

# **Rape as a Weapon of War and it's Long-term Effects on Victims and Society**

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*Abstract:*

The following paper studies the use of rape as a tool of war, including the short and long-term effects it has on the individual, as well as the societal and political future of a country.

The paper will look at the following key questions:

- Does rape as a tool of war leave a country with less chance of a solid and stable political future?
- What are the long-term effects on the society as a whole?
- What are the ongoing effects of stigmatizing victims including the effects on: marriages, children, families and communities? This entails inequality and gender discrimination women face in times of war, including social exclusion, and how this symbolic form of violence affects that marginalization in the future and in times of peace.
- What promotes an individual to use rape as a tool of war, and what are key motivating factors?
- What function does rape have in modern warfare, and how does it compare in a historical perspective?

The paper concludes with recommendations for more in depth analysis and studies on primary and secondary victims, as well as the rapist. These recommendations lead into how to work towards a sustainable end to the use of rape as a weapon of war.

*Key Words:*

- Rape
- Rapists
- Gender Based Violence (GBV)
- Infanticide
- War Orphans
- Genocidal Rape
- Forced Impregnation
- Genital Mutilation
- Post Conflict
- Combat Strategy

*Countries where rape has been used as a weapon of war in recent conflicts include:*

Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Burma, Cambodia, Chechnya, Congo, Cyprus, East Timor, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Kuwait, Liberia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Peru, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Turkey, Uganda, Vietnam, The Former Yugoslavia (Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo and Serbia), Zimbabwe.

*Countries currently utilizing in rape as a weapon of war include:*

The Sudan, Chechnya, the Central African Republic (CAR,) Congo, and Democratic Republic of Congo(DRC).

*Abbreviations and Definitions (American Psychiatric Association):*

- Acute Stress Disorder symptoms: feeling numb and detached (like being in a daze or a dream, or feeling that the world is strange and unreal); difficulty remembering important parts of the assault; reliving the assault through repeated thoughts, memories, or nightmares; avoidance of things (places, thoughts, feelings) that remind the victim of the assault; anxiety or increased arousal (difficulty sleeping, concentrating, etc.).
- DDR - Demobilization and Reintegration
- DID - Dissociative identity disorder, is a psychiatric diagnosis that describes a condition in which a single person displays multiple distinct identities or personalities, each with its own pattern of perceiving and interacting with the environment.
- Fistulas - an abnormal connection or passageway between two epithelium-lined organs or vessels that normally do not connect. In cases of rape fistulas is vesicovaginal and rectovaginal.
- HPV - Genital Human Papilloma Virus
- OCD - Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, is an anxiety disorder and is characterized by recurrent, unwanted thoughts (obsessions) and/or repetitive behaviors (compulsions). Repetitive behaviors such as handwashing, counting, checking, or cleaning are often performed with the hope of preventing obsessive thoughts or making them go away. Performing these so-called "rituals," however, provides only temporary relief, and not performing them markedly increases anxiety.
- PTSD - Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, PTSD, is an anxiety disorder that can develop after exposure to a terrifying event or ordeal in which grave physical harm occurred or was threatened. Traumatic events that may trigger PTSD include violent personal assaults, natural or human-caused disasters, accidents, or military combat.
- RTS - Rape Trauma Syndrome. Symptoms are similar to PTSD
- STI - Sexually Transmitted Infections

The thesis of this paper is to illustrate and question the lasting effects rape as a weapon of war has on both individuals and society, and thus prove that rape as a weapon of war is not an individual issue, but a societal issue. The 21<sup>st</sup> century may see an increase in what is possibly one of the worlds most powerful and destructive weapons against humanity. Rape shapes not only the future of an individual victim, but families, communities, generations, nations and has the potential to reach a global scale.

The purpose of this paper is not to prove that rape is a weapon of war, or discuss it's strategic uses, history has done so time and time again. It will use some examples to illustrate the severity of these crimes, including the lack of international will to prosecute them and unchanging social taboos towards gender-based sexual violence. The use of rape as a weapon of war is undoubtedly effective, as it is not simply an attack on an individual, but an attack which utilizes social and gender stigmas for the advancement of societal break-down. As rape as a weapon of war demoralizes and destabilizes entire communities, it weakens ethnic communities/ties, and affects populations with the exploitation of the reproductive rights and abilities of its victims. When rape is employed instead of a bullet, the weapon continues to wield its power beyond the primary victim, while the battlefield may be the body, but the target is civil society.

*“Rape, as with all terror-warfare, is not exclusively an attack on the body- it is an attack on the ‘body-politic’. It’s goal is not to maim or kill one person but to control an entire socio-political process by crippling it. It is an attack directed equally against personal identity and cultural integrity” (Nordstrom 1991).*

For the purpose of this paper the definition of rape is: forced vaginal, anal, or oral sex, of either a male or a female with either a person or an object, including the force used by a person to rape or sexually violate another person of the same or opposite sex. The definition assumes, rape as a weapon of war to include; single and multiple instances of rape, gang rape, forced prostitution, forced impregnation and sexual slavery. The paper will not focus quantifiably on the number of victims of rape as a weapon of war, either historical or contemporary. However, various estimates are given for the purpose of aiding the reader in visualizing the extreme depth of the level of violence and reach of victims in time of war. The true number of victims of the use of rape as a weapon of war will never be known, as large/substantial numbers of victims never come forward.

#### *Why is rape such a useful weapon?*

The use of rape as a weapon is one of the most violent and humiliating offences inflicted on the enemy, the brutalization of rape permanently scars the victim's mind, soul and often body. Rape is often used as a predecessor to murder, where others survive only to serve as daily reminders to those around them of the tragedies of war. Victims are shunned by their families and communities and many become pregnant as a result of their rapes. Rape leaves a permanent reminder of war and of the enemy through the birth of a child, which places both the mother and child in continual victimization and isolation. Rape as a weapon of war affects not only the rape victim, but their entire family, village and community. While rape as a weapon of war continues today, many of the psychological effects have yet to be felt in many communities around the globe.

In war there are many weapons that may be employed and while the Kalashnikov or IED may be favored arms in modern warfare, there is one weapon all men carry and more often use. Men are choosing to use their bodies as weapons - in fact their manhood - to attack. The victim is raped in an effort to dehumanize and defeat the enemy, leaving an entire society with long-term suffering as victims cascade across generational divides. The scourge of rape as a weapon, affects not only the individual lives of the victims, but the entire family and community in which they live. Leaving their lasting marks on the entire country's civil society, which in turn effects our globalized world.

#### *Historical and Modern Context of Rape as a Weapon of War*

Rape in warfare is rooted deep in world history and well established in modern warfare, however it can no longer remain an issue silenced by suppressive governments, ignorance and fear. The idea that rape is a normal by-product of war, due to its continual use historically and currently, only perpetuates its use. The seeing of it as normal and its continual impunity increases its use as a weapon, the perpetrators are less likely to be tried for rape than murder.

Historically in art and literature, there are many illustrations of rape as a weapon of war which confirm its historical use and illustrate the perception of rape as a normal weapon of war, such as Homers *Iliad* and Giambologna's sculpture, *“The Rape of the Sabine Women”* (1574-82) in Florence's Loggia dei Lanzi. The use of rape is also noted on multiple occasions in the Old Testament of the Bible, including: *“Women are raped in Zion;*

*virgins in the towns of Judah*" (Lamentations 5:11), and "For I [God] will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken and the houses looted and the women raped..." (Zechariah 14:2). Biblical references such as this give reference to the use of rape as a normal casualty of war.

One of the greatest historical instances of mass rape warfare dates back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century as Genghis Khan, whose great rise to power came from his military mastery as he amassed an empire across Asia and Central Europe. Genghis Khan established his overwhelming power through strategic methods of violence and terror at the expense of millions of women and young girls, as he established strategic policies of rape warfare. Bidwell (1973) gives examples, such as Genghis Khan telling his courtiers: "The greatest pleasure in life is to defeat your enemies, to chase them before you, to rob them of their wealth, to see those dear to them bathed in tears, to ride their horses, and to ravage their wives and daughters". This passage illustrates the use of rape as a form of torture for not only those raped but their families.

In recent history, rape was used in World War II by the Nazi's, Soviets, and by the Japanese (as was the case with 'Comfort Women' and the infamous *Rape of Nanking*) and it was used in Vietnam. The last decade has seen a growing number of civil conflicts around the world increasingly target women and girls, leaving the number of rapes and forms of abuse at alarming levels, triggering an epidemic of sexual violence as a form of warfare. Countries such as: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Guatemala, India, Liberia, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Uganda. Currently the use of rape as a weapon of war continues in many countries such as the Sudan and the Congo, to name only a few, have used rape in recent conflicts, as this paper will explain. In both a modern and historical context it is clear that all armies use rape as a weapon.

#### *Who Are the Victims?*

The disparity of the age of the victims only solidifies the weapons use to destroy, for the age range of female victims is from infancy to the elderly. Women and girls have been primarily targeted due to the extensive acceptance of gender based violence, so much so that "violated in a conflict situation it is in-scripted within their everyday life and violation gets normalized. These include virginity testing, pulling of the labia, female genital mutilation (FGM), child marriages, forced pregnancies and marrying the girl to the person who raped and impregnated her even if it is not her will (ACCORD 2007, pg. 8)". Females are the primary target, (especially in patriarchal societies), of rape due to their standing and value in the community, while the majority, are not the only victims. Men have been known to have their genital areas repeatedly beaten in attempts to render them infertile, and to humiliate and demoralize the man by taking away his perceived manhood and masculinity. Men have also been known to be directly raped. In Croatia it is estimated that some 4,000 males were sexually assaulted, of which 11% were castrated and 20% forced to perform oral sex with others prisoners of war (Independent 1996, pg.7).

#### *Effects on the Victim*

Victims are often raped multiple times and gang raped, which can cause a much higher degree of physical and physiological injuries, and often lead to death. Due to unwanted pregnancies, many women who have abortions through non-sterile procedures, non-medical methods, and thus risk death, infection, scarring or sterilization. Physical injuries may include gynecologic, rectal, and internal hemorrhaging. The long-term physical effects of rape can include pregnancy and sexual transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS. Rapes are often carried out with guns, branches, bottles and other objects, which are intentionally used inflict additional pain on the victim. The violent nature of rapes and the frequent use of objects increases the long-term and permanent physical damages such as fistulas, in which the an abnormal opening is produced between the vagina, the bladder and/or rectum. Women who are pregnant often miscarry, others are rendered infertile due to the extent of damage the rape inflicted on their bodies.

A 2003 study aimed at examining the long-term systematic effects that civil wars had on public health, showed an increase of suicide (especially among women of child-bearing years) which may be related to unwanted pregnancies due to rape), cervical cancer (which is directly linked to the STI HPV), AIDS (which showed the highest level of impact) and unintentional injuries (which were suggested to include unreported suicides) (Ghobarah, Huth and Russett 2003, pg. 198-199). Sexually transmitted infection (STI) rates of soldiers are 2-to-5 times higher than in civilians in peacetime, and can be more than 50 times higher in times of conflict (UNAIDS 1998, pg. 3). Many victims are given a death sentence as the premeditated infections of victims with HIV in many conflicts has led it to become a secondary weapon (Rehn and Sirleaf 2002). The dramatic increase of the virus after combat is alarming, as in Rwanda, where a study of 1125 female victims, showed 66.7% with HIV (Amnesty 2004, pg.3). Thus rape and HIV as a weapon of war combine into a deadly cocktail that only serve radically increase the number of casualties of war. "It also blurs the distinction of between (1) rape and deliberate killing and (2) civilians

and combatants” (Elbe 2002, pg.170). The increased relevance of HIV/AIDS also contributes to social exclusion and destabilizes economies, as many with the disease are abandoned, stigmatized and children are left orphans. The sudden creation of high levels of health issues placed on a nation recovering from conflict, will significantly strain the healthcare system. Many victims cannot afford the care they need, or do not have physical access to appropriate care needed, as the following victim testimony in Liberia illustrates; *“I was very afraid. He forced me to go far into the bush and he undressed me. Then he raped me...My stomach is very painful, but I don’t have any money to go for treatment”* (MSF 2004, pg. 7). This sudden burden not only strains the financial stability of the nation, but also that of the victim’s and their family’s financial stability due to the cost of healthcare.

Victims have also been forced to rape other victims, sometimes men are forced to rape other men, or family members are forced to rape each other, adding to the torment feelings of incest and homosexuality, to the physiological scars left behind. Psychological effects include: social difficulties or dysfunction, disassociated blame, isolation, fear of intimacy and sexual dysfunction. The long-term psychological effects of rape can include PTSD and RTS, OCD, DID, eating disorders, self-injury, self-blame, panic attacks, flashbacks, and sleeping disorders. These effects can be lifelong if the victim does not get immediate support and care. Victims symptoms can be either exhibited either expressive or subdued, and can immediately cause Acute Stress Disorder. Some of the physiological effects may manifest into physical effects such as increased vulnerability to other sexual and physical abuses. Victims are also at an increased risk for suicide due to the physiological effects, as even *“hiding their stress can also result in...increased risk of suicide”* (Amiss and Neale 2006, pg.29).

### *Children Born of Rape*

The longest lasting effect of rape as a weapon of war is the number of children it bears and the ripple effects it has, as children are both the consequences of the victim and society. According to a three part report, *War Children of the World*, tens of thousands of children have been born due to rape in conflict (Greig 2001). There are no true statistics on the number of children born as a result of rape as weapon in each conflict. Many women may be forced to bear multiple pregnancies, as in a testimony out of East Timor, where a woman had four children all born of rape (Williams and Lamont 1999, pg. 10).

The mother of a child born of rape faces a lifetime of turmoil over the conception, regardless of her decision to raise the child, give the child up for adoption or terminate the pregnancy. A mother who keeps a child is often tormented and pulled between feelings of love and hate. These feeling of hate or shame of the victims own child thus only torment a mother more as she then feels guilt for having such thoughts about her own child. An adviser for the International Rescue Committee in Rwanda made the following statement: *“Did you ever see the look in a woman’s eyes when she sees a child of rape? It’s a depth of sadness you cannot imagine. Mass rape forces the victims to live with the consequences, the damage, the children.”* (Landesman 2002, pg. 7). A mother who gives a child up for adoption lives with the trauma of carrying and giving birth to her attackers child, she also lives with grief of separation and loss. Women who terminate pregnancies struggle with the feeling of hate and shame regarding the conception and may also face guilt and mental anguish for the loss of a child, or due to a conflict of moral or religious beliefs. A program assistant working with victims of rape as a weapon of war in Zagreb, stated in defense of abortion; *“The fetus growing inside the women is a living reminder of the horror she has suffered, like a wound that keeps on growing”* (Robson 1993, pg.2). The effects of all scenarios last a lifetime for both mother and child, as well as for family and community. A study of children born of rape in East Timor stated that, *“...evidence suggests that such children are both at risk of abandonment to orphanages, and, if kept by their mothers likely to experience ostracization and impoverishment, due to the mothers low social status...”* (Rimmer 2006, pg.328). The direct correlation between a mothers well being and the well being of a child, physically and mentally, are well established.

Many children are never adopted and orphanages in conflict zones are often flooded with “rape babies”, as a conflict or post-conflict country leaves many who would be willing to adopt unable to due to instability, and/or poverty, thus the burden is placed on the state. More than ten years after rape was used as a weapon of war in the former Yugoslavia, the questions and impact is only beginning to emerge. Children who spend their lives in orphanages or foster homes, are more susceptible to sexual and mental abuse. Many of these children are turned away once they reach 16 or 18, with little education, money or support and are thus not only prone to abuse, but poverty and homelessness. Those who adopt children are faced with decision to tell their child the truth behind their birth, which can then lead to trauma and a sense of guilt on the adoptive parent, as was the case of one families trauma which unfolded in the short Bosnian documentary, *“A Boy from a War Movie”* (2004) directed by Šemsudin Gegić. *“When his mother is raped by a Serb soldier and then sent to the other side of the border late in her pregnancy, 10-year-old Alen is abandoned in the middle of the Bosnian conflict.”*

The response to children born as a result of rape as a weapon of war, has left children with much the same

results, internally, by the mother and in society's perception. They face endless struggles of identity and social hurdles both internally and externally. In many communities children who are the byproduct of rape as a weapon of war, such as in Rwanda, are labeled with names like; *Enfants non-desires*' - unwanted children or '*Enfants mauvais souvenir*'- Children of bad memories. Children born of rape carry the burden of their traumatic conception and mothers pain with them. This can manifest into guilt, viewing their self as a source of misery, a mistake, tainted, and even often as evil as they see themselves as genetically connected to their rapist father and thus often feel they are predisposed to violence. Hate of what the man that fathered them and did to their mother can also manifest into anger. The social stigma placed on both the mothers and children who are born as a result of the use of rape as a weapon of war only "exemplifies the problem that international law fails to recognize the offense of forced maternity on behalf of the mother, or any offense with respect to the child" (Rimmer 2006, pg.331).

#### *Long-term Societal Consequences of Rape as A Weapon of War*

Rape as a weapon of war affects not only the victim, but places all women and girls in fear of sexual violence. Fear dominates the daily life of all woman and girls who are living in a conflict zone. This continual fear leaves victims in constant torment and mental anguish, which causes increased long-term psychological stress and damage. Many physiologists believe the fear alone can cause PTSD. A victim traumatized by the lingering threat of rape, is often too afraid to leave the home to work and lives in constant fear, as with one who is ostracized by their community. This changes not only the internal dynamics of their family, but the economic and social well-being of their entire family. Children afraid to walk to school effect both their and their countries literacy levels. Women too afraid to collect water, animal fodder and firewood, contribute to the malnutrition and poverty levels of both the family and community. The effects on men too afraid to work, afraid to let their wives and daughters leave the home, has a similar effect. These effects are dramatic, when then compounded by tens of thousands of people across a nation, where it leaves communities crippled under the burden. Ripple effects reach even those communities untouched by the use of rape as weapon of war, as a villages trade may decrease.

The violence and brutality of the use of rape as weapon of war does not begin or end with the rape itself, victims are most often beaten, and in many cases physically mutilated. Mutilations include: cutting off of lips and ears, blinding victims so they cannot identify their attackers, amputations of limbs, and mutilations of genitalia. Victims often beg for death over rape, reports of the brutal killings and mutilation tell stories of atrocious suffering before the victim is murdered. Gruesome acts are often carried out in front of family members, such as the torture and mutilation one mother witnessed:

*"...My daughter refused to obey the order to get undressed. So they ordered her to choose between rape and death. She choose death. So they started to torture her, cutting off her breasts one at a time with a knife, then her ears and then they completely cut open her belly...after a time, my daughter breathed her last...I was powerless, I wasn't able to protect her. Since then I haven't been able to do anything..."* (International Alert 2004, pg. 35).

This mothers testimony of her daughter's suffering and her own illustrates the extreme effects of secondary victimization, which is the re-traumatizing of the sexual assault, abuse, or rape victim through the responses of individuals and institutions. Secondary victimization includes victim-blaming and inappropriate post-assault behavior or language by medical personnel or other organizations with which the victim has contact (Campbell 1999, pg. 261-75). Victims are often raped in front of their families, those forced to watch psychologically traumatized and scarred as they feel helpless and in many ways responsible for the attacks. There have also been many instances of rape among those who are pregnant, most often these brutal rapes end in miscarriages, therefore it could be charged that infanticide was also committed due to the use of rape as weapon.

Human Rights Watch collected drawings from children in Sudan and the children's crayon drawings lost the innocence of normal childhood, as graphic images were played out on paper only to exemplify the grave nature of what those children had witnessed. One child colored the images of rape, only to illustrate the dramatic physiological effects on children who subsequently witness such violent and heinous acts(HRW 2005). International Alert's report, *Women's Bodies as a Battlefield* (2004) noted that witnessing sexual violence often led to, or contributed to dysfunctional family lives. "A U.N. survey of Rwandan children of war concluded that 31% witnessed a rape or sexual assault, and 70% witnessed murder. They will grow up beside children born of rape, all of them together forced to navigate different but commingling resentments (Landseman 2002, pg.7)."

#### *Consequences of Rape as Weapon of War on the Victims Community*

Rape is especially stigmatizing in cultures with strong customs and taboos regarding virginity, sex and

sexuality. Thus a victim may be viewed by society as being: unfaithful, dirty/unclean, traitors, damaged. Often victims suffer isolation, disownment, are prohibited from marrying; divorced, abandoned, abused, neglected and even killed. Accounts such as this victims story are not unfamiliar; *"My husband insults me everyday, calling me the wife of the militiamen who raped me...[and] when I ask my husband to give me some food he replies to me, why don't you go and ask for food to your husband in the forest?"* (MSF 2004). Similar stories can be heard by a daughter or a sister, about the treatment received by her family. Much of this is due to the patriarchal nature culture of many countries where rape as a weapon of war is frequently used. In the Congo for example researchers state that rape as a weapon of war has now "metastasized into a wider social phenomenon", which now reaches further than the conflict itself and domestic abuse and killings are increasing, seeming "almost normal" (Gettleman 2007, pg. 2). Thus women are then re-victimized and abused, left to feel even more shame and guilt for their attacks, and thus their suffering is only magnified. This not only affects the victim, but their children, family and community. Many women are left to support children alone, whilst living in fear of rape and being ostracized, as well as dealing with the traumatic recovery; a task that is often too much to bear. These consequences have a long-term effect on both the individual and the society as it leads to a destabilization of the community and family structure.

#### *Effects of Rape as a Weapon of War on the Rapist:*

Little has been done to evaluate and treat the effects of rape in times of combat on the perpetrator, many who are young boys or adolescents, and some who are forced, or coerced, to rape by their commanding officers. In Bosnia-Herzegovina stories emerged from soldiers who were threatened with death if they did not rape. One soldier told how he was forced to prove his manhood by raping 12 women; *"...they stripped a girl naked...she looked scared and lost...three of them held her down. The soldiers told me I should rape her, and the others too..."* (Stiglmeier 1993, pg. 56). Studies have yet to look at how rape as a weapon of war affects the perpetrator long term. What are the physiological effects of the use of rape in warfare to the rapist and how does this affect the social structure and community thereafter? Rapists often come back to their communities after having committed such atrocities.

The ripple effect that it has, and impact the entire community and country are potentially enormous. US soldiers who use torture as a strategy in conflict, who then return home have been found to use these same practices in their jobs when they return. Examples where torture techniques from combat have shown up in prison systems, police forces, immigration services; where instances of rape could be found if ignored, are numerous. The highly publicized case of Chicago police commander, Jon Burge brings to light how the effects of torture continue post combat and affect countries where combat has not taken place. After serving in Korea and Vietnam, Burge went on to the police force, where it was discovered he used torture techniques to coerce confessions for some 20 years, ending with some 192 accusations. The case put considerable financial strain on the state (allegedly costing some \$17 million and 4 years to investigate), while also causing the rule of law to be tainted. The effects and blowback of torture follow the victim, resulting in more than just torture, but a lack of clear justice, economic instability, continued fear and physiological trauma. While reintegration programs have been criticized for not including specifics for survivors, we must also consider the mental health of the perpetrators of such violent acts, in order to better understand how to control and prevent its use in future conflicts.

Additionally, such analysis and treatment should provide assistance in preventing gender-based violence in post conflict situations and peace time. How does a perpetrator's physiological well-being affect the future in countries prone to repeated conflicts? If treated would we see a lower level of rape in the follow-on conflicts? Bourke (2007), analyzed the behavior of a group of American soldiers who used rape during the Vietnam war, the men had significant guilt for their act, and illustrated that they were mostly driven by fear and hate, but mostly pressure from other soldiers or commanders. Left untreated, or under treated, PTSD can lead to suicide, accidents, violence, irrational and impulsive choices. In 2002 on Fort Bragg the Army's headquarters for Special Forces and Special Operations units, in just over a month four soldiers, three who just returned from Afghanistan, killed their wives, two then killed themselves. The case illustrates the results of untreated PTSD, thus it is inevitable that some combatants who use rape as a weapon of war will have PTSD, and similar instances could reoccur.

These issues illustrate the need to include substantial consideration for victims in reintegration disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plans (DDR), as successful DDR is one of the main keys to prevention. In addition there is a need include programs that focus on the physiological affects that carrying out such acts have on combatants, and thus how they will adjust to civilian life. Thus, what does a soldier that continually used rape do when he is back in society, does he continue to use rape as a strategy in life? In the Democratic Republic of Congo many Rwandan combatants left with no guarantees to return home safely, felt they had little to lose and "feel they can benefit only by continuing the violence and forestalling an uncertain but likely ominous end for themselves (USAID/DCHA 2004, pg.9). Rape in post-conflict is high for this reason, and

reintegration and demobilization programs currently place little emphasis on it. While no one looks at how they may face psychological break-downs when dealing with the reality of the crimes and scale of brutality they committed. Many rapists and victims know each other, and we know it taunts victims to see the perpetrator again, but what does seeing their victim do to them? Does the guilt and shame they feel eat at them and cause them other issues besides being prone to violence? Do they commit suicide in higher numbers? Do they become less productive and destabilize the economic recovery of their family and community? These are questions that we need to ask and answer if we are to end the use of such a vicious weapon of war.

#### *Other Effects of the Use of Rape as a Weapon of War*

Many primary and secondary victims of rape as a weapon of war, either choose to, or are, forced to leave their country of origin, and thus both the physical and physiological effects are carried with them and imposed upon the country in which they seek refugee or asylum status. For example, it is estimated that a minimum of half, possibly more than 70%, of those females seeking asylum in the UK are victims of rape many of whom use the fear and stigma of rape as their basis for claiming asylum (Crawley 1997, Amiss and Neale 2006, pg. 32). Thus this matter must be addressed in all states, so that survivors of the use of rape as a weapon of war can both enter into and go through the asylum process with as little re-victimization and trauma as possible. It is therefore suggested that a more universal and unified approach be applied to survivors seeking asylum.

#### *Does rape as a tool of war leave a country with less chances for a solid and stable political future?*

The ignorance or blind eye of governments to protect victims, punish perpetrators, treat, rehabilitate, and bring attention to the use of rape as a weapon of war, effects a whole nation. Thus the ramifications reach far beyond the person raped and the effects could then reach all nations. In many countries where rape as a weapon is used women are stigmatized and left untreated, which then creates instability in the communities. Women are over disproportionately left out of the peace building, reconstruction, and nation building process; thus this marginalization leaves many holes and gaps in the social, political and economic framework, which then leads to increased levels of instability. The culture of silence that follows the use of rape as a weapon of war, and gender based violence carried out in times of peace, leads to decreased levels of productivity amongst certain segments of the population, violence, poverty, spread of disease, and death in untreated conditions. Further, spread of HIV and increased suicide rates are more likely when victims, both primary and secondary do not receive treatment.

#### *Conclusions and Recommendations:*

The tolerance and standardization of rape as a weapon of war has lead to its impunity, and thus increased it's silence. Impunity regarding the increasingly brutalized use of rape as a weapon of war combined with it's effectiveness, only provokes its use, for the perpetrators are less likely to be tried and punished for the use of this weapon, and if convictions do follow the punishment is disproportionate to the crime. As Nelson Mandela stated:

*“Safety and security don’t just happen: they are the result of collective consensus and public investment. We owe our children – the most vulnerable citizens in any society – a life free from violence and fear. In order to ensure this, we must become tireless in our efforts not only to attain peace, justice and prosperity for countries but also for communities and members of the same family. We must address the roots of violence. Only then will we transform the past century’s legacy from a crushing burden into a cautionary lesson.” (WHO 2002).*

Therefore illustrating the urgent need to form collective and cohesive plans and programs which will address the use and persecution of rape as a weapon of war. In addition Mandela illustrates the need to not only focus on prevention and persecution, but the need to address why we continue to use rape as weapon in modern combat, thus the need to focus on gender equality on a global scale.

Reliable statistics are impossible obtain, statistics available are often only calculated from victims seeking medical help for pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections or abortions, thus leaving a void in substantial statistical data on the far reaches of this horrendous crime. Nothing more than guesstimates are available through victims data collection surveys, as the large majority never report their victimizations, due to shame, lack of proper agencies to report to, out of fear of ostracism or violent retaliation from their family, community or the perpetrators. Many never survive the brutality of their attackers, and thus their victimization goes unreported. Those who seek and receive treatment rarely receive adequate physiological care and little follow-up is done with survivors. Therefore this lack of resources for survivors, their families and the communities affected, not only exacerbates the long-term

effects of rape as a weapon of war, but also fails to show the depth and enormity that it has on individuals and civil society long term, much of which is permanent. Many survivors do not seek treatment for medical or physiological effects of their attacks, as they feel there is no one who can or will help them, and thus the lack of adequate aid and support programs only fuels their fear to report such crimes and seek treatment. When international organizations are present to witness the violations, and deliver medical and physiological help with more immediacy, it will undoubtedly aid in survivors feelings of security to report and seek treatment. Nonetheless is not fool proof and will not lead to accurate statistics, as shame and fear will always play a factor. In other regards the presence of the international aid community does not guarantee safety against the use of rape, nor does one find security in the refugee camps as levels of rape in the camps remain high, as it must be noted that all types of combatants rape, including peacekeepers.

While there have been historical cases for the persecution of rape as a weapon of war, as seen in 1474, military officer Peter van Hagenbach was the first to be sent to an international tribunal for the use of rape warfare committed in Briesbach, Austria, under his command, he was convicted and beheaded for his crimes (Frederick 2001, pg. 10). While rape as a weapon of war has continued in modern warfare it has little persecution in comparison with the scale for which it continues to be utilized. Hob Njoki Ndungu, Former Kenyan Member of Parliament stated; *“Sexual violence is robbery that takes something that can’t be given back...why are penalties so lenient? Why does society accept and tolerate this crime...?”* (ACORD 2007, pg.4). Many developments in law with regard to rape have taken place during the twentieth century including; the first United Nations conviction exclusively focused on rape as a war crime in 1998; the International Criminal Court for the former Yugoslavia making the first conviction the use of rape as a crime against humanity in 2001; the International and Article 7 of The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court explicitly mentions sexual violence as a war crime. However groundbreaking these cases may be, they in no way compare to the scale of rapes committed, nor in many instances do the actual punishments received truly fit the crime. Continued silence on rape as a weapon of war places women as items of conquest and as spoils of war. This continued silence weakens societies and places generations at risk. While the damage of rape can never be undone, placing adequate punishment on the crimes will help end its long running impunity. These are steps towards ending the impunity over the use of rape as a weapon of war, however considerable, must be taken on the national level. Additionally gender barriers must be torn down and victim support must be properly established to see substantial advances in not just prosecution, but prosecution befitting the severity of the crime committed.

There is no doubt that the effects of the use of rape as a weapon of war are effects far-reaching regardless of time, place or culture, and this paper only begins to touch upon the long-term effects of rape as a weapon of war. Short and long-term support and treatment for victims is substantially lacking, which will only serve to exacerbate the use of rape as weapon of war. Thus an end to the perception that rape is a common and unavoidable tactic of war must occur, making it unequivocally unacceptable. In order to do this there are three main areas of focus: One the issue of gender inequality and bias must be removed in all countries, when such programs are in place at peace time it will significantly reduce the stigma and use of rape and gender-based violence in times of conflict. Two, there must be a unified international response to ban the use of rape as a weapon of war once and for all, and thus strategies of prevention and awareness must be put into place, including in internally displaced persons and refugee camps and in times of post conflict. Three, impunity was come to an end, or victims will continue to remain silent and not seek medical, psychological and legal attention if they feel there is no retribution or care for which they are safe to receive. If one is listening, victims will talk, thus if aid and government agencies step forward and ask victims to speak out, then they must be willing to not only listen, but provide them both the short and long-term care and support, including providing physical and financial access to services.

*“Addressing this crisis requires a response that includes immediate support measures for victims; access to legal services; and global, national and local advocacy to tackle embedded belief systems and social structures that discriminate against women and girls and allow sexual violence to continue unabated...Governments, donors and humanitarian agencies urgently need to harness the necessary resources ...to eliminate gender-based violence in all its forms...When states persistently violate human rights and when the international community fails to respond, it is a collective responsibility we have all failed to meet.”*(OCHA/IRIN 2007).

The effects of rape as a weapon of war do not end with the victim, once the rape is over, or once the physical wounds have healed. The wounds of rape do not heal, they leave lasting scars on individuals, families, communities, nations...the world. The effects and enormity of mass rape as a weapon of war are yet to be felt, as only the beginning of the long-term effects that impact all of society and shape our future world are beginning to

emerge.

It is evident that there is a significant need for in-depth and qualitative studies on the scope and depth of the long-term effects of rape as a weapon of war on all its victims, both primary and secondary, as well as on the perpetrators themselves. Very little focus has been paid to those who have been forced to witness such crimes, but were not physically victimized themselves. At current, data and studies on the affects of rape as a weapon on the rapist, either short or long term, are difficult to find. It is clear that this data would prove substantial in the prevention of its use, as well as understanding the long-term effects on civil society. The beginning of the end of the use of rape as a weapon of war is to combat gender inequalities and stereotypes in cultures while in peace time, as a method to prevent and curb the use of rape as a weapon of war. Removing the stigma of rape is the first and foremost crucial step to see that the ripple effects do not continue to haunt our global society in future generations and centuries.

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