Gender and Conflict

Topic Guide

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GSDRC topic guides aim to provide a clear, concise and objective report on findings from rigorous research on critical areas of development policy. Rather than provide policy guidance or recommendations, their purpose is to signpost policymakers and practitioners to the key debates and evidence on the topic of focus to support informed decision-making.

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Contents

Executive summary

This topic guide responds to the need for deeper understanding of how gender and conflict interrelate in fragile and conflict-affected situations (FCAS), and of gender-sensitive approaches in such contexts. Drawing on a literature review, it highlights key texts and identifies the strength of evidence alongside gaps in evidence. It summarises the evidence on the role of gender inequality in producing or exacerbating the structural causes of different forms of violence and conflict, and on the multi-layered effects of violence and conflict on gender relations. The topic guide also signposts evidence on the effects of interventions to support gender equality in FCAS, and emerging lessons.

The evidence base for exploring these issues is limited in a number of ways. Much of the available literature is secondary, and conceptual or normative. Only a few empirical studies, focused on a limited number of countries (mostly in Africa), apply a multi-country comparative approach or qualitative country case study methods. There are few rigorous randomised control trials or impact evaluations able to attribute improved development outcomes or processes of conflict transformation to gender-sensitive approaches in FCAS.

There are three main arguments in the literature for incorporating gender in conflict-related work**.** One is that promoting women's and girls' rights in conflict-affected contexts has instrumental value. Another, rights-based, argument is that gender equality has intrinsic value. A third is that gender and conflict are linked in ways that are poorly understood, and that this deficiency needs to be reversed if real impact is to be realised.

Evidence indicates that conflict affects women, men, girls and boys differently in their experiences of violence, health impacts, economic activity, and political and civic inclusion. Conflict can result in short-term changes in traditional gender roles, though long-term changes may be more elusive. Both men and women can be the victims and the perpetrators of violence.

Barriers to building gender equality in FCAS include the resilience of patriarchy, violence and women's exclusion. There are also risks – or potential unintended consequences – associated with incorporating gender in conflict-related work, both for populations and donors. These include potential backlash against women and girls, and the risks of data collection on gender issues in conflict-affected contexts.

Key definitions

Conflict, **violence, and organised violence** are the use or threat of physical force by groups (civilians, states, social groups). Conflict and violence take many forms, including outright civil war, large- or small-scale communal conflicts based on regional, ethnic, religious or other groupings, and domestic violence (World Bank, 2011, p. xv).

Conflict sensitivity implies understanding conflict dynamics and the potential effects of interventions on them, to avoid negative impacts and maximise positive ones (Conflict Sensitivity Consortium, 2012, p. 2).

Gender means 'the socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to the two sexes on a differential basis. Gender is relational and refers not simply to women or men but to the relationship between them' (UN Women, 2014, p. 42).

Gender relations are relations between men and women, between men, and between women, characterised by negotiation, bargaining and exchange (True, 2013, p. 2). Gender relations, including constructions of masculinities and femininities, determine access to power and resources in society (True, 2013, p. 2).

Gender mainstreaming involves assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, so that the concerns and experiences of both sexes are considered in their design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (UN Women, 2014).

Gender sensitivity implies an understanding of gender differences and their role in producing social norms and power relations, and adapting approaches to these dynamics (Saferworld, 2014, p. 6).

Peace means either the absence of violence (negative peace) or the presence of cooperation, freedom from fear, equality and integration (positive peace) (Galtung, 1967, p. 14).

Peacebuilding aims to create conditions in which violence will not recur, including strengthening national capacities for conflict management, and laying the foundations for sustainable peace between social groups (UN 2010, p. 5).

Statebuilding is 'an endogenous process to enhance capacity, institutions and legitimacy of the state' (OECD, 2008, p. 1). Statebuilding involves developing reciprocal relations between a state that delivers basic functions and services, and citizens who confer authority and legitimacy on it.

Key sources defining gender and conflict

- Saferworld. (2014). *A gender sensitivity resource pack: Community safety training, outreach, and advocacy in Nepal*. Saferworld
  http://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/view-resource/793-a-gender-sensitivity-resource-pack

- OECD. (2008). *Statebuilding in situations of fragility – Initial findings*, Paris: OECD.
  http://www.oecd.org/dac/governance-peace/conflictandfragility/docs/41212290.pdf

- Galtung, J. (1967). *Theories of peace: A synthetic approach to peace thinking*. Oslo: PRIO.
  https://www.transcend.org/files/Galtung_Book_unpub_Theories_of_Peace_-_A_Synthetic_Approach_to_Peace_Thinking_1967.pdf

- UN Peacebuilding Support Office. (2010). *UN peacebuilding: An orientation*. New York: United Nations. http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/pbso/pdf/peacebuilding_orientation.pdf

- World Bank. (2011). *World development report: Conflict, security and development.* Washington DC: World Bank http://go.worldbank.org/QLKJWJB8X0

- Conflict Sensitivity Consortium. (2012). *How to guide to conflict sensitivity.* CSC
  http://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/view-resource/646-how-to-guide-to-conflict-sensitivity

1 Concepts, debates and frameworks

1.1 Why gender matters in FCAS

Two main rationales for the integration of gender sensitive approaches in fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS) recur across the literature. First, the normative argument notes the intrinsic importance of gender equality for the achievement of human rights (Greenberg & Zuckerman, 2009). Second, the instrumentalist argument emphasises the value of gender equality for conflict prevention, conflict transformation, peacebuilding and the achievement of broader development outcomes (OECD, 2013a; Harders, 2011). Much of the literature draws attention to the significance of gender sensitivity in FCAS for aid effectiveness.

It is argued that all forms of collective and individual violence are gendered processes and that conflict dynamics influence and recreate masculinities and perpetuate women's disadvantage (OECD, 2013a). Understanding gender dynamics is vital for avoiding unintended negative consequences, or inadvertently doing harm to gender relations in situations of conflict (OECD, 2013a; Anderlini, 2011). Gender-blind programming might unintentionally worsen women's status. Aligning aid with locally legitimate institutions, for example, could reinforce discriminatory practices; and promoting women's rights may create a backlash against them (OECD, 2013a). On the other hand, gender analysis can identify opportunities to reshape gender relations, particularly in the formative stages of statebuilding.

1.2 International policy frameworks

A number of normative policy frameworks at the international and national level promote gender equality, including in FCAS. Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 aim to empower and protect women in situations of violence and insecurity. They incorporate both *general* protections for women (based on the similarities between men and women) and *special* protections (based on the differences between men and women) (UN Women, 2012a). In 2013, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) adopted General Recommendation No. 30, which obliges states to prevent, investigate, punish and ensure redress for crimes against women by non-state actors. For further resources on prominent international commitments and frameworks, see Table 1, below.

While international frameworks reflect an emerging international consensus on the significance of gender in conflict, some experts argue that certain laws problematically depict women as victims and males as perpetrators, and focus too much on the protection of women. This can undermine women's agency and fails to consider their broader experience of and roles in armed conflict (Barrow, 2010).

What impact has international law had?

There is a paucity of evaluations of the impact of international law on gender and conflict. An impact study of 12 UN peacekeeping operations in 11 countries finds that success varies in the implementation of UN Security Resolution 1325, and that overall, gains have been modest (UN, 2010). While women's political participation has increased significantly, there has been only modest success in including women in disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes and little success in including more women in peace negotiations (see section 2.5). The presence of female peacekeepers has helped to

challenge traditional ideas of gender and encourage women to enter the security sector, but there are still too few women in this sector.

Legal and judicial reforms have helped support the adoption of gender equality provisions in national constitutions and relevant national laws. However, progress on improving gender balance and building capacity across the judicial system is less clear. While better legal structures are in place to address sexual and gender-based violence, it continues with impunity in many conflict-affected areas (UN, 2010).

An evaluation by the OSCE (2012) finds no coordinated initiative to implement UNSCR 1325 – and no systematic exchange of best practice or lessons learnt – in the OSCE region. It calls for states to establish timelines for implementing reform, set baselines for gathering meaningful statistics, and commit funds for audits to measure progress (OSCE, 2012).

What impact have national action plans had?

A number of international organisations, regional bodies, and countries, have developed National Action Plans (NAPs) for the implementation of UNSCRs 1325 and 1820. NAPs are designed to promote women's participation in decision-making, mainstreaming women's views in all aspects of prevention and prosecution of conflict-related crimes, protection from gender-based violence, and women's role in relief and recovery. The process of developing a plan provides the opportunity to coordinate relevant cross-ministry actions (Swaine, 2013), although this does not necessarily occur in practice.

Approaches to NAPs vary, as do their quality and content. While evidence of the impact of NAPs is weak (EPLO, 2013), the literature discusses various implementation challenges. These include lack of genuine participation of key stakeholders and political actors, weak accountability, lack of a dedicated budget, and a focus on measuring outcomes rather than results (Swaine, 2013; EPLO, 2013).

Gaps between national-level commitments and subnational implementation are causing concern. Strategies are being developed to involve local governance structures and decentralise NAP implementation, and to monitor and evaluate at regional and community levels (Swaine, 2013). NAPs developed through inclusive processes are more likely to be implemented (EPLO, 2013). Recent reports highlight the need for more specific progress indicators (FCO, 2013; UN Women, 2013).

UN Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security

- **UNSCR 1325 (2000)** calls for the prevention of conflict, stronger participation of women in peacebuilding, the protection of women's rights during and after conflict, and a gender-sensitive approach to peacebuilding http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1325

- **UNSCR 1820 (2008)** addresses SGBV. While men and boys are not mentioned explicitly in the resolution, due to resistance from some member states, the term 'civilians' is used to refer to men and boys http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1820

- **UNSCR 1888 (2009)** reinforces UNSCR 1820 http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1888

- **UNSCR 1889 (2009)** reinforces UNSCR 1325 by calling for steps to improve its implementation. These include indicators and proposals for monitoring mechanisms. It also highlights the importance of gender-sensitive economics and education in FCAS. http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1889

- **UNSCR 1960 (2010)** reinforces UNSCR 1820. http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1960

- **UNSCR 2106 (2013)** addresses sexual violence and conflict. http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/2106

- **UNSCR 2122 (2013)** focuses on the protection of civilians. http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/2122

Table 1. International policy frameworks

Framework	Resolution and key provisions	Further information
Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)	At the 1995 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing, states committed themselves to establishing mechanisms to promote women's rights – including national action plans, gender strategies and legal frameworks.	http://www.un.org/en/events/pastevents/pdfs/Beijing_Declaration_and_Platform_for_Action.pdf
Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	Adopted in 1979, defines what constitutes discrimination against women and outlines agenda for national action to end discrimination.	http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/ http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/CEDAW/GComments/CEDAW.C.CG.30.pdf
UN Women, Peace and Security Agenda	The UN Security Council (UNSC) has passed seven resolutions under the Women, Peace and Security agenda (see box above).	http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/issues/women/wps.shtml
EU Comprehensive Approach for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820	UNSCR 1325 is a guiding principle for European Security and Defence Policy operations, and the EU has also developed a gender mainstreaming framework.	http://eeas.europa.eu/csdp/documents/pdf/news144_en.pdf http://eeas.europa.eu/special-features/working-with-women/docs/01-eu-comprehensive-approach-1325_en.pdf
NATO action plan	The action plan to mainstream UNSCR 1325 was endorsed in 2010. NATO is incorporating a gender perspective in crisis management, operational planning and exercise planning from the higher political and strategic level to the field-level.	http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_91091.htm
OSCE action plan for the promotion of gender equality (GAP)	Dates back to 2004 and focuses on six priority areas: equal opportunities; violence against women; legal frameworks; conflict prevention; national mechanisms; and political participation.	http://www.osce.org/pc/14713?download=true http://www.osce.org/mc/17450?download=true http://www.osce.org/mc/17451?download=true http://www.osce.org/mc/40710?download=true http://www.osce.org/mc/86085?download=true

1.3 Gender, violence and peace in the post-2015 agenda

Conflict and violence have been important factors obstructing progress on the MDGs (World Bank, 2011). It has been argued that the post-2015 framework of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) must address the most common drivers of conflict and violence (Saferworld & Conciliation Resources, 2014).

Several international organisations, including DFID and the OECD, called for a stand-alone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment to be included in the SDGs (Saferworld & Conciliation Resources, 2014; OECD, 2013b; UN, 2013). This was included as 'Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls'. Its proposed targets include ending all forms of discrimination and violence against all women and girls. The SDGs also include 'Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels'. This goal's proposed targets include 'significantly reduce all forms of violence'.

A stronger focus on gender equality could provide an impetus to improve the availability and quality of gender equality data and statistical capacity building, resulting in better tracking of progress. Calls to integrate gender-specific targets and indicators in the other SDG goals include separate monitoring for men and women, or boys and girls, where appropriate (OECD, 2013b).

1.4   Current debates and trends in gender and conflict

There is some debate about whether international policy frameworks on gender and conflict reinforce stereotypes of the roles of men and women. Some experts argue that certain laws generalise women as victims and focus excessively on the protection of women (Barrow, 2010) (see section 1.2). There is also a critique that the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda's focus on engaging with and supporting women, more generally, undermines the adoption of a gender-relational approach (that defines masculinities and femininities in relation to one another, and acknowledges men as gendered subjects) (Myrttinen, Naujoks & El-Bushra, 2014; Sudhakar & Kuehnast, 2011). Others argue instead that exclusive attention to women is necessary to counter the male point of view that traditionally dominates conflict and security discourse (Myrttinen et al., 2014) (see section 3.2).

International gender commitments may also clash with pragmatic, power based approaches. Some argue that the focus on elites at the outset in political settlement processes undermines UNSCR 1325, which calls for women's equal and full participation at all stages of the promotion and maintenance of peace and security (Castillejo, 2011) (see section 3.3). This provision can also be undermined by the view that other forms of identity, such as ethnicity, are more important fault lines for conflict. There is debate about whether it is better to wait for specific points in the conflict and peace cycle that will serve as more effective entry points for women's issues (Aker & Noma, 2012), or whether it is essential for women to be included in peace processes and for gender equality goals to be considered from the outset (Domingo, Holmes, Rocha Menocal, & Jones, 2013) (see section 3.3).

Debate around gender-sensitive conflict analysis often centres on the need to consider men alongside women rather than equating 'gender' with 'women'. It is argued that a gender relational approach enables more comprehensive and robust gender and conflict analysis. It can also enable exploration of how gender intersects with other identities, which could improve identification and targeting of

vulnerable groups (rather than focusing automatically on women and children as a generic whole) (Myrttinen et al., 2014; Sudhakar & Kuehnast, 2011; El Bushra & Sahl, 2005) (see section 3.2).

The relationship between conflict and gender is widely discussed. There are assertions that while women and girls are more likely to be victims of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), SGBV against men and boys and against sexual and gender minorities is also prevalent and should be acknowledged and addressed (Sivakumaran, 2010). The relative neglect of SGBV against men and boys is often attributed to stereotypes of women and girls as victims and men and boys as perpetrators (Linos, 2009) (see section 2.2).

There is also growing exploration of the persistence of high levels of SGBV in the aftermath of armed conflict. Some experts argue that this is tied to issues of masculinities and identity: former male combatants feel emasculated, due to disarmament, few economic opportunities and altered gender roles during conflict, and seek to reassert male domination through violence (Schäfer, 2013; Specht, 2013; Sudhakar & Kuehnast, 2011).

Much of the literature emphasises, however, that although gender roles may be altered during conflict, with women taking on increased responsibilities and gaining economic independence, these changes are short-lived and do not translate into lasting economic and political gains (Domingo et al., 2013; Justino Cardona, Mitchell, & Müller, 2012) (see sections 2.2 and 3.3). They advocate for ensuring that women gain power alongside responsibility, and that men's roles are re-envisioned (see section 3.4). An emerging approach to changing social norms and behaviours is involving men and boys as 'change agents' – helping them to understand the causes and consequences of their behaviour to promote change (Myrttinen et el., 2014) (see section 3.3). Addressing issues of masculinity in post-conflict programming has the potential to contribute to changes in individual attitudes and behaviours (Sudhakar & Kuehnast, 2011) (see sections 2.2 and 3.3).

There is a growing debate about the effectiveness of quotas for women's representation in solidifying and advancing political gains for women after conflict. This period provides a unique opportunity for the transformation of political systems. While much of the literature points to the effectiveness of the tool in increasing the percentage of women in parliament, there is another view that quotas alone are not sufficient. They may not translate into greater decision-making powers for women or an increase in gender-sensitive policies. This may be due in part to exclusion of women from informal networks and relationships, which are particularly prevalent in FCAS (Domingo et al, 2013; Anderlini, 2011; Castillejo, 2011) (see section 3.4).

2 Relationship between gender and conflict: the evidence

2.1 Impact of gender on conflict

Does gender inequality fuel violence?

Isolated case studies and cross-national statistical analyses have identified correlations between levels of inequality and propensity for conflict or violence, but they cannot prove causality. A recent review concludes that it remains unclear whether or how gender inequality fuels violence (or whether gender inequality is a proxy for something else that may cause conflict) (Saferworld & Conciliation Resources, 2014). Gender inequality may be part of broader structural inequalities and norms of discrimination and violence that contribute to mobilising groups and legitimising violence (Caprioli 2005). Isolated studies provide some evidence of the following:

- Qualitative, cross-country research suggests that patriarchal gender relations intersect with economic and ethno-national power relations, fuelling a tendency toward armed conflict (Cockburn, 2010). Quantitative analysis, comparing data on micro-level gender violence and macro-level state peacefulness, indicates a correlation between higher levels of domestic violence and a greater chance of violent conflict. While it has not been possible to establish a causal link, findings emphasise the importance of the responsibility to prevent violence against women (Hudson, Ballif-Spanvill, Caprioli, & Emmett, 2012). Statistical datasets also suggest that higher levels of gender inequality in a country correlate with increased likelihood of intra- and inter-state conflict (Melander, 2005), although this is contested by some.

- Qualitative, cross-country case studies have also concluded that gender identities (ideal characteristics of men and women) can contribute to the motivations that lead to war and perpetuate violence (El-Bushra & Sahl, 2005). Qualitative studies in Colombia and Guatemala (and interviews with female combatants in Sri Lanka and Nepal) find that domestic and communal violence perpetrated against young women compelled them to flee and join gangs or insurgencies (Moser, 1997; Winton, 2005, cited in Anderlini, 2011).

- Caprioli's studies (2003; 2005), based on theoretical inquiry and statistical analysis, argue that while extreme and systematic gender inequality is correlated with political violence, higher levels of gender equality (represented in this study as lower fertility rates and a higher percentage of women in the labour force) are associated with lower risks of intra-state conflict. A subsequent study by Melander (2005) finds that while female state leadership has no effect on levels of intra-state armed conflict, the percentage of women in parliament and the ratio of female-to-male higher educational attainment are associated with lower levels of intra-state armed conflict. There is no clear established causal link, however. In general, these studies suggest that improvements in gender equality and women's security could contribute to stability (Anderlini, 2011).

These findings mirror much of the qualitative and empirical work on gendered early warning indicators (see section 3.1). This work claims that increased gender disparity and reduced physical security for women are among the earliest signs of crisis and violence (Anderlini, 2011).

For further resources, see the GSDRC's topic guide on Gender and report on *Links between gender-based violence and outbreaks of violent conflict*.

Gender and social exclusion

Evidence on the intersection between gender, conflict and social exclusion is limited, but rigorous. Most socially excluded groups experience multiple deprivations that reinforce each other (e.g. exclusion from economic and political power). Research shows that while both men and women experience social exclusion, women in many societies suffer disproportionate discrimination, lack of power, and relative poverty, even in economically rich households (Stewart, 2006). Although social exclusion does not necessarily result in violent conflict, economically and politically deprived individuals – particularly among young men – may consider violence a means to gain respect, status, and material advantage. They may, for example, gain financially from employment in rebel armies (Stewart, 2006).

Gender and youth unemployment

The intersection of gender, conflict and unemployment is also under-researched. One recent isolated study from Nigeria illustrates how youth unemployment increases young people's vulnerability to mobilisation by rebel groups or gangs. The study's evaluation of youth employment and empowerment interventions finds that lack of gender analysis and responsiveness as well as a lack of conflict sensitivity reduced these programmes' quality and impact. Moreover, the politicisation of such programmes can actually contribute to conflict (Banfield, 2014).

2.2   Impact of conflict on gender

A range of factors, including ethnicity, age, and occupational group, may affect how people experience conflict more than differences between men and women. Nevertheless, there is consistent evidence that women, men, girls and boys experience conflict differently, and that conflict has differential impacts on men and women.

Gender-based violence (GBV) and violence against women and girls (VAWG)

Gender-based violence (GBV) is violence targeted at individuals or groups on the basis of their gender. Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) is directed specifically at females. While VAWG is considered to be a useful proxy indicator of rising tensions and incipient conflict (see section 3.1), ensuing violence and armed conflict themselves can exacerbate gender-based violence. Isolated case studies have documented how women experience multiple types of violence as a result of war. Qualitative interviews with young women who returned from abduction into the Lord's Resistance Army in northern Uganda, many of whom were forcibly given as 'wives' to commanders, indicate links between different forms of violence and discrimination. These women experienced physical and sexual violence in an armed group, verbal and physical abuse from extended family members, and from intimate partners (Annana & Brierb, 2010).

It has been increasingly emphasised that sexual violence cannot be seen merely as an inevitable 'by-product' of war and insecurity, but deserves specific attention as a strategy of war and as a form of insecurity. In addition, Wood (2009, cited in Sudhakar & Kuehnast, 2011) finds that whether sexual

violence occurs during conflict depends partly on the dynamics of armed groups (their policies and strength of command structure), which may either tolerate sexual violence or forbid and punish such acts.

Evidence also suggests that while women and girls are more likely to be victims of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), **SGBV against men and boys** is also widespread during conflict (Sivakumaran, 2010). A review of UN responses to sexual violence against men and boys finds that while there have been positive developments – in understanding the problem, measures of prevention and protection, and consequences for accused perpetrators – much more remains to be done (Sivakumaran, 2010).

Stereotypes surrounding masculinity and a culturally permissive approach towards violence against men may lead to under-reporting and reduced health-seeking behaviour (Linos, 2009). A study of the experience of civilian males during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina finds an extra level of stigma associated with violence against men when heterosexual men are sexually violated (Linos, 2009). **Sexual and gender minorities**, i.e. lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons (LGBTI) may also be targeted, yet this has received minimal attention. During and after conflict, armed groups may engage in policing conservative, heterosexual gender norms, violently targeting LGBTI communities. LGBTI persons are also vulnerable to sexual violence and abuse by security forces, informal violent groups and individuals, particularly in barracks, police stations, prisons and detention centres, refugee and IDP camps, and at border facilities (Myrttinen et al., 2014).

Anderlini (2011) finds that the **long-term impact of SGBV** committed in conflict is rarely addressed. Such impacts include undermining reconciliation efforts and rehabilitation (particularly of victims), fuelling retributive violence, and higher rates of sexual disease, including HIV/AIDS, among rape victims. In Rwanda, for example, HIV prevalence in rural areas rose from 1 percent prior to the genocide in 1994 to 11 percent in 1997 (UNAIDS, WHO, cited in Anderlini, 2011, p. 11). A study based on female and male combatants who experienced sexual violence in Liberia found that they had worse mental health outcomes than non-combatants and former combatants who had not suffered from SGBV (Johnson et al., 2008, cited in Buvinic, Das Gupta, Casabonne, & Verwimp, 2013). It is important to track these longer term impacts in order to assess the full consequences of violent conflict and to design appropriate interventions (Johnson et al., 2008, cited in Buvinic et al., 2013): more data and research are needed.

Much of the literature emphasises that the end of armed conflict may not necessarily end SGBV. People's experiences of violence may lead them to view violence as normal (Harders, 2011). Rather than representing an isolated event, such violence can more appropriately be seen as a point along a continuum (Sudhakar & Kuehnast, 2011). Many post-conflict societies experience high levels of sexual and domestic violence (Schäfer, 2013). This is closely tied to the issue of **masculinities and identity**. Male ex-combatants who return, traumatised, to few economic opportunities and to changed gender roles (stemming from the conflict) may see SGBV as a way to re-establish male domination (Schäfer, 2013; Sudhakar & Kuehnast, 2011; see also section 3.4).

Reducing gender-based violence in post-conflict situations requires action to: increase educational and economic opportunities and the accountability of the criminal justice system, minimise substance abuse, and improve the coping mechanisms of families and individuals exposed to extreme violence (Annana & Brierb, 2010). Women and girls are not the sole targets of such violence; there are also reports of assaults on other men and armed robbery (Schäfer, 2013). These issues are exacerbated by the lack of outlets for

men to openly express their social, emotional and psychological needs – and for them to be addressed (Myrttinen et al., 2014).

For further resources, see the sections on gender-based violence and gender and fragile and conflict-affected states in the GSDRC's Gender topic guide, the section on women in conflict-affected areas in the GSDRC's Conflict topic guide, as well as the Violence against women and girls helpdesk and Virtual Knowledge Centre to End Violence against Women and Girls. See also the sub-section on social norms in section 3.4 of this topic guide and the GSDRC report, *Links between women's empowerment (or lack of) and outbreaks of violent conflict*.

Gendered health impacts

The health impacts of conflict can be direct (battle-related deaths) or indirect (e.g. increased risk of disease transmission) (Murray et al., 2002). A recent secondary review concluded men have a higher risk of death during conflict, whereas women and children constitute a majority of refugees and the displaced (Buvinic et al., 2013). Isolated quantitative studies provide contradictory evidence of the effects of conflict and fragility on the life expectancy ratio of men and women. One study found that conflict reduces women's life expectancy disproportionately to men's, because women are more affected by the indirect effects of economic change (e.g. increases in food prices), displacement and sexual violence – and consequently the risk of HIV/AIDS (Buvinic et al., 2013; Plümper & Neumayer, 2005). Another, more recent statistical analysis found conflict does *not* have a significant impact on gender parity in life expectancy; rather internal conflicts seem to harm males and females equally (Gates, Hegre, Nygård, & Strand, 2010). There is evidence that conflict affects maternal mortality: in 2008, the eight countries with the highest maternal mortality rates were either experiencing or emerging from conflict (Saferworld & Conciliation Resources, 2014). In addition, a meta-analysis on sex differences in trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder finds that females are at greater risk than men of experiencing these conditions after traumatic events (Tolin & Foa 2006, cited in Buvinic et al., 2013).

Gendered economic impacts

It is widely posited that conflict alters women's economic role in the household and broader society. While rigorous evidence is limited, recent comparative, cross-country case studies (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Kosovo, Nepal, Tajikistan and Timor-Leste) illustrate that armed conflict can increase women's economic activity, primarily through participation in labour markets. In some cases, this is associated with increases in overall household and community welfare (Justino et al., 2012). In general, however, female employment often involves low-paid, low-skilled jobs, self-employment in the informal sector, or unpaid family labour (Justino et al., 2012). The effects of conflict on women's economic activity differ by age and life status. Statistical data from Rwanda document how conflict economically empowered widows, probably driven by necessity. In contrast, married women continued to conform to traditional notions of women's role, engaging in domestic tasks and subsistence farming (Schindler, 2011). In general, the economic opportunities open to women are shaped mostly by culture and tradition, education, and access to land and resources (O'Connell, 2011).

There is some country-specific evidence (Colombia, East Timor and more weakly, Nepal) that supports the argument that women's greater economic participation contributes to their empowerment within households (measured by the share of women's contribution to household income) (Justino et al, 2012). Based on case studies, (Sudan, Uganda, Angola, Mali, and Somalia), El Bushra and Sahl (2005) find that

women in some instances gain decision-making power within the family once they become the main breadwinner. In general, however, they find that while the practices of social institutions may change in conflict contexts, it is usually to a limited degree.

Overall, there is insufficient longitudinal research to ascertain whether temporary adjustments to gender roles through periods of conflict have had lasting impacts. Justino et al. (2012) argue that social, economic and political gains that women may have achieved during the conflict tend to disappear in the post-conflict period. Although there is little empirical evidence on the economic status of war widows, existing evidence suggests that these female-headed households are more vulnerable and have a higher incidence of poverty than male-headed households (Myrttinen et al., 2014; Buvinic et al., 2013). Such vulnerability to poverty can persist across generations. It is thus important to target widows and their families with assistance in order to halt this inter-generational transmission (Buvinic et al, 2013). To date, there has also been little or no research conducted on the reintegration of same-sex couples (whether ex-combatants, IDPs, refugees or abductees) after armed conflict (Myrttinen et al., 2014).

Gendered impacts on political and civic activity

Conflict can create opportunities for women to play an increased role in political decision-making (Domingo et al, 2013). Hughes (2009) finds that longer, larger scale wars that contest the political system and/or change the composition of government have produced the best outcomes for women to gain parliamentary representation. A third of the countries that have 30 per cent or more women in parliament experienced recent conflict, fragility or a transition to democracy (UN Security Council, 2012, p. 10). Evidence from Rwanda, Mozambique, Uganda, and Tajikistan suggests that structural and cultural mechanisms combined with political openings have resulted in post-conflict gains in women's parliamentary representation (Hughes, 2009). In addition, more women in Africa have tended to run for presidential office in FCAS (DRC, Liberia, Rwanda and Sierra Leone) than in countries that have not recently experienced conflict (Tripp, 2012, cited in Domingo et al, 2013).

Similar to the case of gendered economic impacts, however, women in most (but not all) post-conflict contexts have been unable to formalise and translate political gains made during conflict into post-conflict political representation (Hughes, 2009). Although there are examples of women having taken political roles at community and national levels (Sudan, Uganda), the evidence is inconsistent. In many other examples women have not made inroads into power structures at the community level (El Bushra & Sahl, 2005) or at higher political levels.

Violence against 'political' women is common in FCAS, and is a key factor deterring women from participating in public life (True, 2013). In El Salvador, for example, reasons given for women's lower engagement in civic issues and politics than men included increased public insecurity (NDI Survey, cited in Anderlini, 2011, p. 38). Women human rights defenders may be vulnerable to abuse and exploitation as a result of the presence of international actors and peacekeeping troops (APWLD, 2007). Extremists can also gain power in conflict situations and violate human rights where traditional, religious and customary norms are rigidly imposed (APWLD, 2007). In post-conflict situations, the dangers facing women human rights defenders can increase during periods of impunity when the rule of law is interrupted (APWLD, 2007).

For further discussion, see sub-section on 'Enhancing women's political and civic participation' in s.3.4 on Addressing gender equality.

3 Approaches, tools and interventions: building gender sensitivity in FCAS

3.1 Conflict prevention

Gender-sensitive early warning

Incorporating gender into early warning – analysing the differences in men and women's perceptions of security – can help create a fuller picture of conflict risks. Higher levels of gender equality and women's physical security are increasingly considered to be important indicators of general stability. Deterioration in women's security and increases in gender disparity can be among the earliest signs of crisis and violence (Anderlini, 2011). Nevertheless, most early warning and early response systems remain gender blind (Zdunnek 2010). This could lead to responses that are inadvertently harmful to women or detrimental to gender relations (UN Women, 2012b). A review of 30 early warning and assessment frameworks found that only 11 indicators out of 832 made any reference to gender or women (UN Women, 2012b). Some gender-sensitive conflict early warning indicators do exist, but are rarely used at the community-level (Zdunnek, 2010).

Obstacles to incorporating gender into early warning include scepticism about the pay-offs, and practical challenges of implementation (UN Women, 2012b). Non-specialists in gender often lack understanding of the issues, and data from women, especially on gender-based violence, can be particularly sensitive to collect (UN Women, 2012b).

Gender-sensitive conflict monitoring

Gender-sensitive conflict monitoring systems use information about women and men, and gender relations, to understand conflict dynamics, identify actors and processes that would prevent conflict, and build peace in a gender-sensitive way. A pilot in the Solomon Islands indicated that women and men attached different risk ratings to certain indicators of conflict (Goetz & Treiber, 2006). The pilot's success relied on positive engagement from the national authorities, so that participants were not exposed to any danger by participating, and so their participation resulted in real change at the policy level.

The sensitivities around gathering information on women, peace, and security issues create gaps in data that impede monitoring and evaluation (GNWP, 2013). Some multilateral organisations have recently developed sets of indicators. For example, the UN agreed in 2011 on the UN Strategic Results Framework on Women, Peace and Security, which includes 26 indicators for measuring progress in advancing UNSCR 1325. The Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP), a programme of the International Civil Society Action Network, has developed a set of locally acceptable and applicable indicators that enable civil society organisations to measure the degree to which UNSCR 1325 is being implemented across different countries (see GNWP, 2013).

3.2 Gender-sensitive conflict analysis

The inclusion of gender perspectives into conflict analysis can provide a more nuanced and effective understanding of conflict factors, actors and dynamics. Such analysis can highlight the gendered nature of the causes and impact of conflict, providing a deeper understanding of the structural issues that need to be addressed through peacebuilding (Anderlini, 2006). Gender variables are, however, often missing from conflict analysis and conflict assessment frameworks. Many conflict analysis frameworks mention gender issues – for example, the need for women's participation in consultative processes, or for understanding of the role of gender in social exclusion – in only a cursory sense (Anderlini, 2006). Resistance to undertaking gender-sensitive conflict analyses is partly fuelled by the lack of rigorous evidence that gendered approaches make a significant difference to the quality of interventions in FCAS (Anderlini, 2006).

Guidance for carrying out gender-sensitive conflict analysis is not well developed. The term 'gender' is still often used synonymously for 'women', resulting in the failure of gender analysis to acknowledge that gender is relational and that men also possess gender identities (Sudhakar & Kuehnast, 2011). Masculinities and femininities can be defined in relation to one another. For example, women tend to gain economic responsibility in conflict contexts, while men lose it (El Bushra & Sahl, 2005). Acknowledging men as gendered subjects makes it possible to ask men and women similar questions in gender analysis, and to understand what conflict and peace mean to men and to different sorts of men, and what men mean to conflict or peace (Myrttinen et al., 2014).

A gender-relational approach to gender and conflict analysis should include how gender difference intersects with other identities (age, social class, sexuality, disability, ethnic or religious background, marital status or urban/rural setting) in shaping and being shaped by violent conflict – and in providing opportunities for transformative change (Myrttinen et al., 2014; El Bushra & Sahl, 2005). Most power is often held by older men, for example, excluding younger men and women (Harris, 2011). A gender-relational approach could identify and target vulnerable groups more precisely (instead of automatically focusing on women and children generally). Myrttinen et al. (2014) find in their case studies that particular men and sexual and gender minorities also experience vulnerabilities. Men and women are not homogenous groups, but play and experience different roles during conflict. Male victims of sexual violence and men who have witnessed sexual violence against female relatives are rarely considered. In addition, female combatants are often overlooked in disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programming, due to a view of combatants as male (Sudhakar & Kuehnast, 2011).

For further resources, see the section on gender and conflict analysis in the GSDRC's conflict topic guide.

Gender-sensitive political economy analysis

Some experts recommend that donors adopt a political economy approach to gender analysis (Castillejo, 2011), as well as integrating gender issues into any conflict, security, and economic analyses. There is growing acknowledgement that gender inequalities are linked to the nature of the political settlement (Castillejo, 2011) and that inequalities and marginalisation are drivers of conflict and crisis (Browne, 2014). Gender has not, however, been widely incorporated into political economy analysis (PEA) (Browne, 2014). Incorporating gender into PEA means understanding how gender inequality relates to power relations and resource allocation (Browne, 2014).

3.3 Gender-sensitive peacebuilding and statebuilding

A gender-sensitive approach implies recognising that peacebuilding, statebuilding and conflict are 'gendered' processes in two senses: men and women are affected differently by conflict, and gender roles shape statebuilding outcomes (OECD, 2013a). Peacebuilding and statebuilding processes present opportunities to embed gender equality goals in emerging political settlements and to achieve legal changes to eliminate gender-based discrimination. Greenberg and Zuckerman (2009) call for three related rights to be guaranteed to women post-conflict: the right to participate in policy-making and resource allocation, the right to benefit equally from private and public resources and services, and the right to build a gender equitable society. Such changes can, however, be slow to affect the real dynamics of gender relations. Even where conflict has produced changes in gender roles, discriminatory structures and social norms tend to reassert themselves afterwards (Domingo et al., 2013).

There is limited research and evidence on the links between peacebuilding and statebuilding processes and outcomes and the adoption of gender-responsive approaches aimed at improving gender equality (Domingo et al., 2013; Anderlini, 2011). Guidance on what does and does not work in incorporating gender into peacebuilding and statebuilding processes remains patchy (OECD, 2013c).

There can be tensions between international gender principles and local social and religious norms that may not be supportive of gender equality (Domingo et al., 2013). In addition, international gender commitments may clash with pragmatic, power-based approaches.

Domingo et al. (2013) argue that given the weak state presence in many fragile and conflict-affected states, gender-responsive approaches should focus not only on formal state institutions but also on non-state actors and informal institutions. Informal patterns of power and resource allocation can, however, be harder to shift (Castillejo, 2011).

Promoting women's role in peacebuilding

Women have generally been under-represented in peace negotiations, both in numbers and status (where they often constitute 'informal' participants) (Justino et al., 2012; UN, 2010). In a review of 31 major peace processes (1992-2011), women made up only 4 per cent of signatories, 2.4 per cent of chief mediators, 3.7 per cent of witnesses, and 9 per cent of negotiators (UN Women, 2012c, p. 3). While an increase in the inclusion of women in formal peace and post-conflict processes has been reported since the adoption of UNSCR 1325, there is little information on efforts to integrate women in peace processes and extremely limited evidence of the impact of this increase (Justino et al., 2012).

Robust evidence indicates that only a small proportion of peace agreements (five out of 48 agreements analysed) concretely address women's representation, protection, and recognition (Ellerby, 2013). In a study of 585 peace agreements between 1990 and 2010, only 16 per cent refer to women (Bell & O'Rourke, 2010, cited in Justino et al., 2012). In addition, UNIFEM (2010, cited in Anderlini, 2011, p. 28) finds that only 18 of 300 peace agreements signed since the end of the Cold War mention sexual and gender based violence.

A key challenge to greater inclusion of women's concerns in peace agreements and in peacebuilding and statebuilding efforts is that women are not seen as central to 'making or breaking' a peace agreement. Other forms of identity, such as ethnicity, are considered to be a more fundamental fault line for conflict

(Haynes et al., 2011). The effectiveness of women's peace initiatives may thus depend on timing: in particular, it may be important to identify points in the conflict cycle when gender identity supersedes other identities, and therefore when women's platforms might serve as an entry point for breaking the cycle of violence (Aker & Noma, 2012).

Others emphasise, however, that efforts to include and reference women in peace agreements and peace processes are necessary from the outset to maximise the prospects of embedding gender equality goals in the new 'rules of the game' (Domingo et al., 2013). The greater mobilisation of women in the peace processes in Burundi, Guatemala, Sudan and Uganda, for example, resulted in their early inputs being channelled into decision making. This enabled gender-related issues to be included in some measures, such as support to victims of sexual violence and services for widows and displaced households (Domingo et al., 2013).

Effective inclusion of women may entail challenging prevailing myths – for example, 'mediators lose valuable political capital by urging parties to include women', or 'women's issues' are discrete, separable topics' (Nderitu & O'Neill, 2013). Success is also associated with the inclusion of a critical mass of women (30-40 per cent is recommended) (Reimann, 2012). Recent research finds that where women were strongly involved in peace processes and negotiations, there was a much greater likelihood that an agreement would be reached and implemented.[1] The research emphasises that the mere presence of women is not sufficient to affect gender equality. Rather, the quality of their participation is important. Where women played a strong role in the negotiation process, they were able to bring more issues to the table that specifically addressed women's inclusion and rights (Graduate Institute of Geneva, 2015).

Gender-sensitive DDR

While women and girls have specific needs in DDR, these processes often do not focus sufficiently on female combatants. In Sierra Leone, for example, despite reports of 12,000 women involved in rebel groups, only 506 went through the DDR process (Save the Children, 2005, cited in Justino et al., 2012). The neglect of women is partly due to the widespread perception of women as victims in armed conflict, rather than as combatants, and also to greater difficulties in tracking them. Given the persistence of traditional gender roles, women tend to disappear after fighting ends to avoid stigmatisation and associations with killings and violence (Justino et al., 2012).

It is important that DDR processes are gendered processes, taking into consideration not only men and boys, but also the needs of women and girls (and of particularly vulnerable groups among them). Two programmes (in Eritrea and Burundi) considered successful in involving female ex-combatants in reintegration programmes included extensive door-to-door outreach, and the option of opening microfinance accounts at no cost (see Justino et al., 2012).

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[1] When women were strongly involved, an agreement was reached in all cases (14 cases, 100%). Where women were involved to some extent, an agreement was almost guaranteed (9 out of 10 cases, 90%). In contrast, when women were not involved, the chances of reaching an agreement were much lower (5 out of 9 cases, 66%). The strong involvement of women also resulted in much higher chances of the agreement being implemented (10 out of 14 cases, 70%), in contrast to when women were not involved (4 out of 10 cases, 40%) (Graduate Institute of Geneva, 2015).

There are also risks that DDR can result in loss of identity of men as fighters and protectors, and removal of freedom for women who have broken out of traditional gender roles. Tensions may arise between empowered women and frustrated men, which may contribute to gender-based violence (Specht, 2013).

For further resources, see section on Gender and peacebuilding and statebuilding in the GSDRC's Gender Guide, in particular the sub-sections on security sector reform, and gender and transitional justice.

3.4 Addressing gender inequality

Supporting women's economic empowerment

A review of small-scale projects found that women's economic gains tend to be higher where men have been particularly severely affected by conflict (O'Connell, 2011). However, even where women assume new economic roles during conflict, these do not necessarily improve gender relations afterwards, especially where men continue to control economic resources, resist women's empowerment, or use sexual and gender-based violence (O'Connell, 2011). Interventions that simultaneously address women's strategic interests (e.g. participation in decision-making inside and outside the home) and their practical needs have achieved success in some contexts (O'Connell, 2011). Natural resource management can serve as an entry point for women's engagement in peacebuilding, including through decision-making on natural resource management and economic empowerment opportunities in natural resource sectors (UNEP, 2013).

Another review of economic recovery programmes in post-conflict contexts finds limited evidence of what works on the integration of women in these programmes (Justino et al., 2012). There was no evidence that employment generation programmes were able to support the continuing involvement of women in labour markets following conflict. This could be due to lack of evaluations or failure to design programmes effectively. There was also limited rigorous evidence on the impact of microfinance schemes on post-conflict economic recovery, gender equality or peacebuilding. While there have been positive results on women's empowerment and contributions to household welfare and community development in some contexts, they are not generalisable across post-conflict countries. The evidence on community-driven development programmes, while limited, indicates that they have the potential to improve women's status through greater involvement in local decision-making processes (Justino et al., 2012).

Supporting women's organisation

Some country evidence (El Salvador, Peru, Sierra Leone and Sri Lanka) suggests that not all women go back to pre-war roles in post-conflict settings and that some women may continue in their leadership roles in new civil society organisations (CSOs) (Wood, 2008, cited in Domingo et al., 2013). Guidance on supporting women's organisations in FCAS is, however, limited. Nevertheless, research shows that women's local community organisation is vital for their empowerment in a post-conflict setting (Pant & Standing, 2011). Women's social and grassroots movements are a potentially important means to promote women's rights and gender equality in the post-conflict period (Domingo et al., 2013).

Qualitative research, based on the former Yugoslavia, has also drawn attention to the role of localised, informal systems of women's political mobilisation in peacebuilding. This local type of activism is important since much physical violence during conflicts occurs at the community level. Such activism has the potential to improve conflict resolution (Korac, 2006). Donor support to women leaders and women's

CSOs during transition processes can increase women's capacity to engage politically and exert influence (Domingo et al., 2013).

Enhancing women's political and civic participation

Quotas are one of the most frequently used tools for increasing women's political participation in FCAS (Domingo et al., 2013). There is evidence that they are effective: women in post-conflict countries with quotas are elected to an average of 30 per cent of parliamentary seats, in comparison with 7 per cent in countries where quotas are not used (Domingo et al., 2013; UN Women, 2012). Further, women in post-conflict countries with quotas tend to build on their electoral success over time, subsequently exceeding quota levels, and this does not occur in post-conflict countries without quotas (Domingo et al., 2013). Castillejo (2011) finds that where quotas are in place there are fewer barriers to women's participation, i.e. cost, violence and stigma. In addition, a study by UN Women (2012, cited in Domingo et al., 2013) highlights research showing that gender quotas in post-conflict contexts seem to ensure that other disadvantaged groups are more likely to gain parliamentary representation – with a positive and related correlation between such inclusion and conflict prevention.

Greater women's political participation does not, however, necessarily translate into greater decision-making powers, or to an increase in gender-sensitive policies (Domingo et al., 2013; Anderlini, 2011; Castillejo, 2011). Quotas should be combined with support for women to develop skills in building informal networks (prominent in FCAS) and negotiating, and with training male leaders to work with women (OECD, 2013c).

Changing social norms and addressing masculinities

While conflict frequently changes gender roles, with women taking on increased responsibilities, research indicates that gender identities, institutions and ideologies often remain the same. Increased responsibility of women, for example, is often viewed in line with prior expectations of their role – providing what the family needs (El Bushra & Sahl, 2005). To make greater headway towards gender equality, women need power alongside responsibility and the role of men also needs to be re-envisioned (El Bushra & Sahl, 2005).

Male demobilised soldiers and ex-combatants often perceive the handover of weapons as a loss of power, and often respond with sexual and general-based violence (Schäfer, 2013; Sudhakar & Kuehnast, 2011). This is particularly the case for child soldiers, who have had limited opportunities to learn about peaceful forms of conflict resolution and other ways to express masculinity (Schäfer, 2013). (See also s. 3.2.)

An inclusive approach to gender, moving beyond a narrow focus on women to address issues of masculinity, can lead to better research, policy and practice (Sudhakar & Kuehnast, 2011). There is emerging qualitative evidence that cultural, media, sports and leadership programmes can be effective entry points for addressing masculinities and working with boys and adolescents in FCAS (Schäfer, 2013; Sudhakar & Kuehnast, 2011). Male leadership programmes (Sudhakar & Kuehnast, 2011) and helping men and boys to understand the causes and consequences of their behaviour (Myrttinen et al., 2014) have succeeded in changing individual behaviours in several countries (Burundi, Nepal and Uganda). This has included reducing levels of violence against women and girls. It is much harder, however, to alter underlying patriarchal norms (Myrttinen et al., 2014). Partnerships with male community leaders and opinion shapers could contribute to altering these norms (Schäfer, 2013; Anderlini, 2011). There is

evidence that high-level political support, levered by a coalition of women's organisations, has triggered changes in Rwandan attitudes concerning gender roles. In other cases (Uganda and Eritrea), however, governments' commitment to gender equality resulted in a backlash, as the rights framework conflicted with entrenched norms (El Bushra & Sahl, 2005).

See also the GSDRC's helpdesk report on changing attitudes and behaviours towards gender equality.

3.5   Negotiating risks

Research has highlighted some risks – or potential unintended consequences – associated with incorporating gender into conflict-related work. One is a backlash against women and girls where donors fail to take into account the impact of gender equality programmes on men (OECD, 2013a). In addition, collecting gender equality data in FCAS can be risky. Female activists, researchers, and informants are vulnerable in conflict settings because of the security risks and because these women can be perceived as stepping outside their traditional gender roles (Anderson & Olsen, 2003, cited in Moser, 2007).

When women's economic empowerment is not prioritised, peacebuilding processes can lead to new forms of gendered exploitation, such as early marriage and sex trafficking, because women in post-conflict countries often have few income generating alternatives (True, 2013). Due to the weakness of civil society in post-conflict settings, there are calls for donors to support women's CSOs without dictating agendas (Castillejo, 2011).

3.6   Assessing impact

The current lack of monitoring and evaluation of impact of interventions on gender-related outcomes, and consequent absence of evidence to support gender-responsive programming, has made it difficult to make the case that programming must consider the needs of men and women in conflict, conflict prevention, peacebuilding and statebuilding (Anderlini, 2011). It has also made it difficult to understand the channels through which initiatives can affect gender equality in conflict affected and fragile contexts. (Justino et al., 2012). In addition to the lack of impact studies, there is also limited understanding of what impact should look like. Discussion, research and evidence are much needed here.

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