

### 1325 Snapshots from the Field: Examples of Good Practices and Lessons Learned within Projects on Women, Peace and Security

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## 1325 Snapshots from the Field

Examples of Good Practices and Lessons Learned within Projects on Women, Peace and Security

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Germany is one of the key donors when it comes to peace and security initiatives through international organisations such as the United Nations (UN) or the European Union, as well as civil society organisations. Generally, the awareness for an intersectional gender dimension in programmes and projects dealing with peace and security initiatives has increased during the last two decades, also through various funding schemes. By now there exists a relatively comprehensive normative framework around gender, peace and security issues that guides and highlights the different dimensions and entry points to respond to gender specific considerations in peacebuilding, conflict resolution and transitional justice. This paper outlines such framework in relation and relevance to Germany's foreign policy and development cooperation. To better understand the effects and impact of Germany's contribution to the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda on the ground, a total of ten projects funded and supported by ifa's zivik Funding programme have been reviewed to identify good practices and lessons learned.

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### Introduction

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Contributing to sustainable peace and development within and outside national state borders, is complex, especially considering the multidimensional power dynamics between the different actors involved. Political interests and unequal power dynamics at the international level, but also at the local level, that feed and contribute to conflict and sometimes armed violence often require a detailed analysis and mapping to start with.

Organisations working on peacebuilding, conflict resolution and reconstruction face the challenge to unveil these social power dynamics in contexts shattered by armed violence, trauma and distrust among different actors.

The gender dimension of most conflicts often plays a central role in what drives conflict and therefore needs to be an integral part of such analysis, conflict prevention and resolution. Even though gender stereotypes and inequality exist before, during and after armed conflict, they become central to creating militarized identities (cf. Enloe 2000) and affect how violence is carried out during times of war and fragility. In addition, factors such as age, ethnic and national affiliations, religious beliefs, sexual orientation and identity, different physical and mental abilities can foster or hem individuals to participate in public discourses, access public services, or resist and recover from (armed) violence. Conflict-related sexual violence, long lasting effects on reproductive health, education and the unequal access to economic opportunities but also security and justice demonstrate the importance of an intersectional gender perspective in foreign, peace and security policy.

Since the early nineteen-nineties, sexual and gender-based violence in armed conflicts is more visible and known to be applied in a systematic and widespread manner and even strategically used to expel a people from a certain territory (cf. United Nations 1992). Such violence does not only have long term consequences for the individuals and their families, but also for the very social fabric of societies as they affect the societies' ability to recover and reconstruct after armed conflict.

While women seem disproportionately affected by conflict-related sexual violence, they still are widely absent from peace negotiation tables and dialogues despite their positive impact on the outcome. International studies (UN Women, summarising Stone (2015: 34)) find that "When women are included in peace processes, there is a 20 per cent increase in the probability of an agreement lasting at least two years, and a 35 per cent increase in the probability of an agreement lasting at least 15 years absent from political decision making positions, as well as from the official peace negotiation tables." Inclusive peace processes that also consider the different needs of minorities and diverse groups of people contribute therefore to more sustainability as they reduce re-emerging social inequalities and tensions. Therefore, a gender perspective in conflict prevention, as well as humanitarian relief and recovery can increase effectiveness and efficiency.

Next to the operational effectiveness and an ethical consideration, there is also a legal case to be made here to consistently include and implement concerns relating to women, peace and security issues within project and programmatic work in fragile contexts. A relatively comprehensive normative framework provides the legal ground for the women, peace and security agenda.

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## The Women, Peace and Security Agenda

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What we know today as the women, peace and security agenda is in fact that there is a set of international legal provisions that build on and refer to each other. At its core are UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and its sister resolutions (commonly known as UNSCR 1325 – see box) which build on each other and have included an increasingly stronger and more specific language with concrete suggestions on how to respond to

### Women, Peace and Security Resolutions by the United Nations Security Council

**UNSCR 1325 (2000):** First UN Security Council Resolution linking a gender dimension to peace and security, in particular women's participation in peace negotiation, the protection from gender-based violence and the prevention of armed conflict

**UNSCR 1820 (2008):** Recognizes conflict-related sexual violence as a tactic of warfare, requiring a peacekeeping, justice, and peace negotiation response

**UNSCR 1888 (2009):** Strengthens tools for implementing 1820 through assigning leadership, building judicial response expertise, and reporting mechanisms

**UNSCR 1889 (2009):** Addresses women's exclusion from early recovery and peacebuilding and lack of adequate planning and funding for their needs

**UNSCR 1960 (2010):** Suggests an accountability system for addressing conflict-related sexual violence

**UNSCR 2106 (2013):** Focuses on accountability for perpetrators of sexual violence in conflict and stressing women's political and economic empowerment

**UNSCR 2122 (2013):** Addresses the persistent gaps in the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda

**UNSCR 2242 (2015):** Requests more resources, women in leadership positions, cooperation between UN agencies; addresses terrorism and extremism as a gendered issue, empowerment of women and youth as counter terrorism strategies

gender, peace and security issues.

The conjunction of all provisions embraces four dimensions including the participation of women at all levels of peace processes, the protection from sexual and gender-based violence, conflict prevention, recovery and relief.

While already the Geneva Conventions<sup>1</sup> and other legal documents of humanitarian law had outlined the prohibition of sexual and gender-based violence, it was only through the international Criminal Tribunals to the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda respectively in the 1990s that conflict-related sexual violence has been recognized as a possible war crime and crime against humanity.<sup>2</sup> By that the tribunals recognized the destructive effect sexual violence can have not only on the survivors directly affected but on the communities at large.

In reference to Article 6 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW 1992) asserted in its Recommendation No. 19 also that armed conflict have a particular impact on women that requires “specific protective and punitive measures.” In addition, its General Recommendation No. 30 on Women in Conflict Prevention, Conflict and Post-conflict Situations, CEDAW (2013) suggests concrete steps on how to implement and respond to the burden women bear during times of armed conflict, not only in

1 Geneva Convention I Art. 50, Geneva Convention II Art 51, Geneva Convention III Art 130, Geneva Convention IV Art. 14, Additional Protocol I Article 11 - Protection of persons and Article 85 - Repression of breaches of this Protocol

2 Prosecutor v. Dusko Tadic, Jurisdiction, Case No. IT-94-1-AR72, 10 August 1995; Prosecutor versus Dusko Tadic; Appeal on Jurisdiction, Case No. IT-94-1-AR 72, 2 October 1995 and Celebici Case, 16. Nov. 1998, para. 476;

International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (1998): Judgement, Case No. ICTR-96-4-T, 2 September 1998, <http://unictr.irmct.org/sites/unictr.org/files/case-documents/ict96-4/trial-judgements/en/980902.pdf>

the light of gender-based violence but also challenges in access to justice and education, employment and health.

In addition to the implementation of CEDAW’s recommendations, the most effective and popular tool of implementation of women, peace and security provisions are national action plans (NAPs) on UNSCR 1325, which more than 70 countries worldwide have adopted.

Germany adopted its first NAP for the period 2013-16 and renewed its commitment to the women, peace and security agenda in 2017.<sup>3</sup> The NAP builds on an internal implementation review which has been prepared by the Federal Government (2017c) for the first time for the period 2013-2016. The most recent implementation stage has been reported by the Government in response to a request by Green Party’s Members of Parliament in April 2018 (Deutscher Bundestag 2018). In the NAP and these reports it becomes clear that Germany implements the agenda through different Ministries (led by the Federal Foreign Office), but also through its development agency GIZ or indirectly through civil society organisations mostly outside its own State borders.

Guided by the Federal Government’s (2017a) Guidelines on Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace, Germany’s implementation of its NAP and women, peace and security commitments strongly depend on the quality of projects funded abroad. Therefore, a review of such projects and reflections of good practices and lessons learned in this respect is a central element of quality assurance and oversight of what Germany has signed up to and considers its own

3 <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/themen/menschenrechte/05-frauen/frauenkonfliktpraevention-node>

guiding policy principles and values, as well as its compliance and accountability to international law.

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## Methodology and Context

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Monitoring and evaluation of project activities, outputs and outcomes or even impact is a central part, even if not the everyday bread and butter of project and programme management within the area of development cooperation, peacebuilding and conflict resolution initiatives. Showcasing what has worked, what is worth continuing funding, and what measures contribute to measurable change, which can influence political priorities and decisions and which can be vital for the persistence of civil society organisations working on these issues. Operational effectiveness, compliance with norms, rules, regulations and mandates and being held accountable for the funding received are all good reasons to systematically look at the effects and consequences of the projects supported and funded through public funds, hence tax-payer's money. Operating in a sensitive environment can cause harm or even threats to safety and life, if actions are not considered carefully. In order to do so, a continuous review of what works and what does not is needed to ensure the highest level of quality, safety and effectiveness (cf. Myrntinen et al. 2016).

While this brief review does not systematically evaluate the projects funded by ifa's zivik Funding programme, it aims at demonstrating some good practices and lessons learned from pre-selected projects that have either had a specific or an integrated focus on women, peace and security issues and are therefore inherently an implementation effort of the German commitment to women, peace and security. In the following, some project activities have been particularly highlighted due to some criteria falling into

a guiding definition of what good practices with respect to gender sensitive project development and implementation consist of (cf. EIGE). While not all criteria have applied equally or consistently to the selection of the below projects, they have been guided by the following:

- The project has made a change to the overall objective to sustainable peace, human security and gender equality.
- The process of decision making and implementation has been inclusive.
- Next to gender, the project has considered other social factors such as age, ethnic and national affiliation, religious beliefs, sexual orientation and identities, diverse mental and physical abilities.
- The project is in part transferable to other contexts.
- It provides potential for transformative change towards more gender equality.
- It builds on lessons learned and has adapted to locally identified priorities.

The findings below are based on a detailed document review of project documents handed in by implementing partners to ifa/zivik reporting on project implementation, monitoring and evaluation efforts. They have been implemented in 2017-2018 in different geographic regions and socio-cultural contexts with different strategic and thematic approaches.

Each project included a conflict analysis, a short presentation of the applying organization, a contextualization and rationale of the project, its intended results and activities, possible risks and partners; most of them also included a reference to international policies and legal provisions. Furthermore, the organisations included a monitoring matrix, where activities have been listed in relation to planned outcomes and outputs, as well as a timeline and performance indicators. In some cases, baseline studies and a more detailed

evaluating report has been handed in. The mid-term and end reports have been developed on the basis of the monitoring framework. A special focus allows justification in case of changes, delays or updated funding conditions.

The grants for the projects funded by the German Federal Foreign Office through ifa/zivik reviewed for this study, range from 29 to over 300 thousand Euro. They have a duration from three to a maximum of twelve months. Even though projects cannot be carried over to the next year, a follow-up funding is possible and has been granted to half of the projects reviewed.

From the ones reviewed, four projects have been carried out in the Middle East and Northern Africa (Iraq, Syria and Egypt), three in Africa (DRC, Rwanda and Uganda), two in Ukraine and one in Asia (Indonesia). All projects have been designed and implemented by German, international or local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), often in co-operation. As a rule for ifa/zivik funding, the German Federal Foreign Office and its foreign representations have been actively involved in the selection and vetting process.

Even though this study aims at identifying potential good practices and lessons learned that could be replicable and notable for other situations and project initiatives, it shall be emphasized that there is no one-fits-all solution, neither to armed conflict, nor to gender inequality. The diversity of possible women, peace and security initiatives and actors lies in the crosscutting nature of the topic itself. Therefore, this study is neither ranking, nor comparing the individual

projects reviewed but rather appreciates the diversity in their geographic, thematic and methodological focus. Some challenges, mitigation strategies to overcome these challenges and innovative approaches have been observed in several project initiatives and are therefore listed below without necessarily attributing them to specific projects. The case studies highlighted in the boxes below nevertheless serve as examples of how different civil society organisations have approached women, peace and security concerns in response to the very specific socio-political dynamics on the ground.

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### **Risks, Challenges, and Lessons Learned**

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The projects selected for this review either operate in conflict, post-conflict or fragile context, which in itself poses a variety of risks and challenges. **Possible civil unrest and armed violence** can put project activities on hold and even put project staff, beneficiaries and counter parts at risk. Data collection and analysis, as well as meetings and communication can pose a challenge and influence the project implementation, management and reporting. External factors such as **economic or political developments**, election processes or – as the case of a project in Iraq – a political referendum, for example, can change political will and the scope of the discussions, as well as create logistical challenges. Restrictions of movement can influence the operational effectiveness significantly and eventually force the project staff to manoeuvre and change the course of the project.



Most of the projects that are aimed at socio-political change depend on the **political will** of the host country or at least on the political will of the communities and institutions the organisations directly work with. Considering that women, peace and security issues can be very sensi-

**Case Study: Prevention and protection from sexual and gender-based violence of girls and women living in conflict areas in Ukraine (AMICA e.V.)**

The armed conflict in Ukraine has resulted in more than one million internally displaced people with an enormous burden on women, especially in the case of single headed household. Sexual and gender-based violence is prevalent and a lot of conflict related trauma untreated.

This project has had two project phases with an implementation timeframe of a few months each, in 2017 and 2018 respectively. It addresses female survivors of sexual and gender-based violence building on each other, dynamically involving lessons learned and good practices from previous experiences. Through an inclusive assessment, needs and actors in the region were jointly identified with local partners.

From the very beginning, project activities actively included both women living at both sides of the conflict lines in an area where infrastructure for women has been lacking. This inclusive bottom-up approach included already existing initiatives and targeted the support and strengthening of change agents and multipliers for the sake of sustainability and local ownership.

Activities for girls and women affected by trauma include next to psychosocial and legal support, art therapy, networking activities and education in community engagement. The project has a great level of visibility and even women outside the region are referred to the centers and meeting points established through the project. By addressing sexual and gender-based violence holistically the recovery from trauma, reintegration into society as well as conflict prevention are part of the possible effect of the project activities.

tive, the creation and maintenance of political will is a central yet fragile factor for success of almost all the projects. Working on the empowerment of women in the public sphere in conservative societies can cause a considerable backlash and even pose a threat to women and beneficiaries of the project, as this kind of change implicates a shift in power relations, which is not necessarily desired by all members of society. Most of the civil society organisations listed resistances and a possible outbreak of violence as a risk to the project implementation. **Working with all members involved – especially men** – has been mentioned as one approach aiming at the prevention of negative or even violent reactions to the project activities and results.

As in many projects with social impact, that benefit one group of society, there is a **risk of others feeling left behind** and excluded. Provision of resources, awareness, capacity building activities represent power and wealth, and may become an element of conflict and social tension itself. On the basis of the “do no harm” concept, conflict-sensitive interventions encourage a continuous self-reflection of possible unintended (side) effects. Some of the organization reported tensions between local NGOs due to the funding opportunities coming from abroad. This can be the case, especially when funding has been limited and reduced, which has been the case in almost all conflict and humanitarian contexts.

In this respect, another central challenge for most NGOs is the precarious and short term funding situation that prevents civil society to plan for long term impact. One of the key challenges lies in the inherent nature of how development cooperation, peacebuilding initiatives and even peacekeeping works: project cycles having a beginning and an end are always aimed at delivering tangible results in a given timeframe through a logical often linear result

chain. Social norms, gender relations and behaviours as well as conflict dynamics nonetheless, do not necessarily follow that scheme. It is **long term engagement** that is needed to build the trust and relationships that implementing partners need to contribute to peace and social change. Civil society organizations working in fragile and conflict context struggle with institutional continuity and financial reliability. As it is the case for most international donors, ifa/zivik in accordance to the German Federal Budget Code's provisions, also generally excludes the possibility to fund fixed-term staff from its project funding scheme. Their salaries have to be paid by other financial resources. Nonetheless, the organizational structure that is needed for management, fundraising, and institutional memory and stability gets continuously challenged by financial insecurity. Financing of fixed-term positions (partly) through project funds is often the only financial resources staff members can rely on. As a result, financial uncertainty oftentimes drives civil society – and especially grassroots-organisations – into a struggle for survival.

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## Good Practices

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In order to identify activities that can attribute to a possible impact and end goal, such as sustainable peace and development, gender equality and human security, an initial analysis and **baseline study** is necessary. Several of the selected projects base their activities on a base-line study and/or needs assessment through local actors. That allows for a later evaluation to compare data and identify progress towards transformative change.

Most of the selected projects concluded to tackle more than one dimension of the women, peace and security agenda, which indicates a close link between the protection and participa-

tion of women, as well as conflict and violence prevention. In addition, there are **topics and aspects that are closely interlinked with peace and security** concerns especially from a gender perspective. Even though the connection between access to economic resources and livelihood and possible sources of armed conflict has been mentioned in many international studies, the link is not always reflected at the project level. When

### Case Study: Empowerment and Protection of Women Human Rights Defenders to Contribute to Civil Crisis Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Peace-Building in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Protection International)

One of the largest and longest lasting armed conflict has been fought in the DRC. In the context of elections, political unrest, violence and unlawful killings have been taking place in various regions of the country. Especially in the East of the country human right defenders are subjected to violence and attacks by various forces. Human rights have been largely compromised and sexualized violence is particularly prevalent among female human rights defenders. Awareness of appropriate self-care seems low and prevents human rights defenders from carrying out their work appropriately and sustainably.

Based on several years of project implementation experience the organization identified women needing more support and protection when acting as human rights defenders. Therefore, this project targets female human rights defenders to strengthen their capacities to build context specific and needs based protection systems for themselves. The project includes training activities, awareness raising materials, technical assistance and the establishment of security focal points within different NGOs.

Especially young urban activists who act and use social media, need to be aware of secure communication methods and strategies. While this initial pilot phase is only 4 months long, the project activities are planned to include mentoring and follow-up scheme from a total of 36 months to build long term capacities.



done so, there has been an observation of an increase of sustainability and a more visible positive impact. In this regard, the access to natural resources is one example that is highly gendered and that is a possible driver of armed violence. Through a project funded in Indonesia, ifa/zivik supports the protection of human rights defenders standing up against illicit land grabbing by large companies, which contribute to the destruction of natural resources and farm land. Several projects, for example in Ukraine and Syria, have demonstrated that when conflict prevention and response training with vocational training on the use of new media tools and psychosocial support are combined, the multidimensional problems women face in conflict prone countries are also addressed.

#### **Case Study: Supporting the political participation in Syria (elbarlament)**

According to the projects conflict analysis, already more than 250,000 people lost their lives and more than 11 million people had to leave their homes of which one million found refuge in Lebanon making up to 25% of the Lebanese population, during the Syrian armed conflict. Women are affected by the armed conflict not exclusively but also by carrying for their family often in single headed households in refugee camps outside Syria. Despite being also active politically, their human rights protection, security and participation is at stake through the rise of extremism and militarization.

The project collaborates closely with the Syrian NGO Women Now for Development which was founded by women living in the diaspora having strong ties to grassroots still operating in the country as well as the North of Lebanon where most Syrian refugees live. The projects aims at supporting women's leadership capacities of women, connecting them and providing them with tools to deal with the current situation of armed conflict and loss. Parallel to the workshop activities, English and computer skill training was offered for women as a complementary empowerment tool.

Furthermore, most projects do not exclusively focus on women in general but include a perspective that allows women from **different backgrounds** to connect (such as the case in Iraq between women from different religious backgrounds) or to put focus on, for example, women living in internally displaced people camps, women with disabilities, female human rights defenders or women returning from incarceration.

Some projects make special mention of the use of **new media tools**, such as social media and blogs. Since the Arab Spring, it has become evident how much driving force social media can have to trigger and mobilize sources for change but also for conflict. In the near future, the active involvement of social media and new technologies may eventually become a pre-requisite for successful project implementation, also in conflict and fragile contexts. In some of the projects in the DRC and in Ukraine, young women actively participated in trainings on how to use new media platforms.

Almost all projects involve international as well as local actors through institutional partnerships. In the ideal case, the **relationship between international and national actors** can be mutually beneficial and build on complementary capacities of either part. The combination between external and international perspective with local expertise on gendered relation in armed conflict allows projects to dig deeper into what could drive conflict and therefore contribute to peace. Nonetheless, this relationship in itself can be a very sensitive one driven by economic dependencies and unequal power relations, which has to be nourished by respect and professionalism.

Especially projects and organisations that build on long-term implementation experience recognize the possible backlash that can threaten

projects focusing exclusively on women's empowerment. The **involvement of different actors** of the community, men and women, leaders and drivers of peace and conflict seem to have a greater chance for success and sustainability. Holistic, participatory and multidimensional approaches seem to have a greater chance to attribute to long lasting positive change.

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## Recommendations

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Considering that social dynamics and unequal power relations lie at the very heart of armed conflict, tensions and development, factors such as gender, age, social class, ethnic and religious affiliation or sexual orientation and identity need to become key factors of analysis. The inclusion and consideration of the different dimensions outlined by the women, peace and security agenda is a necessity due to the existing normative framework, ethical considerations but also for the sake of mere operational effectiveness.

The active and equal participation of women in conflict resolution and recovery can contribute to a more comprehensive and sustainable peace and transitional process towards lasting positive peace. The response to sexual and gender-based violence can only be effective when considered the central security threat it is during times of armed conflict and times of peace. Projects funded by ifa/zivik have taken different approaches to address sexual and gender-based violence, as well as the participation of women in public and political processes, and the prevention of armed conflict and violence. These experiences hint at several recommendations for civil society organisations and donors striving to support women, peace and security issues, as well as a gender perspective in their peacebuilding and development cooperation initiatives:

1. Each context is different. While some commonalities between different (post) conflict areas or fragile contexts exist, each situation requires its own **gender sensitive conflict and context analysis**. Identified groups facing vulnerabilities, such as women living in displacement, need to be an active part of the analysis, shape the design and input to the base-line study, as well as play an important role in the project development. Such active involvement and participation can be one aspect of empowerment prior to the start of the project activities. Mixed research teams with men and women are part of a gender responsive approach when it comes to research and analysis.
2. The aspect of **conflict prevention** has a strong gender component. Violent, toxic or even militarized masculinities play a strong part in the escalation of conflict into armed violence. Including gender sensitive early warning indicators in context analysis is a first step in conflict prevention. Also the adequate response to gender-based violence and structural inequalities, for example, is part of a prevention strategy and should be considered in particular in fragile contexts.
3. **Ethical consideration and principles** such as "do no harm", "gender-cultural and conflict-sensitivity" and human rights protection have to guide all the different stages of the project cycle including assessment, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
4. In order to ensure sustainability, **local ownership** is central. The relationship between international actors and local communities is not always free of tension and co-dependencies. Especially, a gender component within unequal power dynamics may be relevant when it comes to inter-national working rela-

- tionships. Donors as well as project managers and implementing staff should consider gender sensitivity as well as a self-critical reflection about privilege and power dynamics. Nevertheless, project activities benefit from the complementary knowledge and skills when driven by mutual respect and recognition.
5. Especially empowerment initiatives aimed at one group within communities, benefit from **inclusive processes** and active involvement of different actors of the communities. Participatory project planning and implementation is key to address women, peace and security issues holistically and prevent possible backlash and social tensions. Women should be actively included at all levels of any project cycle in conflict-affected contexts or in fragile contexts.
  6. Considering additional **intersectional factors** that contribute to possible situations of vulnerability, such as gender or age but also displacement, diverse abilities or socio-demographic factors are a very much needed fine-tuning of project activities that make project activities more effective and efficient.
  7. There is a strong case to be made to interlink **development and peacebuilding** activities. Economic prospects and recovery from armed conflict and violence go hand in hand. Initiatives that recognize and address these links seem to have more attribution to long term impact than others. The consideration of the particular burden women may face when being solemnly responsible for the household and family care has to be part of a gender analysis and project planning in fragile contexts.
  8. Most civil society organisations are currently faced with a precarious funding situation and in several contexts by political repression, especially when it comes to gender relations. **Long term core funding** for civil society organisations is rare but very much needed in order to probably keep the most important actors and drivers of women, peace and security implementation alive, independent and active.
  9. Supporting processes towards social change and gender equality often require a change in thinking and traditions. **Innovative project ideas**, topics or methodologies can contribute to a more visible change as it forces all participants to think outside the box, be creative and create a common vision. The use of new media can be one way to inspire such process.
  10. **Evaluations** are a key driver to continuous learning and improvement of any work cycle. There is an increased need to evaluate women, peace and security projects to identify what has worked and what needs to be improved. These evaluations should be included within the project cycle, as well as at country programme level. Considering that women, peace and security issues are crosscutting topics, thematic evaluations are worthwhile exploring, especially in light of the upcoming 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UNSCR 1325 and the renewal of Germany's NAP in 2020. The active involvement of women and men who have been project or programme beneficiaries in the evaluation process is important to ensure a credible approach to empowerment and the women, peace and security agenda.

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