



Amplifying women's voices towards sustainable and inclusive peace

Global Network of Women Peacebuilders
2018 Annual Report

About GNWP

The Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) is a coalition of women's groups and other civil society organizations from Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America, Eastern and Western Europe and the Middle East and Arab World, mostly from conflict-affected countries. GNWP has a proven track record in advocating for women's leadership to be at the core of all efforts in peacebuilding, conflict prevention and sustaining peace. It has demonstrated impact in bringing local voices to influence global policies on women's rights, peace and security, and translating global policies into practical actions that improve the lives of women and men in local communities.

GNWP is managed by an International Coordinating Team, based in New York, where it is registered as a charity.

Our vision is a world in which women and girls' rights are promoted and protected, and they are recognized as peacebuilders and decision-makers.

Our mission is to empower women, and amplify their voices to build sustainable and inclusive peace.

We work to fulfil this mission through the following strategies:



1. Full cycle implementation of the WPS resolutions



2. Amplifying voices of local women and civil society in global policy forums to influence global norms and standards



3. Empowering young women to become leaders and agents of peace



4. Ensuring adequate and predictable funding on the implementation of WPS resolutions

Learn more about us at: www.gnwp.org

Foreword



The year 2018 was exciting, inspiring and challenging for peace and women's rights activists around the world. The election of a woman as President in Ethiopia; the election of a historic number of women from the most diverse backgrounds in the US Congress; women occupying half of cabinet positions in Ethiopia and Rwanda and nearly two-thirds in Spain; the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Dr. Denis Mukwege and Nadia Murad for their work in responding to victims of sexual violence; and the signing of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan were some of the reasons why we were thrilled about the past year. The UN Secretary-General's report on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) notes that the global proportion of parliamentary seats occupied by women stood at 23.8 per cent in June 2018.

In nothing short of a feminist movements redux, women activists expanded the phenomenal #MeToo campaign and gave rise to #Time's Up, #Niunamenos #NotOneMore #BalanceTonPorc, #TotalShutDown and other campaigns. This is yet another reason why 2018 was an inspiring year.

However, there were also moments in 2018 when we felt that as women were taking one step forward, socio-political developments influenced by patriarchal systems were pulling us two steps back. In Colombia, despite the signing and congressional approval of the peace agreement between the government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), activists were murdered and the implementation of the peace agreement is not getting the necessary support from the current government. In many countries, women and girls, as well as LGBTQI persons continued to be targeted and suffer sexual violence, both during conflict and during peace. Early, forced and child marriage has "escalated in a number of conflict and humanitarian settings, often in response to conditions in which families and communities negatively cope with financial burdens or safety issues, or to preserve family honour," according to the 2018 report of the UN Secretary-General on WPS.

Women also continued to face barriers to meaningful participation in peace negotiations and implementation of peace agreements. The Expert Group Meeting convened by UN Women in May 2018 identified the following primary barriers to the participation of women in peace negotiations and implementation of peace agreements: institutionalized gender bias and discrimination, continued and high prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence, lack of economic, social and cultural rights for women, low levels of political participation of women prior to conflict, and the continuing levels of poverty, food insecurity, disparity and deprivation experienced by women and girls.

Undaunted, we at GNWP increased our efforts in 2018 to amplify local women's voices in order for them to assert their role as leaders, peacebuilders and change agents. Through organizing of a global conference on Localization of UNSCR 1325 held in Kathmandu in February 2018; and a regional Women, Peace and Security (WPS) conference in Central Asia, Eastern Europe and South Caucasus that took place in Vienna in September 2018, we created avenues for women activists to dialogue with policy- and decision-makers and jointly formulate concrete actions to strengthen the gains and mitigate the risks in the implementation of the WPS resolutions.

The pool of young women leaders whom we trained under our Girl Ambassadors for Peace and Young Women for Peace and Leadership programs in Bangladesh, DRC, Indonesia, and the Philippines continued to grow and gain recognition in 2018. These young women make us proud as they lead efforts in peacebuilding, prevention of violent extremism, and economic empowerment in their communities.

With support from UN Women, GNWP conducted the global research on civil society perspectives on the Sustaining Peace agenda that generated response from more than 1,500 civil society actors from 50 countries. We have been sharing the research findings with different UN agencies and entities, Member States and civil society to ensure that the operationalization of the Sustaining Peace agenda fully integrates local women's views and realities.

On the organizational front, GNWP expanded its Board of Directors, hired new Program Officers and began recruitment for its International Advisory Council. We were also joined by our third Cora Weiss Peacebuilding Fellow, a human rights lawyer from South Sudan.

We are forever grateful for the support of our donor-partners which allows us to work in global policy spaces as well as in local communities. This enables us to enhance the capacities of local populations –especially women and girls who are increasingly becoming key influencers and important leaders; and the men and boys who have realized that gender equality is good for humanity.



Mavic Cabrera-Balleza

Chief Executive Officer
Global Network of Women Peacebuilders

The Global Context in 2018

The year 2018 has been marked by change and important developments in global policy spaces and on the ground in both developed and developing countries. Women's movements, women activists and politicians have achieved important strides towards equality, prompting some to refer to 2018 as the "[year of the woman](#)." Yet, women also continued to face inequality and violence across the world.

Moving towards better implementation of WPS

In 2018, seven countries adopted National Action Plans (NAPs) for the implementation of UNSCR 1325: Albania, Luxembourg, Mozambique, Moldova, Poland and Tunisia, increasing the number of total member states with a NAP to seventy-nine.¹ The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) also launched a regional action plan on WPS, increasing the number of regional, continental, and international organizations who have developed frameworks on women, peace, and security to eleven. The number of countries using the Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) to report on the implementation of the WPS resolutions also continued increasing. However, despite these positive developments, implementation of WPS remains uneven. Only 18 of the existing NAPs have an allocated budget, and many lack reliable accountability mechanisms to measure progress through qualitative and quantitative indicators.

Important developments on gender equality and gender mainstreaming in peace and security were made at the United Nations: gender parity was achieved in the UN Secretary-General's senior management group at the UN headquarters and among UN Resident Coordinators; a woman was appointed to be head of the Department of Political Affairs for the first time ever; women comprised 41% of heads and deputy heads of peace operations, a 13% increase since 2017; 19% of peace operations with police components had woman heads; and women comprised 22.5% of permanent representatives at the ambassador level to the United Nations in New York; and 3 of 15 Security Council seats (Poland, UK, and USA) were filled by women Ambassadors.² In addition, for the first time ever, a Palestinian woman briefed the Security Council during the October Open Debate on UNSCR 1325.

In 2018, the UN system under the leadership of the Secretary-General Antonio Guterres remained committed to conflict prevention and the implementation of the Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace resolutions. The Secretary-General produced a report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace, in which he emphasized the importance of sustaining peace "at all stages of conflict and in all its dimensions [and on the imperative to] prevent the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict." The General Assembly President convened a High-Level

¹ Source: Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network

² Source: UN Women, "Facts and Figures: Peace and Security."

Meeting on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace in April 2018. The UN Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace resolutions highlight the important role of civil society and women in conflict prevention and building lasting peace. They also emphasize the importance of preventing violence and conflict – a key tenet of the WPS agenda.

The “year of the woman” – women’s political victories in 2018

2018 saw some positive political developments towards gender equality and women’s meaningful participation. A record number of women have broken down barriers in political participation in countries like Bolivia, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Spain and the United States, where they are represented in large numbers. In [Ethiopia](#) and [Rwanda](#), government reshuffles in October 2018 have resulted in cabinets in which women constitute 50 per cent. In the United States, a record number of women won congressional seats during the midterm elections. Youth political engagement has also seen a rise, as demonstrated by events such as the election of the youngest ever Congresswoman to the House of Representatives, and high school students driving a powerful national agenda on gun control. In Spain, the new Prime Minister, Pedro Sánchez, sworn in June 2018, appointed a [cabinet in which almost two-thirds are women](#) – the highest proportion in the world. New Zealand’s Prime Minister also became the first head of state in history to take a maternity leave, sending a powerful message about gender inequality and the lack of policies around maternity-leave and child-care.

Women activists have also secured important victories in 2018, such as the [lifting of the ban on women drivers in Saudi Arabia](#) in September, and the [repeal of the eight amendment to Ireland’s constitution](#), which paved the way for legalized abortion in the country in May.

However, elsewhere in the world, political elections remained a source of instability and insecurity for the communities. GNWP’s members in Democratic Republic of Congo reported that the long-awaited presidential elections were marked by delays, tensions around the use of electronic voting machines, and a several weeks long shutdown of internet throughout the country. In Brazil, a right-wing candidate, Jair Bolsonaro, won the presidential election following a [campaign marked by misogynistic language, hegemonic masculinity and dismissing calls for equality as a “gender ideology.”](#)

Other heads of states across the world continued to perpetuate themselves into power beyond the scope and the terms of office mandated by the constitution, fueling political tension and crises, such as in Burundi, Sudan and Venezuela.

Moreover, in most countries where GNWP has worked in 2018, women continued to face institutional and socio-cultural barriers to the enjoyment of their rights. Given the lack of access to education, employment opportunities, and financial and technical support to pursue economic opportunities, gender equality is still more of an aspiration than a reality.

An insecure world

GNWP's work continued to be set in areas affected by conflict and instability. According to the [Global Peace Index](#) the "global peacefulness deteriorated in 2018 by 0.27%." The least peaceful countries included a number of those where GNWP implements its programs, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Nigeria, South Sudan, Syria and Ukraine.

As of June 2018, the [UN High Commissioner for Refugees](#) documented 68.5 million individuals who fled their homes, primarily due to violent conflicts. Nearly 60% of the refugees come from only three countries: Afghanistan, South Sudan and Syria, and 85% of the refugees are hosted in developing countries, including many of those in which GNWP works. The security situation is deteriorating in a number of countries where GNWP implements programs, including Bangladesh, Burundi, DRC, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

A positive development was the [signing of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan \(R-ARCISS\)](#) on 12 September 2018. The agreement reaffirmed the cessation of hostilities agreement (CoHA) from December 2017, and set out a road map for peace. Eritrea's President Isaias Afwerki and Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed also [signed the Joint Declaration of Peace and Friendship on 9 July 2018](#), paving the way for an improvement of relations between the two countries. However, the implementation of peace agreements around the world – including in Colombia and the Philippines – remained slow, and violence continued.

Climate change has also continued to pose a global threat and exacerbate conflicts and humanitarian crises. In October 2018, the United Nations issued a dire warning about climate change in their [report](#) released by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which cautioned we have as few as twelve years to act before reaching a point of no return.

Civil society, including GNWP members, continued to face challenges in their work, such as shrinking of democratic spaces and increased suspicion. Studies show that civil society organizations working on human rights continue to confront abuse,

threats, and intimidation, and even violence. The threat to human right defenders and peace activists was demonstrated by the murders of [Ukrainian activist Katerina Gandzyuk](#) in July 2018, who exposed corruption in Kherson, and [Marielle Franco](#), an Afro-Brazilian politician and LGBTQ+ activist in March 2018. The death of [Jamal Khashoggi](#), the journalist and Saudi-dissent, also spurred debate on the threats faced by the independent media.

Speaking out against sexual violence and abuse

The #MeToo movement, which started in 2017, continued to promote discussion about sexual violence in 2018, as millions continued to come forward to share their stories. The movement became #QuellaVoltache (“that time when”) in Italy, #YoTambien in Spain, #BalanceTonPorc (“squeal on your pig”) in France, and #AnaKaman in Arabic-speaking countries.

Women living in conflict-affected situations continued to face the scourge of sexual violence. In Colombia, as of August 2018 [about 2,000 documented cases of sexual violence](#) were brought to the special peace tribunal.³ Sexual violence in conflict remains as one of the most important issues in the WPS agenda. The [2018 Nobel Peace Prize](#) that was awarded jointly to Congolese gynecologist Dr. Denis Mukwege and Yazidi assault survivor Nadia Murad is a recognition of global efforts to end sexual violence.

However, much remains to be done in terms of preventing sexual violence, including against marginalized groups such as migrants, persons with disabilities and LGBTQI persons, and to provide effective, long-term and survivor-centered response. GNWP continues to work with governments and civil society at the local and national levels to adopt measures to address conflict-related sexual violence and ensure accountability throughout all its programs. GNWP's CEO is also a member of the civil society advisory group to the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (SRSG SVC). This allows GNWP to present first-hand information from the ground as well as its recommendations on local initiatives that needs the support of the Office of the SRSG SVC.

³ However, recent reports indicate that the special tribunal or the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP by its Spanish acronym), which was tasked to investigate war is in jeopardy because of proposed changes from the government. One of the proposed is to exclude sexual violence crimes from the JEP's jurisdiction. <https://www.wola.org/2019/03/colombia-peace-deal-duque-transitional-justice-system/>

GNWP in numbers in 2018

800

Local leaders, including women

leaders in **12** countries participated in GNWP's capacity-building on the "full cycle" of WPS implementation

Promoting local leadership. In 2018, GNWP facilitated trainings on NAP and Localization of 1325, media and 1325 synergies between CEDAW and Women, Peace and Security (WPS) for local authorities, women's rights organizations, journalists, and other local and national leaders. Leadership, peacebuilding, economic empowerment and social media trainings for young women were also held. This work was organized in 12 countries: Armenia, Bangladesh, Colombia, Democratic

Republic of the Congo, Georgia, Iraq, Lebanon, Moldova, Nepal, Palestine, the Philippines and Ukraine wherein local and national leaders and journalists gained knowledge and skills on WPS, sustainable peace, political participation, economic empowerment, and use of the law to assert their rights.

Young women claim their space.

In 2018, over 2,000 young women participated in literacy and peacebuilding activities organized by the Young Women for Peace and Leadership (YWPL)/Girl Ambassadors for Peace (GA4P) in over 20 locations across Eastern DRC and in Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh. In the Philippines, the YW+PL members mobilized 4000 youth from different provinces through peace fora on gender equality, women's rights, human rights, and sustainable peace. The GA4P network in Indonesia and Bangladesh grew remarkably: 80 young women applied to join the GA4P. In Bangladesh, over 120 Rohingya refugee and host community women in Cox's Bazar were trained on literacy and numeracy by members of the GA4P

6,000+

young women and girls in Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indonesia, and the Philippines were reached by the activities, literacy trainings and discussions on gender equality and sustaining peace organized by the members of the network Young Women for Peace and Leadership and Girl Ambassadors for Peace trained by GNWP

100

national and local stakeholders from

30

countries exchanged experiences during GNWP's regional and global conferences in Kathmandu and Vienna

Exchanging regional & global good practices to foster policy change.

To effect policy change, GNWP convened regional and global meetings between policy- and decision makers and civil society influencers to discuss progress in implementation of WPS, exchange good practices and lessons learned, especially on Localization as a standard practice in WPS implementation.

The conferences held in Kathmandu, Nepal and Vienna, Austria, convened **over 100 policy makers and civil society from 30 countries.**

In addition, over 300 policy makers were reached through GNWP's bilateral meetings and discussions held in New York.

120,000

people were reached by GNWP tweets during the 17th Anniversary of UNSCR 1325

Harnessing the power of social media.

In 2018, GNWP produced and circulated 79 blog posts on its various initiatives to over 2,700 recipients including representatives from governments, civil society, UN, AU, EU, NATO, media and academic institutions. GNWP also maintains active presence on social media. As of December 2018, GNWP has 4,442

Twitter followers (21% increase from December 2017), and the Facebook posts reach an average of 500 users. Twitter had its most successful outreach during the 18th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 in October 2018, with more than over 120,000 impressions (54% increase from October 2017) and 125 new followers (92% increase from October 2017).

The media is our ally. At the national and local levels, GNWP works with its partners implement media campaigns to promote its projects and key messages on WPS. For example, the Localization and media workshops in Moldova in **news segments on national television**, and interviews with experts were aired, helping to raise awareness of the WPS agenda. The training on synergies between the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was featured in **two Palestinian radios**, with combined audience of over 50,000 listeners, as well as in local newspapers and on social media.

50,000+

people were reached through the local and national radio and newspaper outreach from GNWP activities in Palestine

300

people attended GNWP panels and bilateral discussions during the key advocacy events in New York in 2018

Global policy makers meet civil society influencers.

In New York, GNWP provided channels for local women to address global policy-makers through various panel discussions and bilateral meetings at the UN during the 62nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the 18th anniversary of UNSCR 1325. During the 62nd CSW, GNWP co-organized 3

panel discussions, which enabled over 120 policy-makers to listen to the voices of local women. During the 18th anniversary of UNSCR, GNWP also held 3 panel discussions and meetings convening nearly 150 policy makers and practitioners. GNWP also held a side event during the High-Level Meeting on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace, which gathered over 30 participants.

GNWP Highlights in 2018



Institutional Strengthening

In 2018, GNWP developed and published its Strategic Plan for 2018-2022. With support from an expert facilitator, GNWP underwent a participatory planning process to define the key strategies and priorities for the organization for the next five years. GNWP also produced a “Unique Contributions and Bold Ambitions” document, summarizing its key achievements to date and its bold ambitions for the future - especially ahead of the milestone year 2020.

In 2018, GNWP also welcomed Hon. Elisabeth (Betty) Ogwaro as a member of its Board of Directors. Ms. Ogwaro is a Member of Parliament (currently the National Transitional Legislative Assembly) of South Sudan. She is also a mediator and negotiator with a long track record, and one of the nine members of the leadership of the National Dialogue Steering Committee.



Full cycle implementation of the WPS resolutions

In 2018, GNWP supported government and civil society actors in **developing and reviewing National Action Plan (NAP) on WPS** in Georgia, Iraq, Moldova and Ukraine. In Ukraine, the workshop held by GNWP and its partner served as a platform to discuss the indicators for monitoring of the NAP implementation, which informed the mid-term review of the Ukrainian NAP. In Iraq, GNWP held a Localization consultation to raise key civil society and government stakeholders' awareness on the importance of Localization as an implementation strategy for the NAP. The consultation also resulted in a Roadmap towards the development of the 2nd Iraqi NAP. GNWP staff has also supported national stakeholders in Ivory Coast and Lithuania with **expert technical advice on NAP development**.

GNWP held **Localization workshops** in Armenia, Colombia, Moldova and Ukraine. In Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine, the workshops led to the development of **Localization strategies** for the implementation of WPS. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), GNWP has conducted a Localization evaluation to take stock of the Localization impact thus far, and formulate concrete recommendations for future implementation, given the country's new NAP and decentralization reform.

GNWP also held **trainings for journalists and media practitioners** on their role in implementing WPS in Colombia, Georgia, Iraq and Moldova. As a result of the trainings, media strategies were developed in all countries. In Iraq, the Cross Sectoral Task Force responsible for NAP development, committed to including the media strategy as an integral part of the NAP.



Amplifying voices of local women and civil society in global policy forums



Ensuring adequate and predictable funding on the implementation of WPS resolutions

GNWP continued to advocate with governments to ensure appropriate Costing and Budgeting methodology, and disseminate its methodology and [manual on NAP Costing and Budgeting](#) when supporting NAP development processes, including in Iraq. GNWP has also conducted a costing and budgeting workshop in Lebanon, to support the Lebanese stakeholders in costing the country's NAP.

GNWP remained active as a founding board member of the [Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund](#) (WPHF). In 2018, GNWP, together with other civil society board members defined membership criteria and released a call for nominations for new civil society members to join the board.

In 2018, GNWP continued conducting literacy, leadership and peacebuilding trainings for young women in Bangladesh, DRC, Indonesia and the Philippines through its Young Women for Peace and Leadership and Girl Ambassadors for Peace initiatives. GNWP also welcomed a new Cora Weiss Fellow, Nyuon Susan Sebit from South Sudan. Susan joined the team in September. She has actively participated in GNWP's activities during the 18th Anniversary of UNSCR 1325, including by speaking about the situation of women in South Sudan to global policy-makers. She has also been involved in preparations of Localization activities in Nigeria

In DRC, the focus for 2018 was on economic empowerment. The young women designed and led micro-businesses, made curriculum vitae and practiced interview skills, and participated in a leadership workshops in January and July focusing on the importance of women's leadership, skill-building, and livelihood projects.

In October 2018, first training for young women was organized in Bangladesh. Young women from Cox's Bazaar, which is home to 1.3 million Rohingya refugees, used the skills gained from the training to **teach literacy and numeracy to Rohingya women and girls in the Balukhali refugee camp.**

In Indonesia, the YWPL have become **influential actors of change in their communities, and first respondents in emergencies.** The young women met with the national Ministries responsible for counter-terrorism and for women's rights to discuss strategies for preventing radicalization in local communities. They also organized community dialogues with 60 community leaders in Payaman Village, Poso, Central Sulawesi. In the aftermath of an earthquake in Palu, Central Sulawesi in September 2018, the YWPL were some of the first responders on the ground, providing relief services and fundraising for the support to the victims.

In the Philippines, the YW+PL members **mobilized 4000 youth from different religions in over 30 provinces in the Philippines** through peace fora on gender equality, women's rights, human rights, and sustainable peace. A YW+PL member from Butuan City, Mindanao, won her first electoral campaign as a local councilor in May 2018 local elections.



Empowering young women to become leaders and agents of peace

As part of its global-local, local-global strategy, GNWP facilitated participation of women activists from Bangladesh, Canada, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Georgia, Moldova, the Philippines, South Sudan, Syria and Ukraine in the Commission on the Status of Women and the 18th Anniversary of UNSCR 1325. In total, **15 women activists, including local, indigenous and young women** were able to speak directly to policy-makers through panel discussions and bilateral meetings organized by GNWP.

In addition, GNWP supported a member of its Young Women for Peace and Leadership (YWPL; formerly Girl Ambassadors for Peace) from South Kivu, Noella Muhamiriza, to present at the OECD Global Forum on Sustainable Development in April 2018, and Ariane Moza, president of the YWPL in South Kivu, to do a video presentation in the World Trade Organization's Global Forum on Least Developed Countries in June 2018.

GNWP also conducted **global research on civil society perspectives on the Sustaining Peace agenda** with support from UN Women. The research reached over 1,500 civil society actors from 50 countries. GNWP has disseminated findings of the research during various high and expert level events in New York, which reached an audience of nearly 200 policy-makers and civil society actors.

Featured Profile Gentile from DRC



Gentile Kavira is 23 years old and is the President of the Board of Directors of the Young Women for Peace and Leadership (YWPL) in North Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo. Gentile first began her involvement with the Girl Ambassadors for Peace program in 2015, when GNWP, in partnership with the Synergie des associations féminines du Congo (SAFECO) – trained the first group of young women from North Kivu in literacy, leadership and peacebuilding skills. The YWPL program empowers young women by providing training in leadership, peacebuilding, economic empowerment and other skill areas.

Four years after the first training in South Kivu, the program and the work of Gentile and other young women has brought tangible change to their communities. Gentile and other YWPL have noticed that their families' perceptions of themselves have begun to shift: young women are being encouraged to pursue an education, given less household chores, and are more comfortable denouncing sexism and sexual and gender-based violence.⁴

In 2017 and 2018, Gentile and other YWPL in North Kivu have focused on building their economic skills and creating small businesses to gain economic independence. Following the training, Gentile created a women's cooperative to sell handbags and jewelry. The businesses began generating small profits near the end of 2018. Gentile and the other young women chose to invest their profits in the monthly literacy and peacebuilding trainings they conduct in nearby rural communities in the province. Like Gentile, many other young women in Bangladesh, Indonesia, the Philippines and South Sudan have become recognized leaders and agents of peace in their communities.

"What motivates me to be part of the entrepreneurs is that I want to be an independent woman. I want independence to awaken the interest in other young women to create job opportunities and personal growth. I want to improve my future. Something else that pushes me to apply my entrepreneurial knowledge is what GNWP has taught me. GNWP has taught me female leadership and women's empowerment – I want to be the living, breathing example of this for others."

Gentile Kavira,

Young Women for Peace and Leadership – North Kivu, DRC

⁴ Based on GNWP's conversations with the young women participating in the program.

Featured Profile

Rimu from Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

Rimu Sultana is a 17 year old Girl Ambassadors for Peace (GA4P) member from Cox's, Bazar Bangladesh. In October 2018, she participated in a five-day training conducted by GNWP and its local partner, Jago Nari Unnayan Sangsta (JNUS), with support from NAMA Women Advancement Establishment. The training focused on developing the young women's knowledge of leadership, peacebuilding, literacy and numeracy, economic empowerment, social media, and theatre in the context of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh is home to over 1.3 million Rohingya refugees. According to 2018 data from UN Women, women constitute 52 per cent of the refugee population, and majority of them do not have access to adequate education. To address this gap, GNWP developed gender-sensitive and age-appropriate training materials and trained young Bangladeshi women from host communities to provide literacy and numeracy education to Rohingya women and girls in refugee camps.

Since the training facilitated by GNWP, Rimu and other young Bangladeshi women have staged local theatre productions, developed lesson plans and conducted literacy and numeracy classes with 60 Rohingya women in Balukhali Camp and 60 local Bengali women from the surrounding host communities.

The project also contributes to addressing the mounting tensions between the host population and Rohingya asylum-seekers and refugees, that have been exacerbated by the pre-existing and deepening poverty among the local host community in Cox's Bazar. Rimu along with the other GA4P members are working to create positive dialogues between the two communities, beginning with providing basic literacy and numeracy education to Rohingya and local women from the host community in Cox's Bazar.



"I'm grateful to have learned about the Women, Peace, and Security agenda. It's important for Bangladesh and for the world."

Rima Sultana Rimu,
Girl Ambassador for Peace – Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

Featured Profile

Nyuon Susan from South Sudan



In September 2019, Nyuon Susan Sebit joined GNWP as the third recipient of the Cora Weiss Fellowship for Young Women Peacebuilders. Nyuon is a young lawyer and advocate from South Sudan, passionate about the rule of law, women's and children's rights, and access to justice. Through the Cora Weiss Fellowship, Nyuon worked with the GNWP International Coordinating Team to promote effective implementation of UNSCR 1325 and the supporting WPS resolutions, as well as UNSCR 2250 and 2419 on YPS.

During the Fellowship, Nyuon represented GNWP in meetings and events in New York, which allowed her to share the experience of South Sudanese women, and highlight their efforts to build a sustainable peace in the country, including through their role in the signing and implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCISS). Nyuon spoke as a panelist in side events during the 18th anniversary of the UNSCR 1325 and the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW); participated in a meeting of South Sudanese civil society with the members of the South Sudan Troika; and took part in discussions at the United Nation Academic Impact and the New York University, as well as the United Nations Correspondents Award Gala. "Through the experience of engaging with global policy-makers in different spaces, I was able to learn about the procedures and mechanisms that exist to address security and human rights violations around the world, and how I, as a grassroots woman, can use them to advocate for the rights of women in my country," she said. During the UNSCR 1325 Anniversary and the CSW, Nyuon interacted and exchanged experiences with GNWP partners and members, including local activists from Canada, DRC, Syria and the Philippines, who came to New York.

The Cora Weiss Fellowship, established to honour Cora Weiss, a long-time peace and social justice leader and activist, supports the development of young women peacebuilders to ensure that more young people share Cora Weiss' vision for sustainable peace and gender equality as strong and integral parts of our global culture. The experiences and skills Nyuon gained through the Fellowship will enable her to advocate for women's rights, women's peace and security and the participation of women at all levels of leadership and decision-making, including in the peace process, to achieve sustainable peace in South Sudan.

"Learning first-hand about the implementation of the WPS agenda in other countries is the greatest learning experience GNWP offered me. No one will ever fully understand an agenda without hearing the experience from other parts of the world. Through the Fellowship, I have learned to step out of my comfort zone and open myself to new experiences every day."

Nyuon Susan Sebit
Cora Weiss Fellow 2018-2019

Featured Event Regional Conference on Women, Peace and Security in Eastern and Central Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia

In Central and Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus, and Central Asia, the lingering impacts of unresolved conflicts continue to disrupt the lives of people—especially local populations. A lasting solution to the region's conflicts cannot be achieved without effective implementation of the WPS resolutions including women's meaningful participation in peace and settlement processes and implementation of peace agreements.

To discuss the progress achieved in the implementation of WPS in the region, exchange good practices and lessons learned, and identify priorities and recommendations for the region ahead of the 20th anniversary of the UNSCR 1325 in 2020, GNWP organized a Regional Conference on WPS in Eastern and Central Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia. The Conference was held in Vienna on 13-14 September 2018, and was organized in partnership with UN Women and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), with support from the Austrian Development Agency and from the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of Austria in its capacity as President of the Council of the European Union in the second half of 2018.

The Conference brought together 68 participants from 18 countries (Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine). The participants included Cristina Lesnic, Deputy Prime Minister of Moldova and chief negotiator in the peace process between Moldova

"Behind the scenes, women have been crossing lines and building peace throughout Europe and Central Asia. From Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, to Ukraine and Moldova, and Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, women are coming together to defend common interests and advance women's equality in support of sustainable peace."

Sabine Freizer,
UN Women Regional Adviser for Peace and Security, one of the panelists at the Regional Conference on WPS in Central and Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus and Central Asia

Pictured: Participants of the Regional Conference on WPS in Central and Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia



Pictured: Edita Tahiri, George Tuka, Melanne Verveer and Ketevan Tsikhelashvili at a panel during the Regional Conference



and Transnistria; Ketevan Tsikhelashvili, State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality of Georgia; George Tuka, Deputy Minister of Temporarily Occupied Territories and IDPs of Ukraine; Dr Desiree Schweitzer, Director General of the Development Section, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Austria; Ambassador Steffen Kongstad, Representative of Norway to the OSCE; Ambassador Melanne Verveer, Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Gender; and Edita Tahiri, chair of the Regional Women's Lobby for Peace, Security and Justice; and various civil society leaders, UN Women officials and government representatives.

Participants noted that women have played important roles in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. As several of the region's conflicts remain unresolved, and the subject of negotiations, women have played roles as mediators in official talks. However, participants emphasized that there should be more women at the negotiation tables to ensure that women's needs and interests are addressed and women's perspectives on peace are part of conflict settlement.

To contribute to this, the participants agreed to create a network of women mediators for the region, to ensure women's meaningful participation in formal peace negotiations and settlement of conflicts; as well as in the resulting agreements.

The participants identified five areas of implementation that need to be strengthened to guarantee women's greater influence over peace and security in the region: (1) Media and WPS; (2) Monitoring and Financing of WPS implementation; (3) Localization of WPS resolutions; (4) meaningful inclusion of women in peace processes; and (5) gender-sensitive security sector reform.

The Regional Conference built on GNWP's work in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine to strengthen WPS implementation at local and national levels, conducted since 2017 with support from the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and in partnership with national and local civil society, governments and UN Women country offices.

Featured Event Media Consultation in Iraq

On November 15 2018, GNWP, in partnership with Women's Empowerment Organization (WEO) and with support from Global Affairs Canada, organized a workshop on the role of the media in implementing United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in Erbil, Iraq.

The workshop convened journalists from across Iraq to discuss the ways in which media can more effectively promote the images of women as leaders, peacebuilders and decision-makers; and to draft a comprehensive media and communications strategy that will be included in Iraq's 2nd National Action Plan (NAP) for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and other Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Resolutions.

The Erbil workshop is part of GNWP's broader work with journalists around the world. The journalists actively participated in discussions on the WPS agenda; the role of national government, local authorities and civil society in the implementation of the agenda; and on the lessons learned from Iraq's 1st NAP, and the status of the 2nd NAP. Throughout the workshop, they discussed key issues such as: how are women and men living in conflict-affected regions, such as Basra or Mosul, represented in media? How can the reporting be made more gender-sensitive? What strategies should be used to ensure that media institutions are engaged at every stage of the development of Iraq's 2nd National Action Plan?

Involving the media from the early stages of Iraq's NAP development is a strategic way to enhance the journalists' capacity to fulfil their obligations to report on the WPS agenda in a comprehensive and meaningful way. By raising awareness of UNSCR 1325 and the supporting resolutions on WPS, the media can not only break conservative stereotypes but instead promote women's roles as peacebuilders, leaders and decision-makers. Media is also instrumental in holding the government accountable for its responsibility to implement WPS through a strong and realistic NAP.

Using the knowledge gained through the workshop, the journalists, with support from local and international experts, identified the priorities for a media and communications strategy for Iraq's 2nd NAP. They worked hand in hand with representatives of the Cross-Sectoral Task Force (CSTF) on UNSCR 1325, responsible for drafting and implementing the NAP. The members of the CSTF committed to strengthen the coordination with media institutions. Moreover, they committed to ensure that a media and communication strategy will be integral to the NAP.

"The role of mass media is to break the traditionally conservative stereotypes around gender in Iraq, but also to report on our government's work and hold it accountable."

Participant of the media consultation in Erbil, Iraq



Pictured: Iraqi journalists conduct a gender analysis of the main national dailies

Featured Publication

Localization Toolkit

“Localization is the “how to” in the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in local communities. Because of its adaptable nature, it can and should be applied in all contexts - both in countries and communities directly affected by violent conflicts, and those that have not experienced a violent conflict in recent history.”

excerpt from “From Best Practice Example to Standard Practice: A toolkit on the Localization of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women and Peace and Security Resolutions”



From Best Practice to Standard Practice:

A toolkit on the Localization of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women and Peace and Security



GNWP's Localization of 1325 program is an innovative, people-based, bottom-up strategy that is based on evidence that local ownership and participation leads to more effective policy making and policy implementation. It convenes governors, mayors, councillors, women, youth, indigenous and tribal leaders, faith leaders, school teachers, local police and military officers and other key local actors to discuss the relevance of the WPS resolutions and develop concrete actions to implement them in local communities.

The Localization program is currently implemented in 16 countries (Armenia, Burundi, Colombia, DRC, Georgia, Jordan, Kenya, Liberia, Moldova, Nigeria, Nepal, the Philippines, Serbia, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, and Ukraine). In many of them, it has led to tangible impacts on the lives of women and girls. For example, in the Philippines, Localization led to the inclusion of 5 women in a century-old, previously all-male traditional conflict resolution council, bodong in Kalinga province. In Uganda, Localization contributed to the establishment of “gender desks” and a fast-track procedure for sexual and gender-based violence cases in police stations in Kitgum, which in turn led to a 6-fold increase in the number of women reporting sexual violence. In Kenema district in Sierra Leone, Localization prompted the local council to provide financial support, which allowed 100 women establish their own micro-businesses. The localization strategy and its outcomes have been cited by the UN Secretary-General as a key tool for translating policy into practice in his reports to the Security Council in 2012, 2013, 2016 & 2017, as well as by the 2015 Global Study on UNSCR 1325.

GNWP's ambition is to ensure that Localization is used as a standard practice in WPS implementation in all countries. To this end, in 2018 GNWP, with support from UN Women, published “From Best Practice Example to Standard Practice: A toolkit on the Localization of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women and Peace and Security Resolutions.” The Toolkit was designed for national and local government authorities, civil society, international organizations, United Nations entities, and donor organizations who implement and support the Localization strategy. It includes concrete examples of the impact of Localization on the implementation of the WPS resolutions, as well as practical, step-by-step guidance on how to organize a Localization workshop, develop a Local Action Plan, formulate local by-laws or resolutions, and publish Localization Guidelines to sustain the local implementation of the WPS resolutions.

The Toolkit was developed through a highly participatory process. The first draft was presented during a global Localization Conference, convened by GNWP in Kathmandu, Nepal in February 2018. The Conference brought together 36 participants from 17 countries - including those who have already implemented Localization, those that were interested in implementing the strategy, and donor countries supporting the Localization strategy. The participants discussed best practices and lessons learned in localizing WPS, and provided concrete inputs and suggestions to the first draft of the Toolkit. The second draft was later circulated for inputs from the Conference participants, as well as UN Women.

Featured Program

Leadership from the Ground Up: Bringing Local Women's Voices to the global discussions on the Sustaining Peace agenda

Following the review of the UN peacebuilding architecture in 2015, in 2016, the UN General Assembly and Security Council adopted twin resolutions (UNSC Resolution 2282 and General Assembly Resolution 70.262), emphasizing the importance of a broad approach to peacebuilding, encompassing all stages of peace, not only the immediate post-conflict reconstruction. The Sustaining Peace agenda recognizes that efforts to sustain peace must continue not only during conflict and in its immediate aftermath, but also long after the conflict ends, in order to prevent the recurrence of violence. It also emphasises the importance of a multi-sectoral, locally-driven and owned approach to peacebuilding and conflict prevention.

The agenda brings with it a great promise of a transformation of the approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Yet, in order to fulfil this promise, it has to be effectively implemented and translated into practical and necessary actions on the ground. This cannot happen without the full and meaningful inclusion of women's civil society at all stages of the agenda's development. To understand how women civil society understands Sustaining Peace, and how they are already operationalizing it, GNWP, with support from UN Women, has coordinated a global research, which comprised of Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) in 15 countries, as well as a multi-lingual survey, which received responses from 49 countries. In total, over 1,500 people participated in the research. The key findings of the study are as follows:

"People should be consulted. When people have no ownership of decisions made that would affect their lives, peace will not be sustained."

GNWP Sustaining Peace research participant from the Philippines



Pictured: Panel discussion featuring preliminary findings of GNWP's research during the High-level Meeting on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace

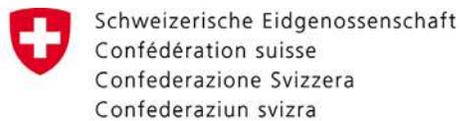
- ▶ To women peace activists, peace is more than an absence of war – it is access to resources, education and employment; presence of strong institutions; and a culture of peace, understood as mutual respect, harmony and inclusion. Consequently, sustaining peace interventions need to focus on long-term, transformative approaches that address these issues.
- ▶ There has been significant progress in the inclusion of women in both formal and informal peace processes, but much remains to be done. However, 13% of respondents still said women are not included at all in peace process; and 30% said they are not included at all in the implementation of peace agreements. Moreover, there is still a need to ensure that the inclusion extends to all women – including young and indigenous women, women with disabilities, and other marginalized groups.
- ▶ Women's civil society is already working to sustain peace. There are numerous examples of initiatives by women's civil society, ranging from educating the youth; promoting and facilitating dialogue and mediation at the local level; organizing neighborhood watch to prevent electoral violence; providing skills training and income-generation activities for women; to supporting the victims of violence and conflict, for example through providing psychosocial support, or shelters for victims of violence.
- ▶ Donor community support is appreciated, but needs to be more locally-driven. While the donor community's efforts to support gender-sensitive peacebuilding initiatives are appreciated, there is a need for stronger local leadership in shaping international agendas and donor priorities. 20% of survey respondents reported that the local civil society was not able to influence the design of donor programs at all, and 17% reported they could do so only to a limited extent.

To disseminate the findings of the research, and ensure that local women activist's voices are included in the policy discussions and practice on Sustaining Peace, GNWP held a side event during the High-Level Meeting on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace, as well as during the 18th Anniversary of UNSCR 1325. GNWP also shared the research findings at a meeting of the Informal Expert Group on WPS, and during an expert-level roundtable on Sustaining Peace, organized by GNWP in partnership with the Global Partnership to Prevent Armed Conflict, International Peace Institute and Dag Hammarskjöld.

GNWP also plans to hold regional and national consultations on Sustaining Peace to facilitate its implementation, and bridge the gap between the policy discussions and the practical and necessary actions on the ground. 

Thank you!

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