“All peace and security advocates – both individually and as part of organizational work - should read the 2012 civil society monitoring report on Resolution 1325! It guides us to where we should focus our energies and resources to ensure women’s equal participation in all peace processes and at all decision-making levels, thereby achieving sustainable peace.”

-Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury, Former Under-Secretary-General and High Representative of the United Nations

“The GNWP initiative on civil society monitoring of UNSCR 1325 provides important data and analysis on the implementation of the resolution at both the national and local levels. It highlights examples of what has been achieved, and provides a great opportunity to reflect on how these achievements can be further applied nationwide. In this regard my Ministry is excited to be working with GNWP and its members in Sierra Leone on the Localization of UNSCR 1325 and 1820 initiatives!”

-Honorable Steve Gaojia, Minister of Social Welfare, Gender & Children’s Affairs, Government of Sierra Leone

“The 2012 Women Count: Security Council Resolution 1325 Civil Society Monitoring Report uses locally acceptable and applicable indicators to assess progress in the implementation of Resolution 1325 at the country and community levels. The findings and recommendations compel us to reflect on what has been achieved thus far and strategize on making the implementation a reality in places that matter. Congratulations to GNWP-ICAN on this outstanding initiative!”

-Leymah Gbowee, 2011 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

“The civil society monitoring report on UNSCR 1325 presents concrete data and analysis on the implementation of the resolution at national level. It helps us identify priorities for implementation and allocate resources to ensure women’s participation in all peace processes and achieve long lasting peace. A must read for all peace and security actors and advocates. Congratulations to GNWP on this outstanding initiative!”

-Sadhu Ram Sapkota, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, Government of Nepal

“A beautifully presented, thoroughly documented accounting of what is happening to a resolution that came from the grass roots, was vetted by the grass roots and was lobbied for by women for unanimous adoption by the Security Council. Cheers to the women of the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders for their careful, detailed work. GNWP is also making a unique contribution working at localization. It’s about time that some western based organization relied on local women to plan their own peacemaking program. Local women are planning their own strategies in peacebuilding and adapting UNSCR1325 to meet their needs.”

-Cora Weiss (former President, International Peace Bureau, now its UN representative, President, Hague Appeal for Peace)
Author: Sharon Bhagwan Rolls

Researcher: Nia Sheppard

Acknowledgements:
We would like to acknowledge the work of the Fiji Women’s Rights Movement and the Fiji Women’s Crisis Centre and members of FemLINKPACIFIC’s Rural Community Media Network on UNSCR1325 who contribute to the production and dissemination of our Fiji Women, Peace and Human Security reports and community media initiatives.
I. Women, peace and security profile

A. Nature of the conflict

It should be noted that Fiji’s recent history of coups and unelected government and the political climate since the military coup of December 5, 2006 have added a layer of complexity to the issue of women’s participation and political freedoms:

Fiji gained independence in 1970. However since 1987, Fiji has been plagued by ongoing political instability, international isolation and racial tensions between Fijians and Indo-Fijians, the two main ethnic groups. The resulting coup-culture within Fiji has seen four coups take place between 1987 and 2006, with the perpetrators of the latter still remaining in power today.

The rise of ethno-nationalism contributed to the military coup of 1987, and has continued to be used as a catalyst for the political and community insecurities since then. The three times that mainly Indo-Fijian backed parties won elections since 1987, a coup or constitutional crisis brought about the reversion to Fijian controlled Government.

The most recent coup occurred following a protracted public stand-off between the ethnic Fijian, Laisenia Qarase, who led a multi-party government, and the military, the Republic of Fiji Military Forces (RFMF), led by Commodore Frank Bainimarama. On 5th December 2006, Commodore Frank Bainimarama executed a military coup d’état against Qarase’s government, claiming that the election result was not in the national interest.1

On 9 April 2009, Fiji’s Court of Appeal ruled that the government of Frank Bainimarama, Army Commander appointed in the wake of the 2006 coup, was unconstitutional. Immediately Bainimarama, as both commander of the army and prime minister, assumed all powers and abrogated the 1997 Constitution,2 issuing Public Emergency Regulations (PER).3 This resulted in broad and sweeping provisions enabling officials to violate key human rights with impunity.4 It revoked all judicial appointments, effectively sacking all members of the judiciary, caused political parties to hibernate, and suppressed the political aspirations of both women and men. The PER, initially brought in for a period of 30 days, continued to remain in place throughout 2009, 2010 and 2011 and was only lifted on 7th January 2012.5 With the April 2009 abrogation of the constitution and the declaration of emergency, Commodore Frank Bainimarama and the military council consolidated their virtual absolute power in Fiji. Parliament had previously effectively been abolished with the deposing of the Qarase government in December 2006.6

On 9th March 2012, Bainimarama announced a year-long constitution-making process that is currently underway and is scheduled to be completed at the beginning on 2013.7 Elections are currently scheduled for 2014. However, it is likely that the military will continue to exercise political influence after 2014 and the precise future role of the military is currently subject to much discussion amongst civil society organisations.

B. Impact of the conflict on women

The current illegal regime has added a layer of complexity to the issue of women’s participation in processes relating to the state. Arguably, primary areas of concern for women’s rights in Fiji include, but are not confined to; violence and harassment stemming from the political instability, poverty, discrimination in the labor market, gender-based violence, and the low representation of women in public life.8 A report by Fiji Women’s Rights Movements (FWRM) highlighted that women gained more rights with the introduction of the 1997 Constitution, which at clause 38(2) outlaws discrimination on the grounds of gender, disability, and sexual orientation.9 However, as previously mentioned, this Constitution has since been abrogated by the current military regime and the process to develop a new constitution, which will be Fiji’s fourth since gaining independence in 1970, is currently underway. Fiji allows women employed in “enterprise undertakings” twelve weeks of paid maternity benefits at a flat rate of 1.50 Fiji dollars (FJD) paid for by her employer. However it offers weak protections against unlawful termination. In addition, the clear majority of women who work in the informal sector or who are not paid wages do not qualify.10 This continues to feminise poverty and, despite proclamations by the current military regime to honour Fiji’s commitment to international agreements such as UN Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), women continue to make-up the majority of the poor within Fiji.

2 Fiji Constitution Amendment Act 1997 Revocation Decree 2009 [Fiji], Decree No. 1, 10 April 2009
3 Public Emergency Regulations 2009 (Fiji), 10th April 2009
8 CEDAW (2010c) Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Fiji, CEDAW/C/FJI/CO/4, CEDAW, New York
9 Fiji Women’s Rights Movements (FWRM), FWCC (Fijian Women’s Crisis Centre) and Ecumenical Centre for Research, Education and Advocacy (ECREA) (2002), NGO Report on the Status of Women in the Republic of the Fiji Islands, pp. 9, 10.
Under normal circumstances, women in Fiji have unlimited freedom of movement as guaranteed by the abrogated Constitution. However, between December 5, 2006, when the military began the latest coup, until June 2007, there were widespread, systemic human rights abuses committed. These included: The detaining of ordinary citizens and human rights dissidents without warrants; restrictions on freedom of movement; expelling foreign journalists without due process; threatening local journalists; torturing and injuring those perceived to have committed mainstream crimes at military check points, military barracks and police stations; targeting of people suspected of prostitution and transgender persons as part of a “clean up” campaign; arresting, harassing and dismissing members of the public service, police force, boards or tribunals who were thought to sympathize with the deposed elected government or other individuals with tenuous links to the deposed elected government; dismissing and charging civil servants and heads of statutory companies without due process; charging various individuals for bogus and trumped up crimes; militarising the civil service in all sectors at senior levels; appointing to boards and tribunals either military officers or those perceived to support the military; unlawfully suspending the Chief Justice without charges and instigating an unlawful Tribunal of Inquiry against him; appointing to the judiciary and magistracy those perceived to support it; and banning those opposing the regime from travelling outside Fiji, including prominent women’s rights defenders. The more vulnerable members of society have been subjected to extreme degrading treatment and torture, including of a sexual nature. For instance, women activists who had been vocal about the coup in Fiji were taken up to the military camp, some of them forced to run around the ground at the barracks, made to lie face down on the ground and lick the boots of the military officers while other women had their hair cut to humiliate them by getting rid of what is considered one of the elements of beauty for women in Fiji.11

The offices of a prominent women’s rights NGO were raided in March 2009, and tape recordings of interviews with victims of human rights abuses were stolen. No other items were taken. The introduction of the Public Emergency Regulations (PER) in April 2009, which placed restrictions on freedom of speech and assembly, and controlled the activities of the media through strict censorship, continues to significantly stifle awareness-raising and outreach work on human rights, peace and security by NGOs and CSOs. Throughout 2011, Fiji remained under the PER, resulting in enforced media censorship with Regime censors continuing to be a feature in newsrooms. While mainstream information and communication continues to be seriously controlled, since April 2009 and continuing throughout 2011, FemLINKPACIFIC’S community media initiatives have also been subject to stringent restrictions and censorship by the military. Radio broadcast logs, detailing everything that is aired on our station, and all print material, had to be approved by the Ministry of Information prior to each broadcast or publication. Our broadcasts are also intently monitored when on air.

Some of the most active CSOs in Fiji are run by women. Women’s rights groups are active on issues such as reproductive health, providing human rights training, and supporting victims of gender-based violence.12 Dating back to 1987, following each military or civilian coup, women have responded actively calling for respect for the rule of law and human rights, and these have been acts of peace and non-violence. Women were detained in 1987, and again in 2006 for their work. Women human rights activists in particular were detained and suffered at the hands of the military following the takeover in 2006. Women have rallied together, through silent peace vigils which demonstrated our commitment to peace and made the point that we will not be silenced by the acts of the overthrow of any democratic government. We have negotiated at the policy level, as well as by using our women’s networks to communicate with other key political players. Historically women have been at the forefront of creating peaceful solutions in times of political insecurity in Fiji.

C. Relevant policies

On paper, Fiji has introduced a number of significant reforms to improve women’s status including a Women’s Plan of Action (WPA) which identifies five priority areas for the promotion of women’s rights: formal sector employment and livelihood, equal participation in decision-making, the elimination of violence against women and children, access to basic services, and women and the law.13 More detailed information on the progress of the Women’s Plan for Action prior to the 2006 military coup can be found in the previous “Security Council Resolution 1325: Civil Society Monitoring Report – Fiji,” submitted by FemLINKPACIFIC in 2010.14 However, it should be noted that while all Women’s Plan of Action Task Forces were disbanded in 2004/5 to date the revised National WPA 2010-2020 has not served the purpose of advancing gender equality policy commitments despite overtures by the state event to the CEDAW committee (January 2010).

The implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Fiji has been through efforts of NGOs such as FemLINKPACIFIC, to work with national and regional government counterparts. Most notable advancements however remain at the regional level including the establishment of a Regional Reference Group on Sexual and Gender Based violence (2009) and the Regional Working Group on Women, Peace and Security (2010 – 2012) which was co-chaired by FemLINKPACIFIC’s Executive Director.

11 Report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on VAW commenting on Fiji

12 CEDAW(2010a), p.41, 90; US Department of State (2011)


II. Data Presentation and Analysis

A. Participation

Indicator 1 - Index of women's participation in governance 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Women</th>
<th>Number of Men</th>
<th>% of Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women in senior positions in cabinet/ministries and departments</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women in parliament</td>
<td>Suspended since 2006</td>
<td>Suspended since 2006</td>
<td>Suspended since 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total women in national government</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women in senior positions in local governance structures</td>
<td>Data pending</td>
<td>Data pending</td>
<td>Data pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women in senior positions in local governance structures (Provincial Development Board)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women in senior positions in local governance structures (Divisional Development Board)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women in senior positions in local governance structures (District Advisory Council)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women employees in local government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women Chief Executive Officers in local government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women in Senior Management Positions in local government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women in local government field staff positions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women on local government Boards and Committees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On 6 December 2006, the democratically elected Government of Fiji was replaced following a military takeover. Shortly thereafter, the Parliament of Fiji was suspended. At the time, the Parliament of Fiji comprised two houses: the 71-member elected House of Representatives, and the 32-member appointed Senate. The 2006 Parliament had 8 women elected to the House of Representatives and 5 women appointed to the Senate. Therefore, within the last democratic government of Fiji, out of 103 members of both Houses of Parliament, 13 members, or 12.6 percent, were women. 

In 2011, due to the continuation of military rule in Fiji, there are no national bodies of legislature to which women can be elected. In 2011, 1 woman served in the 11 member Cabinet, which is appointed. Of the 35 Permanent Secretaries, 5 are women. Therefore, of those appointed in senior positions in ministries and departments by the interim military government, 13 percent are women — showing that there has been no significant advancement of women's representation in national government structures within the last 5 years, despite the military government’s statement of commitment to a number of international agreements and programmes of action on gender equality. The Fiji women’s movement has commenced discussions on how to integrate gender issues and women’s rights into the constitutional and electoral reform processes schedule which started in 2012.

On 12 April 2012, the first National Women’s Forum was convened in Suva by women’s NGOs. Women’s groups discussed a range of issues, including women’s leadership.

The final National Women’s Forum Outcomes Statement, called for a 50 percent women’s quota in any new national legislature and/or a compulsory 50 percent candidates quota for political parties. However, although these issues still need to be advocated for during the constitution-making process and the lead up to the return to democracy with elections currently scheduled for 2014, a number of interviews and statements by the government suggest that their targets for women’s representation will not be as ambitious. 

16 Information received from Ministry of Provincial Development & National Disaster Management
In Fiji, figures on women employed in local government in particular have not been systematically collected and there is currently no provision, either through the Fiji Bureau of Statistics, Fiji Local Government Association, local governments themselves or various sector organisations, to address this. Some councils are reluctant to provide figures on female staff numbers: this does not support efforts to develop an accurate profile of women in local government in Fiji.\(^{18}\)

However, research undertaken by the Strengthening Women’s Participation in Municipal Governance (SWPMG) Project in Fiji suggests that women are significantly under-represented in local decision making processes (as leaders, managers and citizens) which means that services have been and are currently largely designed and managed by men, and are likely to reflect their priorities and perspectives. Furthermore, the majority of women employed in local government tend to hold support positions within the administration, finance and health service areas.

The loss of women's and men's political voice at the national level has flowed down to local level governance. On 31 January 2009, the interim government of Fiji moved to terminate all elected local government councillors and mayors, installing Special Administrators or Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) to manage local councils for an unspecified period – a situation which continued throughout 2011. Of the deposed councillors, 28 out of 130 were women, making up 14 percent. To date, only one of the seven special administrators has been a woman. She has since retired. The lack of elected and diverse representation in the leadership of local government reduces avenues for women to raise concerns, to be heard on issue of importance, and to feel that decisions being made reflect the priorities of their communities. At a management level, women are also significantly under-represented. Less than 25 percent of local government employees in Fiji are women and only 8 percent are in senior management positions. Without a critical mass, women's decision making voice is severely curtailed.\(^{19}\)

Within the Ministry of Regional Development, which ensures that Fiji’s rural areas are provided with access to opportunities and basic amenities enjoyed in urban areas, the number of women within senior positions fairs somewhat better, with 26 percent and 27 percent of the members of the Provincial Development Board and the Divisional Development Board respectively, being women.\(^{20}\)

Customary notions about women’s role in society may be the biggest impediment to women’s political participation at both local and national level. At the local level, districts and villages have their own chiefs and councils based on extended family networks – a system which is dominated by and continues to favour men. Indigenous Fijian administration is based on the koro, or village, headed by a Turaga ni Koro elected or appointed by the villagers. Within a patriarchal society such as Fiji’s, women are still considered the property of their fathers and husbands and they rarely have access to customary title, chiefly or noble systems which are entry points for political participation especially. There are however a few women chiefs within the traditional system of chiefs that govern parts of Fiji, but the Great Council of Chiefs (Bose LevuVakaturaga) has now also been disbanded, and one high ranking female chief was detained in 2009.

Prior to the 2006 election, the two major political parties specifically promised that there would be an increase in the number of female candidates. Yet, out of the 338 candidates they selected, only 27 (8 percent) were women. This was a reduction of four compared with the 2001 election. At this time the National Alliance Party contested the elections for the first time, and fielded the largest number of candidates and the highest number of women candidates. Obviously, the political situation within Fiji since 2006 has made the activities of political parties more difficult and has greatly stifled their capacity to grow and gain support. However for elections currently scheduled for 2014, if political parties really want to appear sympathetic to gender equality, they need to actively seek more female candidates and allocate them to safe seats, where they have a good chance of winning. Furthermore, as women within Fiji have less access to economic resources than their male counterparts, it is also of particular importance that parties assist candidates to raise the funds to cover the cost of campaigning. The state controls on participation are also having a negative impact on women’s engagement within political parties.

**Indicator 2 - Percentage of women in peace negotiating teams and detailed breakdown of gender issues addressed in peace agreements**

There were no formal peace negotiating processes occurring within Fiji in 2011.

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20 Information received from Ministry of Provincial Development & National Disaster Management
**Indicator 3 - Index of women’s participation in the justice, security sector, and peacekeeping missions**

Figure 3.1: Index of women's participation in the justice, security sector, and peacekeeping missions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of Women</th>
<th>Number of Men</th>
<th>% of Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women in Military (All Levels)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer Positions</td>
<td>Data pending</td>
<td>Data pending</td>
<td>Data pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower positions</td>
<td>Data pending</td>
<td>Data pending</td>
<td>Data pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women in Police</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>3,135</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officers</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>Data pending</td>
<td>Data pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower positions</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>Data pending</td>
<td>Data pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women in Judiciary</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Court</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magistrates Court</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women in Peacekeeping (DPKO data only)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Experts</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troops</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Police</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formed Police Units</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Military**

Women were only first permitted to join the Republic of Fiji Military Forces (RFMF) in 1988 with the graduation of seven women cadets to the rank of commissioned officers. The rapid expansion of the RFMF’s involvement in peacekeeping required a mass recruitment of females which finally took place in 2005 and 2006, suggesting it was international pressure which forced the RFMF to increase the representation of women within the military forces, and not a genuine internal commitment. However, despite this recruitment drive, the representation of women in the RFMF still remains at around 2 percent.

**Police**

A policy put in place in 2003 gave 35 percent of places in the police to women and 65 percent to men. The new human resources policies also promoted a more transparent and fair selection procedure, gave women front line operational roles including elite units, established networks, and promoted zero tolerance of sexual harassment as well as positive media coverage of women in the police force. However, from the current data presented above, it is clear to see that the targets given in the 2003 policy have not been achieved, with women making up only 19 percent of the police force in 2011. The militarization of the police force can certainly be attributed to the lack of gender inclusive spaces.

However, despite the continued low representation of women within the police, thanks to the efforts of women’s civil society groups, the Fiji’s Women’s Crisis Centre (FWCC) continue to advocate for the need to increase women’s access to justice by advocating for human rights training for police officers. They have emphasized the need for police sensitivity in dealing with the cases and have established services to help victims. Recently, UN Women highlighted the improvement in their flagship report about women’s access to justice.

**Judiciary**

The challenging political environment in Fiji has had a widespread and systematic negative effect on the capacity and capability of the judiciary, magistrates and defense lawyers to defend human rights. The disruptions and interventions created by the political environment have also negatively affected development and effective operation of the judiciary, magistrates and independent defence lawyers as defenders of human rights in Fiji. Examples include:

- the entire judiciary and human rights commission being removed in both 1987 and 2009;
- several promulgations restricting the independence of the judiciary and the courts such as the Administration of Justice Decree 2010, which removed such items as the courts’ jurisdiction to hear challenges to decisions by the Government on judicial restructuring, and limited court jurisdiction on cabinet and ministerial decisions and the Limitation of Legal Liability Decree 2010, which extended immunity to the military and the Fiji Police Force against charges or civil liability suits.

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23 Elizabeth Cox interview http://www.radioaustralia.net.au/international/radio/onairhighlights/fijis-police-improve-sexual-assault-response
**Peacekeeping**

There are still few women peacekeepers although there has been an increase in 2011 compared to previous years. Women continue to be noticeably lacking at expert level. It should be noted that before, and immediately after, the military coup of 2006, the United Nations stated that it was not going to engage future or new Fijian troops for new operations. However this policy appears not to have been enforced as an increase in Fijian troops to UN operations took place as early as 2007.

**Indicator 4 - Number and percentage of women participating in each type of constitutional or legislative review (including security sector review)**

*Figure 4.1: Number and % of women participating in each type of constitutional or legislative review (including security sector review) 2012*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review Type</th>
<th>Number of Women</th>
<th>Number of Men</th>
<th>% of Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constitutional Review</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Review</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security Sector Review</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No reviews occurred in 2011. The last major review of Fiji’s security and defence requirements was conducted in 2003-4 and a Draft White Paper was subsequently prepared by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 2005. However, the White Paper was never implemented, as the recommendations it contained (especially the reduction in the size of the military forces) were strongly opposed by the military leadership. TheRFMF subsequently staged the coup of December 2006.24

Furthermore, since the abrogation of the 1997 Constitution in 2009, new laws and changes to existing laws have been made by decree by the President and the military Regime, which have not been subject to any legislative reviews. As women make up a very small percentage of the military and cabinet,25 it could be argued that women have had very little, to no influence, in any legislative procedures since 2009.

The role of the military was addressed in the People’s Charter for Change, Peace and Progress and the State of the Nation and Economy Report (2009) which co-opts the language of human security and recommends the realignment of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces (RFMF) to “enhance the RFMF–community development partnership by strengthening its developmental role to ensure that its professional, technical and social potential is fully realised. This to be achieved through the implementation of the National Youth Service, and in areas such as conservation of biodiversity, basic infrastructure rehabilitation and development, especially in the rural areas through an expanded Engineering Corps; and provision of security services.”

As women make up a very small percentage of the military and cabinet, it could be argued that women have had very little, to no influence, in any legislative procedures since 2009.

Since then, the Bainimarama Government has announced its commitment to developing a new constitution by September 2013 and holding national elections in September 2014. On 9 March 2012, the Fiji Government announced the roadmap for a new constitution making process and the subsequent appointment of a 5-member Constitutional Commission. Three members of the Constitutional Commission are women: Ms TaufaVakatale, the first female Deputy Prime Minister of Fiji; Ms Christina Murray, a constitutional law expert from South Africa; and Ms Penelope Moore, a long-standing human rights advocate in Fiji and the first coordinator for the Fiji Women’s Rights Movement.

From October to December 2012, the Constitutional Commission will collate public submissions and draft a Constitution. In January 2013, the draft constitution will then be submitted to a Constituent Assembly, consisting of representative civil society groups and organizations that are Fijian-registered, including faith-based organizations, national institutions, political parties, and Government. The Constituent Assembly will have 2 months to consider the draft Constitution. Once the Constituent Assembly approves the Constitution, by the end of February 2013, it will then be assented to the President of Fiji.

However, in the outcomes statement of the Fiji Women’s Forum which took place on 20th April 2012, great concern was expressed as the State’s current road map to elections was neither transparent nor inclusive. The process was decided upon by Decree without consultation and engagement from Civil Society,26 and its tight time frame will prohibit the extensive civic education and consultation processes that are required.

**Indicator 5 - Percentage of civil society organizations (CSOs) in task forces on UNSCR 1325 and 1820 (out of total task force members)**

Despite the state’s CEDAW report (2008) highlighting that the appointment of the Minister responsible for Women into the National Security Council would enhance and accelerate the efforts of women in pursuing the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and Women, Peace and Security issues, to date there were no task forces on UNSCR 1325 or 1820 active in Fiji in 2011 as the Department of Women is yet to reactivate any of the task forces of the National Women’s Plan of Action. Additionally, under the current government, there has been no attempt to establish task forces on Peace and Security which would enable human rights based civil society organisations to

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25 There was only 1 woman in the unelected cabinet in 2011, whose influence upon the implementation of new laws is difficult to verify.
participate and contribute to such a process. The legitimacy of any task forces can only be formalised through a democratically elected government.

**Indicator 6a - Level of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and percentage of cases investigated, prosecuted, etc. during times of conflict**

In 2011, Fiji was not experiencing overt armed conflict. However, according to a 2005 Australian government report, there is evidence to suggest that sexual violence has been used as a weapon during flare-ups of armed and ethnic conflict in the country. Furthermore, violence against women was also shown to have increased during periods of political turmoil caused by the coups of 2000 and 2006.

**Indicator 6b - Level of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and percentage of cases investigated, prosecuted, etc. when no conflict is present**

According to the 2010 CEDAW report, as well as the US Department of State human rights report, and from anecdotal evidence from Women's NGOs within Fiji, types of SGBV that remained prevalent in Fiji throughout 2011 included domestic violence, battery, rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, etc. Violence against homosexuals and transgender individuals also continues to pose a problem as highlighted by a number of prominent Women's NGOs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sexual Offences</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>555</td>
<td>586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Harassment</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Abuse</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, women's rights organisations have noted that judges are inconsistent in regard to sentencing in rape cases, with sentences usually ranging from 1 – 6 years. Many women still feel restricted by cultural and social pressures that make it difficult to report gender-based violence. Noting that a high number of complaints were subsequently withdrawn by the victims, a “no-drop” policy became standard in 2008. This policy aims to ensure that all reported cases receive due legal attention, by pursuing investigations even in cases where the woman drops charges. However, according to the US Department of State, women's rights organisations maintained that this policy is not enforced consistently, and that cases reaching court are often dismissed.

A common barrier to gender justice within Fiji is the attitudes of judges, magistrates, police officers, prosecutors and prison officers, in the implementation of laws. For instance, although the Domestic Violence Decree was promulgated in August 2009 police officers and magistrates still appear reluctant to apply for and make the appropriate orders for restraining orders. Additionally while the Decree also empowers any interested members of the community to apply for restraining orders in the courts, there have been few such applications and it also fails to provide for the establishment and maintenance of an education and training programme for police officers which would acquaint them with techniques for handling incidents of domestic violence to minimize the likelihood of injury to the officer and promote the safety of the survivors and his/her dependents. While the Decree stipulates community participation in the eradication of domestic violence there is no provision of support services in the decree. Given Fiji’s economic and social context such a provision is important to ensure that the objective of the decree is met.

The decree also lacks an adequate provision for medical practitioners. Another gap in the Decree is the lack of provisions to establish departments, programmes, services, protocol and duties including but not limited to shelters, counseling programmes and job training programme to aid survivors of domestic violence. This is of particular importance given Fiji’s cultural context whereby most female survivors reside in matrimonial homes or with extended families. Therefore, access to shelters and safe homes is critical. The decree also lacks programmes to assist in the prevention and elimination of domestic violence which includes raising awareness and public education on the subject. This should be based on developing greater understanding within the community of the incidence and causes of domestic violence and on encouraging. The Domestic Violence Decree provides for a very thorough definition of domestic violence and gives police expanded powers to attend and process domestic violence.

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It is critical to reiterate that whilst the decree stipulates the standard of proof to be decided on the balance of probabilities, it fails to provide that the burden of proof in the proceedings is on the accused to demonstrate that he or she was not a perpetrator of domestic violence. Subsequently there remains a lot of pressure for the victim to prove violence, especially in situations when there have been no reports filed with the police.

On November 5th, 2009 the interim government promulgated the Crimes Decree, which came into effect on February 1, 2010. The Decree replaces Fiji’s Penal Code. The Penal Code was drafted in the 1940s and many of its provision were adopted from the Indian Penal Code. The Decree was drafted and brought into effect without consultation or input from women's organizations or any other civil society organizations. The Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM) and other feminist organizations in Fiji have worked towards reforming the Penal Code for more than two decades. For example, one of FWRM’s first campaigns was the “Anti Rape Campaign” in 1986. FWRM’s advocacy work was targeted at reforming provisions within the Penal Code which dealt with sexual violence against women and children. The Decree broadens the definition of sexual violence to include any forced sexual act against a non-consenting person. As compared to the previous Crimes Decree, this definition provides additional protection to survivors of violence, and allows for prosecution of sexual violence against men for the first time.

However, while the Decree contains some improvements from the Penal Code to protect women and girls, and men and boys from sexual offences, those positive changes are on paper, and the standard set by the Penal Code was not a high one. Concerns remain regarding how the Decree will be applied in the courts, particularly in relation to consistent sentencing of offenders. By failing to update the language to incorporate a human rights based approach to sexual offences, the Decree fails to take the opportunity to provide adequate protection for women and girls or replace myths about rape and sexual assault.

The Decree has also broadened the definition of the offence of rape, which now includes the various forms of sexual violence. The Decree has made the offence of rape gender-neutral – rightly recognizing that boys and men can also be victims of sexual assault. The Decree has also removed discriminatory provisions of common law such as corroboration laws and the use of past sexual history of a victim as a means of discrediting the victims’ testimony. Penalties have increased by an average of three years for offences such as attempted rape, defilement of a young person between the ages of 13 and 16 years, defilement of intellectually impaired persons, procuring defilement by threats or fraud or administering drugs. The Decree has substantially increased the penalties for offences such as incest, “householder permitting defilement of a child on premises,” “householder permitting defilement of a person less than 16 years” and “conspiracy to defile.” These changes may be viewed as positive in their intent to update Fiji’s legislation to better recognize and deal with sexual crimes.

However, although there are positive elements in the Decree, it still retains provisions that fail to provide women and girls with adequate redress under the law. For instance even with the increase in penalties for certain sexual offences, the Decree still fails to set a minimum sentence for those offences. Rape and attempted rape have always (even in the old Penal Code) carried a sentence of life imprisonment. However, in practice the convicted rapists and child sexual abusers are frequently given suspended sentences or sentences of less than two years imprisonment. By not providing for a minimum sentence the Decree allows concerns to remain regarding the consistency of sentencing with the issue left entirely to an individual judge’s discretion. It is therefore important that sentencing guidelines (a common practice in many jurisdictions) be formulated and applied. The Decree does not use human rights framework where the laws and legal language used is around the fundamental issues of protecting a person’s dignity, integrity and sexual autonomy. Based on this the Decree fails to protect women and girls’ fundamental rights.

The Decree has retained and not replaced terminology that was used in the Penal Code, such as carnal knowledge, indecent assault and defilement, which are all terms that are based on notions of women’s sexuality and chastity as property that requires protection. Due to its use of archaic language the Decree fails to comply with the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), where article 2 requires that such language should be removed as it perpetuates the understanding that women and girls are “damaged” by the offences and that the use of moralistic language takes away from the violence of the act and also perpetuates myths around women’s sexuality.

It is of concern that child sexual abuse offences are similar to the Penal Code and using Victorian terms of defilement of children under 13 years. FWRM had lobbied to have a separate chapter within the law to deal with sexual crimes against children and young people. As stated in FWRM’s Draft Sexual Offences Legislation (1996) the aim was to recognize the fact that child sexual abuse is a pervasive problem and also to assist in incorporating the specific experiences of minors into the law.
Improving women's access to legal services. The harassment of women in Fiji is a particular barrier to this, with victims often being reminded of the laws, as they are inclined to send women home to reconcile with their husbands, or to minimise their complaints in other ways.

The Domestic Violence Decree (2009) and the Crimes Decree

In Fiji, while the Domestic Violence Decree of 2009 (DVD) and the Crimes Decree of 2009 have to some level significantly improved the legal framework for criminalising and prosecuting cases of sexual and domestic violence, the process is contentious due to the fact that it was undertaken via the decrees promulgated by an unelected government and disregards the decades of lobbying and advocacy by the women's rights movement in Fiji.

Nonetheless, as the CEDAW committee and Fiji Women's Rights Movement have noted recently, the DVD has several serious shortcomings. It stops short of comprehensively criminalising all forms of violence against women, as the CEDAW committee points out, and still leaves the country without a multi-sectoral action plan to address violence against women. The DVD does not establish any training mechanisms for police officers by which the decree will begin to be implemented, nor does it make any provision for support services for survivors of violence. And as such, with all decrees, public consultation and support was not part of the process — nor has dialogue or cooperation been sought from civil society for implementation. Hence, critics observe, it is unlikely that progressive elements of the decree will be operationalized.

The Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE) report cited Fiji's No-Drop Policy for police handling domestic violence cases as a promising practice to discourage women from withdrawing complaints against abusive husbands due to pressure from the abuser or his family. Although the policy has been in place for many years and training by the FWCC and Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) continues, service providers reported that the police have to be continuously reminded of the laws, as they are inclined to send women home to reconcile with their husbands, or to minimise their complaints in other ways.

The current political situation in Fiji is a particular barrier to improving women's access to legal services. The harassment of women's rights defenders by government agents mentioned in the ODE report has continued and is particularly problematic in light of impunity granted to police and military officers by the 2009 Public Emergency Regulation.

As the CEDAW committee pointed out, the trend of ongoing harassment of human rights defenders has been exacerbated in recent years by the impunity police and military officers enjoy under the new regulation (implemented at the abrogation of the Fijian constitution). In certain cases women's human rights defenders have been detained and abused in custody (see CEDAW 2010a). Expert interviewees report that this environment has made activism in Fiji more difficult and dangerous in recent years than it had ever been previously.31

Discriminatory Family Code

In 2009 the Marriage Act was amended by decree, raising the age of consent to 18 and removing the ability of minors under this age to marry with parental consent. The effect on early marriage rates is unknown at this point, since the most recent data is from 1996. Drawing on this data, the United Nations' World Fertility Report estimated that 10 percent of all Fijian girls between 15 and 19 years of age were married, divorced or widowed. According to the Marriage Act, both men and women are free to independently choose their spouses. Although arranged marriages occur in some Indian communities, a study by the Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) reports that both parties must consent to the proposed union. Polygamy and bigamy are illegal in Fiji as declared in the Crimes Decree of 2009. Legislation grants parental authority to both parents with regards to the upbringing of their children. In the event of divorce, both parents have equal right to custody, and the court will make a final decision in the best interests of the child, in regard to child custody. Legally, men and women have equal rights to inheritance. However, women have no inheritance rights to customary land and tradition favours male heirs over their female counterparts when it comes to inheritance.

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### Indicator 7 - Number and quality of gender-responsive laws and policies

#### Figure 7.1: Number and quality of gender-responsive laws and policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Law Name &amp; Year</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Result of the Law</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence Decree (2009)</td>
<td>Improved definitions of domestic violence in accordance with international standards and expanded authority to police to investigate and prosecute cases of domestic violence.</td>
<td>Significantly improved the legal framework for criminalising and prosecuting cases of sexual and domestic violence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Crimes Decree (2009)</td>
<td>Broadens the definition of sexual violence to include any forced sexual act against a non-consenting person.</td>
<td>This definition provides additional protection to survivors of violence, and allows for prosecution of sexual violence against men for the first time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Law Act</td>
<td>Based on a no fault system and takes into consideration women's unpaid work.</td>
<td>Judges and lawyers do not implement but it is legislated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Restricted Resources and Entitlements**

Women in Fiji have full ownership rights, including the same legal rights as men in access to land and access to property other than land. However, a recent (2010) CEDAW report reports that women have relatively limited knowledge of these rights and frequently accept not being recorded as co-owners in documents concerning titles or other transactions of family assets. Fijian women also tend to be excluded from the decision-making process on disposition of communal land. Fijian law provides men and women with the same access to bank loans and credit. In reality, access is biased towards men as they are better positioned to provide collateral and/or an initial deposit, a situation hampered by the concentration of women in low-paying, less secure occupations. Women in particular have been hit hard by declines in the sectors where they comprise a majority of workers, such as tourism and the garment industry as well as a high proportion of workers in the informal sector. In response, the Fiji Development Bank and the Ministry of Women are taking steps to improve the situation by creating special credit schemes for women. However, anecdotal evidence from rural women have also highlighted challenges for women to access financial schemes and projects as many of the patriarchal social structures remain entrenched.

**Restricted Physical Integrity**

The Crimes Decree of 2009 has defined and criminalized rape in Fiji, recommending as punishment imprisonment of 10 years for attempted rape and life for rape. Spousal rape is a criminal offence under the Domestic Violence Decree. The Domestic Violence Decree of 2009 created a specific offence of domestic violence, as well as removing previous requirements that a couple attempt reconciliation before a case could be brought. Sexual harassment is a prohibited under the Human Rights Commission Act.

Fiji still requires laws on sexual violence and changes to employment law to ensure gender equality. Better training of judges and lawyers and wider consultations when making law, utilising gender technical experts, is also required.32

**Indicator 8 - Number and nature of provisions/recommendations in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and other transitional justice reports on women’s rights**

Currently there are no efforts by the state to initiate a TRC process in Fiji.

**Indicator 9 - Percentage of women (versus men) who receive economic packages in conflict resolution and reconstruction processes**

There has not been any relevant process in Fiji since October 2000.

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32 Information from Fiji Women’s Rights Movement
III. Conclusions and recommendations

More than 2,000 days have passed since the military coup of December 5, 2006. Throughout this period FemLINKPACIFIC has worked to support members of our Rural Women’s Community Media Network on UNSCR 1325 to remain visible and to be able to continue to raise their voices to define their peace and human security priorities.

Since 2007 FemLINKPACIFIC’s rural community media network meetings, consultations and community radio broadcasts have provided a participatory and interactive process to link rural women’s networks with initiatives such as the Fiji Women’s Forum and other women’s rights groups to also provide relevant support to enable rural women to engage proactively in process of democratization, including Constitution submissions.

The plans for supporting women’s engagement during the timeline for submissions were very much informed by the monthly network meetings and documentation and reiterate the need to apply UNSCR 1325 within the core budgets of national governments as well as investing in women’s civil society as the leaders in advancing UNSCR 1325 at country and regional level.

Efforts in the Pacific to date to apply UNSCR 1325 to Security Sector Governance have been closely connected to campaigns such as the annual 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence including raising concerns about the way in which countries continue to spend enormous amounts of money every year on militarism, and the global campaign was an opportunity to collectively call for a shift in priorities in order to achieve sustainable development, gender equality and peace!

In 2011 our effort to demonstrate community radio as a safe space for the broadcast participants to link to the global theme, FemLINKPACIFIC localized the theme connecting it to the monthly “1325” network discussions on Women, Peace and Human Security using a UNSCR 1325 lens.

Community media, including community radio continues to enable women to talk about issues closest to them. To connect processes and define where the transformation is needed as women continue to highlight the lack of health facilities in remote communities as well as the high cost of living and the difficulty women are facing to find employment.

The 2011 campaign coincided with the announcement by the state that the 2012 Budget would increase the military budget by FJD5.2 million “due to the additional 42 troops for the Iraq Mission” with an additional FJD550,000 allocated for military infrastructure upgrade.

This is the same amount allocated to the Women’s Plan of Action, which is focused on “(providing) training to women in the rural and urban areas and in the process assist in the implementing of their projects that promotes the social and empowerment of women” while an additional FJD300,000 is provided for repairs and maintenance of health facilities, including health centers and 103 nursing stations in the 4 divisions.

Investing in women, peace and security strategies will enable women to define a national action plan for UNSCR 1325 focusing on four pillars:

(i) Prevention: Prevention of conflict and all forms of violence against women and girls;
(ii) Participation: Women participate equally with men and gender equality is promoted in peace and security decision-making processes at local and national levels;
(iii) Protection: Women and girls’ rights are protected and promoted; and
(iv) Relief and Recovery: Ensuring such responses highlight and meet women and girls’ specific relief needs and ensuring that women’s capacities to act as agents in relief and recovery are reinforced in humanitarian crises situations.

Those are the policy commitments in addition to CEDAW - and our work at local level is to make it relevant especially through women’s leadership.

It is in this context that we reiterate that the state must ensure a smooth transition to parliamentary democracy because no number of decrees can replace the legitimate process of decision making, including one where women’s participation is supported through access to information as well as the time, the resources and the energy to pick up and pen and write her submission on legislation and laws in order to define the Fiji she envisages for her children’s future.

It is not simply enough to “invite” her to the table. She needs the political security within her home and community to feel that she can question the societal and governance structures that impede her participation. She needs to also claim and celebrate leadership for and by women in all our diversities.

Recommendations

State Level:

- Work with women’s rights organisations to develop a Gender Policy incorporating CEDAW and UNSCR 1325.
- A gender and Security Sector Governance working committee to be established within the National Security Council and its membership should include “1325” experts from the women’s rights movement. The working committee will be responsible for the review of defence and national security policy, their postures and budgeting processes, in order to meet human security needs.
- An affirmative action policy for the Police force setting in place a gender task force on recruitment and training.
All official publications must give the full and proper gender analysis of the economic status of society. An important part of the strategy of engendering Budgets must be full commitment by Governments to budget for the marginal resources that are needed by the Bureaus of Statistics in the region, to provide gender disaggregated statistics and basic analyses from the information they currently collect from the economy and society.

Reform public service broadcast policies to ensure a quota of content and gender mainstreaming of content.

Development of assistance programmes should be designed to strengthen the media sector to take into local community needs, including the implementation of the Digital Strategy of the Pacific Plan and recognition and support for existing community initiatives and provision of appropriate equipment such as wind-up radios.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs in close collaboration with women’s rights groups should collect names and profiles for national lists of women experts for nomination to high level posts, as special envoys, and to eminent person groups, to be contributed to the regional and international databases to ensure Pacific Women peace-makers are considered for appointment.

State must implement commitments to the elimination of all forms of gender-based violence, particularly domestic violence, which increases in the build up to, during and after conflict, in collaboration with women’s human rights experts and advocates.

Police must increase level of response to the violation of women’s security, and uphold standards to build confidence and trust that may have been eroded through corruption, violence or abuse of power.

Gender equality should be incorporated into law reform processes, especially family, civil, labor and land reforms. National legal systems should penalise and remedy all forms of violence against women in conflict and post-conflict situations. Specially trained police units should be established to investigate crimes against women. Law enforcement officials, including judges, police and armed forces, should be sensitised about such crimes. Women’s access to justice should be ensured though legal literacy programmes, support services and legal aid.

UN Level:

Support the integration of UNSCR 1325 and CEDAW in the political process of Fiji including through a specific allocation of funds for women’s rights groups.

All troop and police contributing countries to UN Peacekeeping Missions should engage gender experts and expertise to be included in all levels and aspects of peace operations.

All troop and police contributing countries to UN Peacekeeping Missions should develop pre- and post-deployment training in UNSCR 1325, international human rights standards, violence against women and the UN’s Zero Tolerance Policy.33

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33 FemLINKPACIFIC Policy Initiative Women, Peace & Security: Policy for peace in Our Region, FemLINKPACIFIC, 2011, Print

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REPORT OF FIJI ISLANDS GOVERNMENT, Crimes Decree, 2009

REPORT OF FIJI ISLANDS GOVERNMENT, Domestic Violence Decree, 2009


"All peace and security advocates – both individually and as part of organizational work - should read the 2012 civil society monitoring report on Resolution 1325! It guides us to where we should focus our energies and resources to ensure women’s equal participation in all peace processes and at all decision-making levels, thereby achieving sustainable peace." - Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury, Former Under-Secretary-General and High Representative of the United Nations

"The GNWP initiative on civil society monitoring of UNSCR 1325 provides important data and analysis on the implementation of the resolution at both the national and local levels. It highlights examples of what has been achieved, and provides a great opportunity to reflect on how these achievements can be further applied nationwide. In this regard my Ministry is excited to be working with GNWP and its members in Sierra Leone on the Localization of UNSCR 1325 and 1820 initiatives!" - Honorable Steve Gaojia, Minister of Social Welfare, Gender & Children’s Affairs, Government of Sierra Leone

"The 2012 Women Count: Security Council Resolution 1325 Civil Society Monitoring Report uses locally acceptable and applicable indicators to assess progress in the implementation of Resolution 1325 at the country and community levels. The findings and recommendations compel us to reflect on what has been achieved thus far and strategize on making the implementation a reality in places that matters. Congratulations to GNWP-ICAN on this outstanding initiative!" - Leymah Gbowee, 2011 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

"The civil society monitoring report on UNSCR 1325 presents concrete data and analysis on the implementation of the resolution at national level. It helps us identify priorities for implementation and allocate resources to ensure women’s participation in all peace processes and achieve long lasting peace. A must read for all peace and security actors and advocates. Congratulations to GNWP on this outstanding initiative!" - Sadhu Ram Sapkota, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, Government of Nepal

"A beautifully presented, thoroughly documented accounting of what is happening to a resolution that came from the grass roots, was vetted by the grass roots and was lobbied for by women for unanimous adoption by the Security Council. Cheers to the women of the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders for their careful, detailed work. GNWP is also making a unique contribution working at localization. It’s about time that some western based organization relied on local women to plan their own peacemaking program. Local women are planning their own strategies in peacebuilding and adapting UNSCR1325 to meet their needs." - Cora Weiss (former President, International Peace Bureau, now its UN representative, President, Hague Appeal for Peace)