

- Improvements to the gender equality marker or coding structure and reporting. In particular improved quality assurance is required as well as consistent use of coding definitions/criteria across Global Affairs Canada.[22]

- Investments in gender equality specific programming, in particular for women-led organizations and grassroots women's movements.

- Improved public reporting on progress towards institutional targets and outcomes related to WPS.[23]

- Longer-term projects. Changing gender norms takes time. We urge the adoption of projects with 5-10 year life span.

In order for "women and girls to be at the heart" of Canada's international assistance, changes and investments are required.

Strengthen Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security

We outlined our vision and recommendations for Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (C-NAP) in our brief to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development.[24] The main recommendations for the next iteration of the C-NAP were:

1) Affirm that women's rights and support for the WPS Agenda is a core goal of Canadian foreign policy.

2) Address the full range of WPS pillars: participation (supporting the full participation of women in conflict prevention, peace negotiations, peace building and recovery); protection (dealing with conflict-related sexual violence); prevention (investing in gender-responsive conflict prevention; and relief and recovery (ensuring attention to women's rights and gender equality results in humanitarian assistance and post-conflict recovery initiatives, including economic stimulus).

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[22] In particular, there are concerns that there are different criteria/definitions of the marker being used in geographic programming and the programming being done by the Global Peace and Security Fund. For example, in order to be coded a "2" or "gender equality integrated", geographic programmes require an explicit gender equality result at the intermediate outcome level supported by budget and gender equality. It is not clear if the GPSF has been using similar definitions.

[23] The WPSN-C has consistently noted the difficulties in understanding the results of the C-NAP, for example see Beth Woroniuk and Sarah Tuckey (2015). *Looking Back, Looking Forward: Reflections on Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security*. https://wpsncanada.files.wordpress.com/2015/12/lblf-final.pdf

[24] WPSN-C (2016). *Brief Presented to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development for their Study on Women, Peace and Security.* https://wpsncanada.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/wpsn-c-faae-brief.pdf

3) Strengthen and support women's organizations working in fragile contexts.

4) Dedicate increased financial and human resources to the C-NAP: a commitment without resources is not a commitment.

5) Ensure accountability for WPS policy directives and commitments.

Please refer to this brief for more details on each of these recommendations.