2022 was arguably one of the most challenging years for the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP). The continuing conflicts and humanitarian crises in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Lebanon, Myanmar, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria and Yemen, as well as Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, are only some of the difficult situations that our local staff and civil society partners confronted. The conflicts and crises aggravated existing inequalities, violence and discrimination against women and girls. However, as in previous years, the courage and resilience of local women peacebuilders and youth give us hope during this trying time.

Reflecting on the past 12 months, we take stock of our achievements, despite the growing uncertainties globally, and our ambitions to better serve our constituents in the coming year and beyond. Our 2018-2022 Strategic Plan guided our organization’s direction in 2022 and helped us embark on a collaborative process of listening, learning, evaluating and growing to develop a new Strategic Plan for 2023-2027. Building on our successes, setbacks and lessons learned from 2022 and the last four years, our dynamic and forward-thinking Strategic Plan will usher in new organizational growth and enhance our ability to co-create programs and projects with local women and youth peacebuilders. We are confident that this participatory and inclusive approach to charting GNWP’s future will further strengthen GNWP and our constituents to jointly formulate, achieve, celebrate and own the impacts we create.

In the following review, you will learn more about our work in translating UN Security Council policies on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) into practical and necessary actions on the ground. This includes expanding our pioneering Localization of WPS resolutions strategy that puts local women, youth and other community leaders at the center of peacebuilding, conflict prevention and crisis response. Our research and advocacy on cybersecurity and continuing partnership with the media enable us to address emerging threats and generate support from a wider audience. We are excited to continue promoting peace, security and gender equality with our finger on the pulse of emerging global threats and opportunities facing local communities. As we reflect on our progress in 2022, GNWP is grateful for the women, men and gender equality allies at the local, national, regional and international levels who comprise the vibrant Global Network of Women Peacebuilders community. Here is one thing I know for sure. Grassroots movements led by diverse women and young people, supported by various sectors of society, always win the struggle for peace, justice, human rights, and democracy. Always.

In peace,

Maria Victoria (Mavic) Cabrera Balleza
Founder and Chief Executive Officer

MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO
Inclusive policymaking, better implementation

Ensuring participation, inclusivity and accountability in Chad’s NAP on WPS

Over several in-country missions throughout 2022, GNWP facilitated the drafting of Chad’s first NAP on WPS. In partnership with the Ministry of Women, Family and Child Protection and the Public Law Interest Center, GNWP organized workshops to establish an implementation plan for the NAP on WPS, create a robust monitoring and evaluation framework, ensure a dedicated budget, and train local media on gender-responsive and conflict-sensitive communications around the NAP. With support from the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, and our strategic partnerships, we ensured a participatory and inclusive approach in Chad’s NAP on WPS.

Building coalitions to center youth voices in the DRC’s first NAP on YPS

GNWP supported the creation of the Congolese Youth, Peace and Security Coalition, enabling young Congolese to have their voices heard in policy- and decision-making. GNWP’s capacity-building and ongoing guidance to the Congolese YPS Coalition significantly contributed to the development and adoption of the DRC’s first NAP on YPS. The Coalition was inspired by the global exchange among youth coalitions in Canada, El Salvador, the Philippines, and the United States organized by GNWP. The Congolese YPS Coalition promotes synergy between the YPS and WPS resolutions, ensuring a cohesive approach that promises better complementarity and more sustainable implementation.

Local women-led humanitarian crisis response

Saving lives and resisting gender apartheid in Afghanistan

GNWP sustained its support to local communities affected by the June 2022 earthquake and harsh winter in Afghanistan. It provided cash transfers to meet the urgent need for food, clean water, medicine and other essential supplies. GNWP ensured that Afghan civil society groups’ humanitarian responses prioritized the needs of women and girls during these crises. It also supported the construction of deep wells to address the need for clean water in target local communities. To ensure the sustainability and local ownership of these wells, women, young women and other community members were trained in sanitation and water management. GNWP bolsters local humanitarian action with global advocacy by amplifying Afghan women peacebuilders’ and human rights defenders’ voices at international meetings and conferences. In these fora, they urge governments to exert pressure on the Taliban to reinstate girls’ and women’s education and enable women to work, thereby addressing the escalating humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan.

Immediate humanitarian relief, ensuring cybersecurity and supporting survivors of war crimes in Ukraine

One week after Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, GNWP convened the first civil society discussion to hear directly from local women and youth peacebuilders. GNWP’s rapid response to the crisis allowed its local civil society partners to directly distribute cash assistance, food, psychosocial support, and other essential services to communities in need. Additionally, GNWP trained civil society organizations, local authorities and local media practitioners on crisis communications and cybersecurity, as well as accompaniment and support to survivors of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). These workshops led to the formation of multisectoral support networks for survivors of CRSV and other war crimes who decide to testify.
Elevating Colombian youth to address gender-based violence with innovation

GNWP and local partners facilitated the first leadership, peacebuilding and advocacy Training of Trainers for young women and gender equality allies in Colombia. The training empowered participants to collectively design and lead awareness-raising initiatives against gender-based violence (GBV). It also equipped them to advocate for protective measures and justice mechanisms for survivors of GBV using artistic expressions. One such initiative is the community theater production that premiered at the Festival Internacional Mujeres En La Escena (FIME). GNWP’s collaboration with young women, men and gender equality allies in Colombia to promote the synergies between the YPS and WPS resolutions inspired the inclusion of diverse intergenerational voices in the development of Colombia’s first NAP on WPS.

Equipping young women and men to contribute to the institutionalization of YPS in the MENA region

Lebanon’s Young Women Leaders for Peace (YWL) chapter is the most diverse of GNWP’s 13 youth peacebuilders’ networks. Its members include Syrian refugees, Palestinian refugees, Palestinian refugees from Syria, male gender-equality allies and LGBTQIA+ persons. With the skills gained from GNWP trainings, the YWL has been working toward concerted advocacy for a YPS NAP in Lebanon. As a result of the network’s inclusive work, two members were selected by the Ministry of Youth and Sports to represent Lebanon at the League of Arab States’ consultation on developing a regional strategy on YPS in September 2022.

Local women’s voices in decision-making spaces

Amplifying local Bangladeshi women and young women’s voices in multilateral decision-making spaces

In Bangladesh, GNWP advanced our advocacy for the integration of the WPS perspective in humanitarian action through our membership in the Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA) Cluster in Cox’s Bazar, the Global Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action, the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action and the Asia Pacific Regional Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group. The Bangla-English interpretation provided by GNWP during GiHA meetings enabled the meaningful participation of YWL members and other local Bangladeshi civil society organizations in decision-making on humanitarian response. The young women peacebuilders’ involvement in the GiHA is a critical opportunity to bring WPS and YPS perspectives into humanitarian action in Bangladesh.

Consulting youth to ensure integration of their needs and priorities in humanitarian action

GNWP conducted four consultations with young women and men in Myanmar’s Magway Region, Karenni State, Kachin State and Chin State. The consultations highlighted humanitarian challenges in conflict-affected areas, including limited and poor education, lack of access to clean drinking water, food and healthcare, and cyber risks and threats. In August 2022, GNWP facilitated a Peace Exchange between Bangladeshi and Rohingya women, young women, male and LGBTQIA+ gender equality allies from Bangladesh, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand. The Peace Exchange participants developed an advocacy strategy targeted to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to address the Rohingya crisis and call on the government of Myanmar to end the ongoing violence. GNWP also organized a dialogue with Ambassador Jacqueline O’Neill, Canada’s Ambassador for Women, Peace and Security, for participants to present their advocacy strategy during her visit in Dhaka, Bangladesh.
learned about implementing the WPS and YPS resolutions in their communities and countries

2,000+ women, young women and gender equality allies

2 million+ people reached through GNWP media activities, including media and WPS competitions, multimedia productions and journalists' workshops

120 organizational members in 41 countries

30+ countries

GNWP provided technical and financial support to the development of

4 National Action Plans on WPS
1 National Action Plan on YPS
65 Local Action Plans or local laws

#Localizing1325 across

7,325+ women, young women and gender equality allies

learned about implementing the WPS and YPS resolutions in their communities and countries

Humanitarian support provided to local communities in

41 countries with Young Women+ Leaders for Peace (YWLP) networks

Cameroon, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea and Yemen

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, South Sudan and Ukraine
IMPACT STORIES

Tamara Ogorodova, Unity for the Future - Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine

Throughout her many years of work as a humanitarian actor, Tamara has maintained and promoted that "women are the key to peace." In the wake of Russia’s full-scale war against Ukraine, 70 per cent of Zaporizhzhia oblast (region) was under occupation. With GNWP’s support, Tamara and her organization, Unity for the Future, swiftly mobilized humanitarian aid for Ukrainian women to address the devastating impacts of the conflict on local communities.

With guidance from GNWP, Unity for the Future (UFF) delivered humanitarian aid to nearly 300 people, including internally displaced women and young women. Tamara’s leadership enabled UFF to “rapidly provide humanitarian relief and contributed to [local communities’] psychosocial wellbeing because they felt that they are not alone.”

Since the invasion, Tamara and the UFF team have also been responding to the increasing instances of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) in the occupied territories of Zaporizhzhia oblast. GNWP and UFF co-facilitated trainings to support survivors of CRSV, equipping local women and young women with knowledge and skills to address trauma, build resilience, improve mental health and strengthen community support networks. As a result of the training, local civil society developed referral systems to ensure survivor-centered accompaniment through reporting and documenting CRSV.

Tamara shares the skills she learned from the GNWP training with local authorities and social workers. She has generated commitments from the local leaders to support women survivors in need of psychosocial aid and future initiatives combating CRSV.
Wivine Kanyere Kahindo, Young Women+ Leaders for Peace - North Kivu, DRC

After attending trainings on leadership, entrepreneurship, networking and economic empowerment GNWP facilitated between 2018-2022, Wivine realized her dream of becoming an entrepreneur in 2022. She launched her micro-business “Simple for a Second Life.” She produces furniture from used car tires and makes plantain chips.

Wivine now employs 15 young women part-time and is exploring expanding her business to produce other items, such as salted fish. Wivine’s story is also marked by her perseverance, which led her to formalize her business by registering with the Guichet unique (one-stop-shop) and successfully meeting the requirements for a business to be considered in good standing. She recently participated in a business plan competition organized by the Projet d’Appui au Développement des Micro, Petites et Moyennes Entreprises (PADMPME) and supported by the Congolese Bank and DRC’s Ministry of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs). Wivine was awarded a 15,000 USD grant for the construction of a hangar and the purchase of a tricycle and small machinery to grow her business.

“I dreamed of being a company director to empower young women without knowing how to get there. The trainings provided by GNWP to members of the Young Women+ Leaders for Peace encouraged me to set up my own recycling business with some YWL colleagues. Despite the difficulties, my business is up and running in Goma. I reach over 50 customers monthly and work with 15 other young women who are now financially independent. I encourage other young women to become entrepreneurs because that is how we will become truly autonomous and earn respect within the community.”
In Colombia, Cauca has been one of the regions most deeply affected by the armed conflict. Cristina Girón, a human rights defender, peacebuilder and member of the Red Departamental de Mujeres del Cauca (REDEMUC), has advocated for over 20 years for local peacebuilding, women’s rights, women’s economic empowerment and the prevention of violence against women. “Peace advances when the violence against women ends” is REDEMUC’s inspiration to promote the WPS agenda.

With GNWP’s support, Cristina and REDEMUC have enhanced women’s participation at all levels of public life and in implementing the 2016 peace agreement with the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC). Cristina is the local coordinator of GNWP’s Localization of WPS resolutions strategy. Co-facilitating the Localization process with GNWP, Cristina and REDEMUC successfully implemented the strategy in nine local areas. It launched pilots in an additional two, including El Tambo, Mercaderes, Miranda, Morales, Patía, Piendamó, Popayán, Puracé and Timbiquí. Cristina has since conducted the Localization of WPS workshops in nine more municipalities in Cauca.

Cristina and REDEMUC have consistently championed the WPS agenda promoting transformative action that positively impacts the lives of Indigenous, rural, campesinas, young and urban women in Cauca. With GNWP’s guidance, the Localization of WPS workshops led to the creation of sustainable coordination mechanisms to implement the peace agreement. Local Steering Committees were established to oversee the implementation of Local Action Plans (LAPs) on WPS in partnership with local government authorities. Cristina and REDEMUC tirelessly advocate for a gender patrol in Cauca. Through the LAPs, the patrols designed an effective “justice route” that responds to women’s peace and security needs.
Global #Mediafor1325 Award

On 17 March 2022, GNWP and the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) honored three journalists for their work that contributed to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and the supporting resolutions on Women, Peace and Security. Meet the winners:

Beatriz Elena Valdés Correa, Colombia

Beatriz’s winning article was about a young woman who channeled her trauma into empowerment after being sexually violated at the age of 14. After coming first place in the competition, Beatriz served as a trainer for GNWP’s national-level media trainings in 2022 and launched Consonante, a media outlet focused on highlighting local perspectives. She also traveled to Vienna, Austria for the GNWP Regional WPS Conference to participate in a knowledge exchange with local peacebuilders from Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus.

Franck Zongwe Lukama, DRC

Franck’s winning story highlighted how the women of South Kivu are overcoming the negative economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. It also emphasized how women’s work has fundamentally contributed to the city’s economy and regional peacebuilding efforts during the pandemic, despite obstacles and long-standing gender discrimination.

Mercy Tyra Murengu, Kenya

Mercy’s winning submission shined light on the women peacebuilders in the Turkana region of Kenya, faced with conflict related to cattle rattling. She highlighted the Women, Peace and Security committees run by women and how they are shaping society and building peace within their communities.

Read more about the competition here.

STRATEGY SPOTLIGHTS

Media as an Ally: Mainstreaming Women, Peace and Security

GNWP vastly expanded its reach across traditional and non-traditional media platforms. This includes increased collaboration with journalists and media practitioners through the launch of the Global Media and Women, Peace and Security (#Mediafor1325) Award, following the WPS trainings with media practitioners and national-level competitions held in Armenia, Colombia, DRC, Georgia, Moldova, Kenya, Lebanon, Nigeria, Philippines, Uganda and Ukraine from 2020 to 2022.

GNWP partnered with the media to advance regional advocacy on WPS. In the lead-up to the launch of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations’ Regional Plan of Action on WPS, GNWP collaborated with journalists and other media practitioners from Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand. The capacity-building on gender-responsive journalism contributed to enhanced reporting on women’s role in peacebuilding in Southeast Asia.

In December 2022, with the support of Global Affairs Canada’s Peace and Stabilization Operations Program (PSOP), GNWP held an international Media Peace Exchange among the winning journalists from national-level competitions held in Colombia, DRC and Nigeria. These inspiring journalists joined GNWP activities in Beirut, Lebanon, to share their experiences in gender-sensitive reporting with counterparts from Lebanon, offering valuable lessons from their unique experiences reporting on WPS worldwide. Following the exchange, the winners initiated a global network of journalists to raise awareness of WPS resolutions across local communities.
Thanks to GNWP’s leadership in civil society advocacy and the support of UN Women and governments, the WPS-HA Compact was launched in 2021. This year, GNWP was honored to be appointed as Co-Chair of the Compact along with Norway. The Compact is a global movement for action on WPS and gender-responsive humanitarian action with a monitoring mechanism for stronger accountability and effective implementation.

Cutting-edge Advocacy and Research

GNWP sustained its research and advocacy on WPS and Cybersecurity through its project, “Gendering Cybersecurity through Women, Peace and Security,” in partnership with ICT4Peace Foundation. This project examined national-level approaches to cybersecurity and WPS. It provided recommendations to the Security Council and other governments on integrating cybersecurity into implementing the WPS resolutions.

In July and August, GNWP held a series of regional consultations to formulate region-specific advocacy strategies for better understanding and implementing the synergies between WPS and cybersecurity. In December 2022, GNWP hosted a workshop on “Gendering Cybersecurity through Women, Peace and Security,” which representatives of over 20 Member States and UN bodies attended.
Support from the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) in 2022 enabled GNWP to respond with agility and sensitivity to local communities’ urgent needs and priorities in the wake of Russia’s full-scale war on Ukraine. Flexible funding from ADA allowed GNWP to provide local women-led humanitarian relief in multiple oblasts, organize Crisis Communication and Cybersecurity workshops and provide accompaniment and support to survivors of CRSV through trainings for local civil society.

ADA’s support allowed GNWP to initiate catalytic dialogues between local women peacebuilders and women political leaders in Kenya and Moldova. These dialogues led to joint advocacy between local women leaders, parliamentarians and other women political leaders on the effective implementation of NAP WPS.

The Global Affairs Canada’s Peace and Stabilization Operations Program’s (PSOP) support enabled GNWP to sustain and expand its programs on Localization of WPS, media partnership, WPS and YPS synergy in Colombia, DRC, Lebanon, and Nigeria. It also allowed GNWP to expand the Localization program to new provinces in the DRC.

In Asia, PSOP’s support enabled us to continue capacity building with Rohingya women and girls that integrated literacy and numeracy education into peacebuilding. We were also able to sustain our critical work in mobilizing young women in host communities to advocate for the rights of the Rohingya people. Additionally, our continued collaboration with Myanmar civil society and advocacy with the Association of Southeast Nations (ASEAN) to call on Myanmar to end violence and repression against civilians was made possible by the PSOP contributions.

The grant from the U.S. Department of State’s Office of Global Women’s Issues (S/GWI) made it possible for GNWP to break new grounds and implement the Localization of WPS strategy in Cameroon, Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Yemen, and reach new provinces in the DRC. The Localization of WPS in these contexts has brought a critical gender perspective to addressing the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon, expanding WPS in local policy in DRC, integrating peacebuilding and conflict resolution in gender-based violence prevention in PNG and promoting women’s involvement in the ongoing peace process in Yemen.

The multi-year core funding provided by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) ensured GNWP’s resilience, adaptability and capacity to respond to crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, and more. SDC’s core support to GNWP provided the flexibility to seize advocacy and policy-influencing opportunities. It enabled us to dedicate more energy to impact work instead of paperwork and to invest the necessary time and resources into strategic planning, staff development, team building and overall organization strengthening.

Norad’s support enabled GNWP to sustain its joint advocacy with women peacebuilders in Colombia and the Philippines to implement peace agreements. In addition, GNWP reinforced Track 2 (or non-governmental and informal peacemaking), which plays a crucial role in addressing the root causes of conflict in local communities. Some of the Track 2 initiatives incorporated economic empowerment projects and COVID-19 pandemic response. This resulted in greater social cohesion in conflict and crisis-affected communities in Colombia and the Philippines.

The Secretary of Global Women’s Issues also extends our thanks to Channel Foundation, Pinkerton Foundation and Samuel Rubin Foundation’s support to our general operations; to Shipley Foundation for its contributions to the local women-led humanitarian response in Afghanistan, to UN Women HQ on the gendered impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic; and to UN Women Indonesia for supporting our work with the media and Localization of WPS, and awareness-raising and capacity-building on the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on WPS.

GNWP also extends our thanks to OSCE’s support, GNWP mapped key actors and networks engaged in peacebuilding and conflict prevention in Eastern Europe and South Caucasus. Based on these mappings, capacity-building workshops were held to support women peacebuilders in the regions. In Eastern Europe, this workshop was the first bilateral meeting between Moldovan and Ukrainian women activists working on the WPS agenda following the 2022 Russian war on Ukraine. South Caucasus workshop brought together previously unheard voices with more experienced women peacebuilders.

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THANK YOU!

GNWP is grateful to our generous supporters that join us in building a more equal, resilient and peaceful world.