



Does Feminist Movement-Building Reduce Violence Against Women? Fact Sheet Building on the Global Study on 1325

“Feminism is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression”

- Bell Hooks

Feminist activism is the most consistent and important and consistent driver of policy change to combat violence against women – more important than left-wing parties, numbers of women legislators, or even national wealth.¹ Although gender equality policy agendas are critical to institutionalise feminist demands, their impact on policy is dependent on the presence of a strong, autonomous movement. Independent feminist activism puts women's status and wellbeing as their main priority for action, rather than relegating it to be considered at some eventual time in the future. It generates social knowledge about women's position as a group in society, challenges gender roles, and prioritises gender equality issues by shaping national and international agendas, demanding institutional reforms, and innovating new forms of social organisation for gender equality. As a result, feminist activism promotes critical legal reform and funding to combat violence against women at the local level, as well as shifts dynamics and broadens issues discussed for more effective peace processes.

Facts and figures

The Global Study on 1325² recognises that women's movements play a crucial role in promoting accountability and mobilising across movements to reduce violence against women and promote peace. Key facts and figures from the UNSCR 1325 Global Study include:

- In 2012-13, only USD \$130 million of aid went to women's equality organisations and institutions – just one per cent of gender equality focused aid to fragile states (UN Women, 382)
- Post 9/11 counter-terrorism measures have resulted in shrinking civil society space through increased government control including through NGO legislation as recommended by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in its Anti-Money Laundering/Countering Financing of Terrorism standard, as well as halts and decreases in funding; blockage or suspension of programmes; and limitations on financial transactions (UN Women, 384)
- According to the Global Civil Society survey undertaken as a contribution to the 1325 Global Study and the 2015 High-Level Review, lack of resources ranked highest among the barriers encountered by civil society organisations (39 per cent), followed by lack of trust and cooperation with governments, and gaps between international policies and local level realities (each 29 percent) (UN Women, 383)
- According to a 2011 cross-regional survey of over 1,000 women's organisations, women's organisations rely primarily on project support rather than on long-term flexible

¹ Feminist Mobilisation and Progressive Policy Change: Why Governments Take Action to Combat Violence Against

² The Global Study on the Implementation of the UNSC Resolution 1325 (UN Women) (2015) Available: [http://peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/UNW-GLOBAL-STUDY-1325-2015%20\(1\).pdf](http://peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/UNW-GLOBAL-STUDY-1325-2015%20(1).pdf)

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funding: 48 per cent of respondents reported never having received core funding, and 52 per cent never having received multi-year funding. (UN Women, 382)

International Commitments

The international community has recognised the importance of women's organisations, civil society, and women human rights defenders and called strengthened support. Key commitments include:

- Agenda 21, section III (1992)
- Beijing Declaration (para 20) and Programme of Action (including paras 183,184, 190(f), 192(h), and 194) (1995)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Article 7 (1979)
- Declaration on Social Progress and Development, Article 15 (1969)
- Declaration on Sustainable Societies, Responsive Citizens (2011)
- Human Rights Council Resolution 22/6: Protecting Human Rights Defenders (A/HRC/RES/22/6) (2013)
- UN Declaration on the Rights and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups, and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (GA Resolution 53/144), Article 5, 16, 18 (1998)
- UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security: UNSCR 1325 (OP 14), 1820 (OP 13), 1889 (OP 1), 2106 (11, 19, 21), 2122 (OP 7, 11), 2242 (OP 1, 2, 3, 5, 11, 13)

Key Recommendations

Reducing violence and creating peace based on justice requires collaboration with, and support for, the feminist movement that builds not only top-down but also bottom-up change. Key recommendations from the UNSCR 1325 Global Study include:

- Increase predictable, accessible and flexible funding for women's civil society organisations working on peace and security at all levels, including through dedicated financing instruments such as the new Global Acceleration Instrument on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action (UN Women, 386)
- Support women's participation in donor conferences to ensure interventions appropriately target the needs of women on the ground (UN Women, 415)
- Revise the structure of budgeting from being 'project' based to be aimed at long-term capacity building, not only of State entities but also of non-State entities (UN Women, 386)
- For each peace process, develop and fund a strategy of long-term support to build the capacity of women's networks to engage in political dialogue, strengthen the gender awareness of mediators, facilitators and conflict parties, address practical issues that may limit women's engagement—from granular details such as procedures for circulation of agenda and materials to bigger issues like the use of local languages, and protect women activists from potential backlash. (UN Women, 398)
- Fund the establishment of an independent monitoring mechanism run by women's civil society groups and women's human rights defenders to track the performance on gender equality of humanitarian assistance (e.g. collection of sex-disaggregated data)

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and gender-sensitive analysis to the systematic application of the gender marker and the engagement of local women) (UN Women, 400)

- Undertake participatory gender and conflict risk analysis (including vulnerability analysis) to inform the design, costing and implementation of all interventions in conflict-affected contexts (UN Women 386)

To learn more:

- Counterterrorism Measures and Their Effects on the Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPP) (Undated) Available: <https://www.womenpeacemakersprogram.org/assets/CMS/Resources/Reports/Policy-brief-CTM.pdf>
- Feminist Mobilisation and Progressive Policy Change: Why Governments Take Action to Combat Violence Against Women; Weldon, S. L., and Htun M., (2013), *Gender and Development* 21:2, 231-247
- Feminist (Re)interpretation of the Dayton Peace Accords: *An Intimate Dialogue on How Societies Transit From War to Peace and How a Feminist Approach to Peacebuilding Can Help Create Strong and Long-Lasting Peace* (2014) (WILPF/Women Organising for Change in Syria and Bosnia and Herzegovina) Available: <http://womenorganizingforchange.org/Development/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/DPA-report-FINAL.pdf>
- Hudson, Valerie et al. *Sex & World Politics*. Columbia University Press (2014)
- New Actors, New Money, New Conversations: A Mapping of Recent Initiatives for Women and Girls (2014) (AWID) Available: www.awid.org/publications/new-actors-new-money-new-conversations
- The Global Study on the Implementation of the UNSC Resolution 1325 (UN Women) (2015) Available: [http://peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/UNW-GLOBAL-STUDY-1325-2015%20\(1\).pdf](http://peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/UNW-GLOBAL-STUDY-1325-2015%20(1).pdf)
- Watering the Leaves, Starving the Roots: The Status of Financing for Women's Rights Organizing and Gender Equality. (2013) (AWID) Available: www.awid.org/publications/watering-leaves-starving-roots
- Weldon, Laurel S. *When Protest Makes Policy*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press (2011)
- Women Moving Mountains: The Collective Impact of the Dutch MDG3 Fund. (2013) (AWID) Available: www.awid.org/publications/women-moving-mountains-collective-impact-dutch-mdg3-fund