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Mireia Cano Vinas

Executive Summary

Between 1996 and 2002 the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) was subject to a spiral of wars and rebellions during which nine national armies clashed on its soil, several rebellions supported by DRC's neighbours fragmented the country, and millions died. Although the level of armed conflict decreased significantly after the signing of the Sun City peace accord in 2002 and the holding of elections in 2006 and 2011, a situation of no peace no war and sporadic fighting continues today in eastern DRC with a variety of non-state armed groups causing insecurity in North Kivu, South Kivu, Oriental, and northern parts of Katanga Province. Army operations supported by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in DRC (MONUSCO) struggle to dismantle these groups, even after a Force Intervention Brigade increased the UN's military strength.

The UN-sponsored Peace, Security and Collaboration Framework (PSCF) was signed in the context of the 23 March Movement (M23) crisis. Emerging from a failed peace agreement between the Conseil National de Défense du Peuple (CNDP) and the government in 2009, the M23 seized Goma in November 2012 despite the presence of UN peacekeeping mission troops in the city, creating a situation which put pressure on the national government in Kinshasa to negotiate at the so-called Kampala talks. On 24 February 2013, while the Kampala talks were at an impasse, eleven African states signed the peace framework (with two joining later). The PSCF requires the Congolese government to carry out key governance reforms, commit states in the region to stop backing rebellions in DRC, and encourage the international community to renew commitments to DRC.

The Terms of Reference for this gender audit called for an analysis from a gender perspective on the development, implementation and monitoring of the PSCF. The evidence collected should be used as a base for advocacy actions, particularly in connection with the fifteenth anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in October 2015.

The gender audit was conducted over a period of 30 days between August and October 2015. A two-week visit to Gisenyi (Rwanda) and Goma, Bukavu and Kinshasa (DRC) complemented the literature review with key informant interviews. There were a total of 55 informants (23 men and 32 women) rom the government, civil society, INGOs, UN and donors. Many other persons, groups and institutions were not contacted due to lack of time or access. Despite the relatively limited time spent in DRC and the region, the consultant feels that sufficient data was gathered to undertake an informed and credible analysis.

An analysis of the PSCF reveals the lack of a gender perspective in the content of the framework itself. It should also be noted that the process that led to the signing of the PSCF lacked any formal representation of women. The six engagements for DRC comprise the suite of activities that the Congolese state should already be doing to consolidate an accountable, effective and responsible state, and to address the root causes of persistent high levels of insecurity (namely in the eastern parts of the country). However, without the participation of civil society and women's organizations, the analysis of the root causes will not take into account the link between gender inequality and conflict.

The PSCF was called the "Framework of Hope" because it provided "what we hadn't had for many years: the semblance of a peace process, with outside monitors and clear benchmarks and goals". Interviewees who were asked to rate on a scale from one and ten the current level of implementation of the PSCF in DRC, gave it between two to seven, mostly agreeing that it was under an average of five. By way of progress, interviewees recognized the defeat of M23, the establishment of the national demobilization program (on paper), the progress on supply chain due diligence in the mining sector, a slew of laws passed on elections and security sector reform, the nomination of a special adviser to the president on fighting against Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) and the recruitment of children, among other actions. Sceptics argue that this would have been accomplished with or without the PSCF and complain that little progress has been made on key PSCF objectives, mainly due to the lack of a real dialogue as well as disagreement among Congolese political forces over key aspects of the reform agenda.

At the national level, the PSCF put in place a National Monitoring Mechanism (MNS in French) in charge of monitoring the indicators developed for the national commitments. Despite formal representation of the official representative of civil society in the redaction committee, civil society has been involved in a consultative role rather than a participatory one. Poor communication on these benchmarks with civil society and the population more broadly is one factor which explains the little progress the PSCF has shown so far. Without further involvement, local actors in DRC continue their peacebuilding work, but lack the information needed to hold their government accountable for progress with the PSCF national commitments that can translate into real security.

At the regional level, a Regional Oversight Mechanism was established and it adopted a series of regional benchmarks and follow-up measures that were translated into an action plan for 2014 (and activities prioritized still apply in 2015) with specific activities, timelines, lead implementers and funding arrangements. An analysis of the action plan reveals that gender has been insufficiently included, and despite the momentum created by the Great Lakes Women's Platform for the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework, the situation seems to remain at the sporadic funding of women's organizations rather than promoting women's political participation at higher levels.

In conclusion, while the PSCF correctly identifies two key drivers of the conflict: foreign interference in the DRC and the dysfunction of Congolese state institutions, it has not yet achieved its goals. The PSCF has helped focus attention on a core set of issues and create a set of common benchmarks for progress at the national and regional levels. At a time when pre-electoral dynamics risk generating instability and more insecurity (in the DRC and beyond), the PSCF should be prioritized and used as the International Community's most powerful tool to accompany the DRC state and society in addressing the identified core domestic drivers of continued instability - while recognizing that doing so will require the increased will on the part of the DRC government to address these issues.

The gender audit describes a set of opportunities for engagement based on

at the programmatic analysis of gender integration in the process and content of the PSCF.

On the redefinition of gender in peacebuilding

There are many gender-related concepts applied in DRC, including gender analysis, gender-based violence, sexual violence in conflict, women's political participation, and gender parity, among others. However, it is not clear how they fit together and the prevalent notion of gender equals women, and therefore, victims of sexual violence undermines the formulation of more effective gender equality programs. If the PSCF is to be used as the key framework for bringing peace and stability to the DRC and the region, the key stakeholders involved need to broaden and deepen the concept of gender in peacebuilding and acknowledge that women and men as social actors play multiple and different roles; that women and men experience conflict and peace differently; that they have differential access to resources (including power and decision-making); and that they have different practical needs and strategic interests relating to gender power relations.

Concrete steps would involve the following: ensuring that, in every text, women and men are conceptualized as productive contributors to peace; using gender-sensitive language and avoid referring to the terms "women and children" and "women and youth", or associate women with marginalized categories; and provide for training on gender awareness and sensitivity for all members of key bodies.

This would allow for a better, more nuanced analysis of the dynamics in eastern DRC, enabling more targeted activities (e.g. not just use the blanket women and youth approach, but look in a more detailed way at particular vulnerabilities as well as capacities), and changing expectations on masculinities and femininities that perpetuate inequality and exclusion.

On the key participation versus mere consultation of women's organizations in particular and civil society in general

Congolese women and men in their communities who are organized in women's groups and civil society organizations have worked to broker peace and to shore up the resilience of communities during continuing armed conflict, but that did not gain them an invitation to the PSCF signing in Addis Ababa in 2013. As one informant to this report bluntly put it, "It doesn't matter if there are women, or men, or dogs around the table. It's about heads of state dealing with state relations". Evidence shows that men and women bring different issues to the table, and therefore, it does matter.

Despite acknowledged efforts by MONUSCO and the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary General for the Great Lakes Region (OSESG) to engage civil society and women's organizations in the monitoring and implementation of the PSCF, their role has been one of consultation rather than meaningful participation at the decision-making level. Beyond the predominantly male political and military elite which controls track-one processes, local level or track-two mediation efforts where women play a major role every day in DRC need to be acknowledged as part of the peace process. This needs to happen not only at the programmatic level through small grants, but also at the political level.

Concrete steps would involve the following: establishing a formal channel for civil society and women's organizations to monitor and implement the PSCF (in the form of the consultative committee that should have been in place in the MNS or other mechanism); specifying minimum quotas for women on key monitoring and implementing bodies and developing a mechanism to ensure or track funding for women's participation in implementation or monitoring, along the lines of gender budgeting.

At the regional level, reinforcing regional initiatives to allow for the meaningful participation of a wide cross-section of civil society and women's organizations is all the more important while inter-state relations are poor, through a coherent mechanism that is inclusive, open, transparent, and accountable.

On the need for continued technical assistance on gender-responsiveness

The majority of development and cooperation programmes in the DRC still lack meaningful integration of gender, and implementation of the agreed priority actions within the national and regional engagements of the PSCF will require technical assistance on gender-responsiveness at the national and regional levels.

Concrete steps at the national level point to the need for a detailed mapping and understanding of local conditions with the active participation of women and men before programmes are designed, formulated or implemented; the reinforcement of the Ministry of Gender to be able to effectively lead the process of monitoring and implementation of the PSCF is paramount. At the regional level, in the same way that the World Bank and the OSESG have established a facility for technical assistance to ensure that projects to be implemented in the region are conflict-sensitive, technical assistance to ensure that projects related to the regional integration objectives of the PSCF are gender-responsive should also be provided.

On the required concerted efforts for change

Despite many efforts to promote SCR 1325 and draft national and regional action plans, the content has not had any concrete impact on the current peace framework. To achieve any sustained change, a number of factors that give rise to violence needs to be addressed to avoid escalation and prevent re-occurrence. These include youth unemployment, poor governance, resource-based conflicts, environmental degradation, economic hardship, and the proliferation of small arms. In each of these, gender considerations need to be analyzed, understood, and taken into account for an appropriate response.

Civil society groups, especially women peacebuilders at the local level, are the main drivers of the 1325 agenda. This factor must be recognized in all policy and programming by the Congolese government and all signatories to the PSCF, international organizations and donors. The review of the indicators for the ISSSS strategy should ensure sex and age disaggregated data allows for the measuring of the impact on women and men, and donors should

Gender Audit of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Region

make funding conditional to a gender-responsive implementation of the PSCF national and regional benchmarks in line with internationally agreed commitments under SCR 1325 and related resolutions on women, peace and security.



Left

Irene Morisho works for the organization CEDEJ in Congo, fighting for young women's rights. CEDEJ operates several so-called school clubs around the city of Uvira where they spread vital information to both students and teachers.

Right

Violence against women is widespread in Congo. To contribute to change, Nabintu Jeannine, from the organization MIFA, engages in efforts to stop the violence. The organization educates traditional leaders about gender organization their villages.



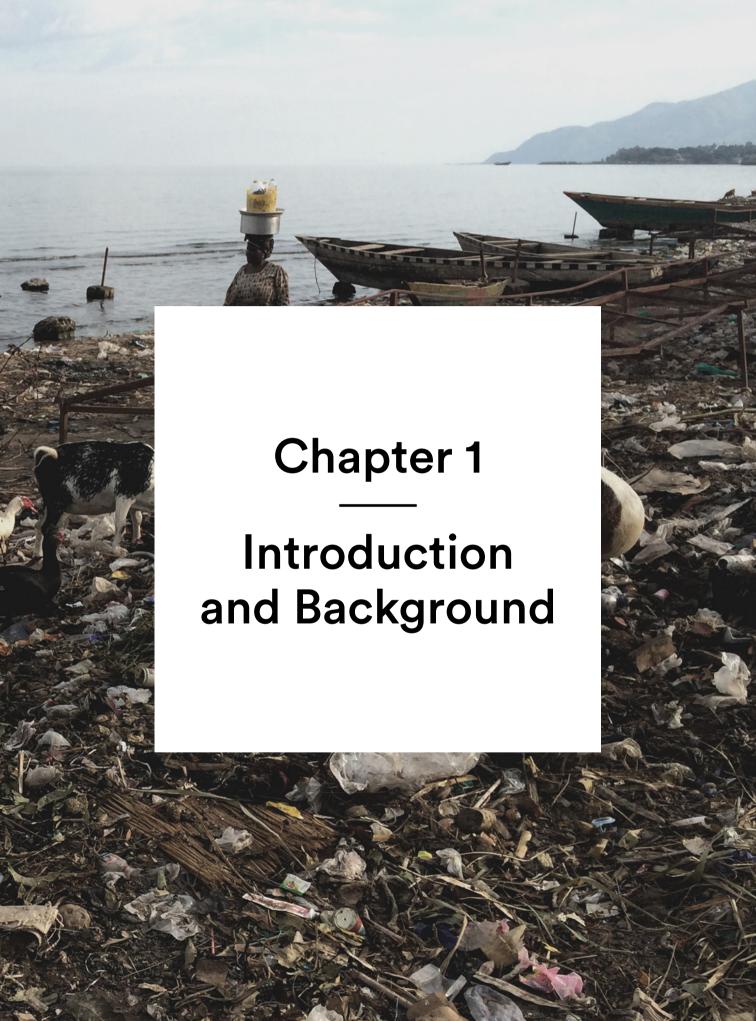
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List of Abbreviations

AFEM	South Kivu Women's Media	OSESG	Office of the Special Envoy of the
	Association		Secretary General for the Great
AU	African Union		Lakes Region
CEPGL	Communauté Economique	PAN	Plan d'Action Nationale
	des Pays des Grands Lacs	PNC	Police Nationale Congolaise
CEDAW	Convention for the Elimination	PSCF	Peace, Security and
	of All Forms of Discrimination		Collaboration Framework
	Against Women	ROM	Regional Oversight Mechanism
CNDP	Conseil National de Défense du	RRSSJ	Réseau pour la Réforme du
	Peuple		Secteur de Sécurité et de Justice
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern	SADC	Southern African Development
	and Southern Africa		Community
CORDAID	Catholic Organisation for Relief	SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based
	and Development Aid		Violence
CSO	Civil society organization	SOFAD	Solidarité des Femmes
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization,		Activistes pour la Défense
	and Reintegration		des Droits Humains
DDR/RR	Disarmament, Demobilization,	SOFEPADI	Solidarité Féminine Pour la Paix
	Repatriation, Reintegration,		et le Développement Intégrale
	and Resettlement	SSR	Security Sector Reform
DFID	Department for International	STAREC	Stabilization and Reconstruction
	Development in the United		Plan for Eastern Democratic
	Kingdom		Republic of the Congo
DRC	Democratic Republic of	SRSG	Special Representative of the
	the Congo		Secretary-General
EU	European Union	SV	Sexual violence
FARDC	Forces Armées de la République	TOR	Terms of Reference
E4.0	Démocratique du Congo	UN	United Nations
FAS	Femmes Africa Solidarité	UNDP	United Nations Development
FIB	Force Intervention Brigade	LINDRICO	Program
HDI ICGLR/CIRGL	Human Development Index International Conference on the	UNDPKO	United Nations Department of
ICGLR/CIRGL		UNICOD	Peacekeeping Operations United National Security Council
IDP	Great Lakes Region	UNSCR	Resolution
	Internally Displaced Persons	WILPF	
(I)NGO	(International) Non- Governmental Organization	VVILPF	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
ISSSS	International Security and Stabi-	WPS	Women, Peace and Security
13333	lization Support Strategy	WF3	Women, reace and Security
KII	Key Informant Interviews		
LGTBI	Lesbian, Gay, Transgender,		
LGTBI	Bisexual, and/or Intersex		
M23	23 March Movement		
MNS	Mécanisme Nationale de Suivi		
111110	et de Supervision		
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization		
	Stabilization Mission in the		
	Democratic Republic of the		
	Congo		
	3-		





1. Introduction and Background

"The more peace agreements we sign, the more peace seems to vanish".1

On 24 February 2013, eleven African states signed the UN-sponsored Peace, Security and Collaboration Framework (PSCF) for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)² and the region (with two additional signatories afterwards),³ requiring the Congolese government to carry out key governance reforms, committing states in the region to stop backing rebellions in DRC and encouraging the international community to renew its commitment to DRC.

The Terms of Reference for this gender audit called for an analysis from a gender perspective on the development, implementation and monitoring of the PSCF. The evidence collected should be used as a base for advocacy actions, particularly in connection with the fifteenth anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (SCR 1325) on Women, Peace and Security in October 2015.

1.1 The PSCF in the local, national and regional political context

Between 1996 and 2002, DRC was subject to a spiral of wars and rebellions during which nine national armies clashed on its soil, several rebellions supported by DRC's neighbours fragmented the country, and millions died. Although the level of armed conflict decreased significantly after the signing of the Sun City peace accord in 2002 and the holding of elections in 2006 and 2011, a situation of no peace no war and sporadic fighting continues until today in eastern DRC with a variety of non-state armed groups causing insecurity in North Kivu, South Kivu and Oriental

and northern parts of Katanga Province. Army operations supported by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in DRC (MONUSCO) struggle to dismantle these groups, even after a Force Intervention Brigade increased the UN's military strength. This continued insecurity has its roots in the country's political history and is fuelled by a particularly unstable regional context. In the DRC as a whole, democratic reforms struggle to take hold and national institutions continue to function in a way that shows scant regard for the needs of Congolese citizens.

The PSCF was signed in the context of the 23 March Movement (M23) crisis: emerging from a failed peace agreement between the Conseil National de Défense du Peuple (CNDP) and the government in 2009, the M23 seized Goma in November 2012, despite the presence of the UN peacekeeping mission troops in the city, creating a situation which led to pressure on the national government in Kinshasa, to negotiate. In the Kampala Peace Talks that followed, it became clear that a broader and more inclusive regional peace process was vital to address core drivers of conflict in DRC, particularly along its eastern borders. When M23 was finally defeated at the end of 2013,5 with the conditions underlined in the Nairobi Declaration, it was perceived as a positive step towards regional peace and stability.

The PSCF contains the framework itself, which outlines national, regional and international actions that aim to end violence (see Figure 1).

The PSCF established a Regional Oversight Mechanism (ROM) known as the 11+4 mechanism, which involves the country leaders and the leaders of four regional and international

Figure 1

Summary of the PSCF by the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region of Africa.⁶ organizations.7 On 23 September 2013, the ROM adopted a series of regional benchmarks and follow-up measures that were translated into an action plan for 2014 with specific activities, timelines, lead implementers and funding arrangements. The DRC government also put in place a national mechanism (Mécanisme National de Suivi et de Supervision. MNS) in charge of monitoring the indicators developed for the national commitments. To coordinate and assess the implementation of national and regional commitments, the UN Security Council appointed Ms Mary Robinson as the Special Envoy of the Secretary General for the Great Lakes8 with a focus on women's empowerment and regional economic integration as two key areas linking security with wider development efforts. Her current successor is Mr Said Djinnit.

The main stabilization/peace architecture in DRC has different levels and focuses (see page 36). In order to implement the PSCF, MONUSCO – present in DRC since 2002 and operating with a \$1.4 billion budget - received a wider mandate through SCR 2098, including the deployment of the first ever UN offensive force, the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB), MONUSCO was also requested to support the government in developing a comprehensive Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Reintegration, and Resettlement (DDR/RR) program; giving a new impetus to Security Sector Reform (SSR); and supporting the government Stabilization and Reconstruction Plan for post-conflict zones (STAREC) and its provincial plans through the revised International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy 2013-2017 (ISSSS). 9

Figure 1. Summary of the PSCF

For the DRC state authority

To deepen security sector reform.

To consolidate State Authority, particularly in eastern DRC.

To make progress in decentralization.

To further economic development.

To further structural reform of public institutions.

To further reconciliation.

For the region

To respect the sovereignty of neighbouring countries in terms of international affairs and territorial integrity.

To neither tolerate nor provide assistance to armed groups.

To strengthen regional cooperation, including economic integration and judicial cooperation.

To neither harbour nor provide protection to any person accused of war crimes or crimes against humanity.

For the international community

For Security Council to remain engaged in seeking long-term stability for the DRC.

A renewed commitment of bilateral partners to remain engaged with the region.

To support economic integration and revitalise the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries.

To review the United Nations Organization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO).

To appoint a UN Special Envoy to foster durable solutions.





1.2 Gender, Peace and Security

For the purposes of this gender audit and in line with United Nation's definition,10 gender refers to the socially given attributes, roles, activities, responsibilities and needs connected to being men (masculine) and women (feminine) in a given society at a given time, and as a member of a specific community within that society. This gender audit also adopts a gender-relational approach which is, on the one hand, broader in the sense that it moves away from equating gender with women (and girls) and, on the other hand, deeper in that it examines the interplay between gender and other identity markers, such as age, social class, sexuality, disability, ethnic or religious background, marital status or urban/rural setting. Peacebuilding can be more effective if built on an understanding of how gendered identities are constructed through the societal power relations between and among women, men, girls, boys and members of sexual and gender minorities.

In terms of defining peace, it is clear that all PSCF stakeholders interviewed give priority to the reform of the security sector and the consolidation of the authority of the State, but this report, in line with Kvinna till Kvinna's work on integrated security11, highlights the inextricable links between personal, economic and social security. As noted by the former United States Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues Melanne Verveer¹²: "The assessments (by women) are often based on their personal experiences and the reality of their lives, while the DRC government places aspects of social and economic development of the PSCF at the bottom of the priority list".

There is strong evidence that the gender norms that underpin gender inequality can drive conflict and violence, particularly where militarized notions of masculinity are prevalent¹³. Women's organizations from around the world bear witness to how militarization is generating a climate that strengthens traditional gender stereotypes regarding what is perceived as masculine and feminine, making efforts to increase gender equality more difficult. The masculine stereotype maintains a view of men as warriors and women as victims to be protected. The protective man's task is to fight and sacrifice himself for his family in order to protect them from external threats.14

The adoption of SCR 1325 in 2000 provides for a range of measures aimed at the inclusion of women in the prevention, management and resolution of violent conflict. It states that just and lasting peace cannot be achieved without the full and equal participation of women in matters of peace and security. It focuses on participation, protection, prevention and equal access to relief and recovery. In particular, several of the resolution's provisions address the role of women and gender in peace negotiations and agreements. Paragraph 8 lays out specific measures relating to women in peace agreement texts. It:

Calls on all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, inter alia:

- (a) The special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction;
- (b) Measures that support local women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution which involves women in

all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements;

(c) Measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary.

Nevertheless, in a study of 585 peace agreements signed since between 1990 (before SCR 1325) and 2010, only sixteen percent of peace agreements contain references to women, but references to women have increased significantly since the passing of SCR 1325, from 11–27 percent percent of agreements. References to women are qualitatively often poor, constituting scattered references to women, sometimes contravening CEDAW provisions, and on rare occasions, illustrating good practice. ¹⁵

An emerging shift¹⁶ from a Women, Peace and Security framework to a Gender, Peace and Security framework at the policy level is reflected in SCR 210617 and the G8 Declaration on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict,18 which mention male survivors of SGBV and call for an engagement of men and boys, along with women and girls, in the prevention of Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV). As much as continued support is needed to prevent, mitigate and respond to the massive scale of sexual violence and other forms of SGBV against women and girls in DRC,19 further attention is required to recognize the militarization of men as an egregious form of SGBV, or as Chris Dolan²⁰ recently questioned: "How are we to qualify what happens to the men and boys who, in addition to purposive emasculation and attacks on sexual identity through the use of sexual violence, are, to borrow a phrase, "disproportionately affected" by landmines, abduction/military conscription and

forcible recruitment, gender-specific massacres, and being forced to commit atrocities against others (with all the resultant psychological damage to themselves)?"

Peace agreements document agreement between warring parties in an attempt to solve the conflict and establish politics as an alternative to violence. Therefore, inclusion in peace agreement texts is an important starting point in achieving other political, legal and social gains for women²¹ and men, including members of the LGTBI community. Nevertheless, in DRC women (particularly outside the elite in Kinshasa and even more so in the rural areas) remain marginalized from decision-making and political participation, including in peacebuilding efforts due to the range of factors summarized below. Certain forms of masculinities as drivers of violence and inequality in society are not seriously addressed while, at the same time, the majority of men are also marginalized from processes of political participation. LGTBI persons tend to conform to the norm and/or remain invisible to avoid discrimination and possible violence.

A brief context analysis

Context of insecurity and instability

The previously described DRC context contributes to the perpetuation of gender inequality and limits opportunities for all, particularly for women and girls. The Gender Inequality Index²² ranks the country 147 out of 152. The World Bank reports²³ that 63.6% of the total population and 61.2% of all women live below the poverty line, and face limited access to basic needs, resoures and social services.

Poor governance and weak state presence

The prevailing form of governance in DRC is extremely patriarchal; it is personalized, centralized, and centred on networks of patronage. This is a form of rule that preys on public funds, siphoning them off to the various clients of those in power and empties state in stitutions of their substance by favouring the creation of shadowy private systems of governance where decisions are not taken in the relevant ministries, but behind the scenes, Ethnic belonging is of great importance in this context, as it is the first level at which relationships are formed. The way in which the political system operates often pits communities directly against one another at the risk of increasing tensions and causing violence.24 This form of governance reinforces those already in power. This exclusion from power also pertains to women, as the majority in power are men.25 Poverty and corruption are massive obstacles for women's participation on any level of power, as are the lack of financial means and the prevailing corruption.²⁶

The persistence of socio-cultural norms that perpetuate gender inequality

Available data suggests the widespread persistence of beliefs and attitudes which view women and girls as inferior and perpetuates traditional ideas of gender roles. These norms place the man in the position of authority in the household, giving him control over decisions and assets, whereas the woman is seen as inferior for domestic care duties. These norms are transmitted to boys and girls at an early age, and both men and women should have a role to play in challenging them.

The existence of discriminatory legislation and the lack of application of more genderequitable laws and policies ²⁷

The national legislative framework to support gender equality has been strengthened over the past decade. but there are still some laws in need of reform and also the Constitution²⁸, which has a huge implementation gap. The 2006 Constitution affirms the equal rights of men and women, and the 2006 law against sexual violence provides a formal definition of rape, including that of both sexes and all forms of penetration.²⁹ The DRC has also ratified the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women - CEDAW (1986) and the Protocol of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2009). Regarding SCR 1325, DRC adopted a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security in 2010 and reviewed it in 2013.30 One of the biggest challenges in DRC is the weak implementation of these laws and instruments due to severe political, capability, and resource constraints, including in the Ministry of Gender, Family and Children.

Discrimination against people who are lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual or intersex

Although there is no law against homosexuality in DRC, people behave as if it is illegal, and LGTBI Congolese are extremely vulnerable to abuse, which is fuelled by a history of discrimination, disempowerment and stigma. They are often rejected by their families, assaulted, arrested, raped and threatened, with few organizations to support them. Therefore, they keep a very low profile, often outwardly conforming to the norm (by being married and having children, for example). A draft bill has been prepared that would criminalize

homosexuality and should it be discussed and passed, it would increase discrimination against this community.³²

On masculinities

A recent study on masculinity by UN Women DRC and the Swedish Embassy in Kinshasa³³ revealed that, in the collective imagination of the people interviewed, men are imbued with the characteristics that are associated with a hegemonic view of masculinity, exerted by men, not only on women, but also on other men who are in *subordinate* or less powerful positions.

1.3 Methodology

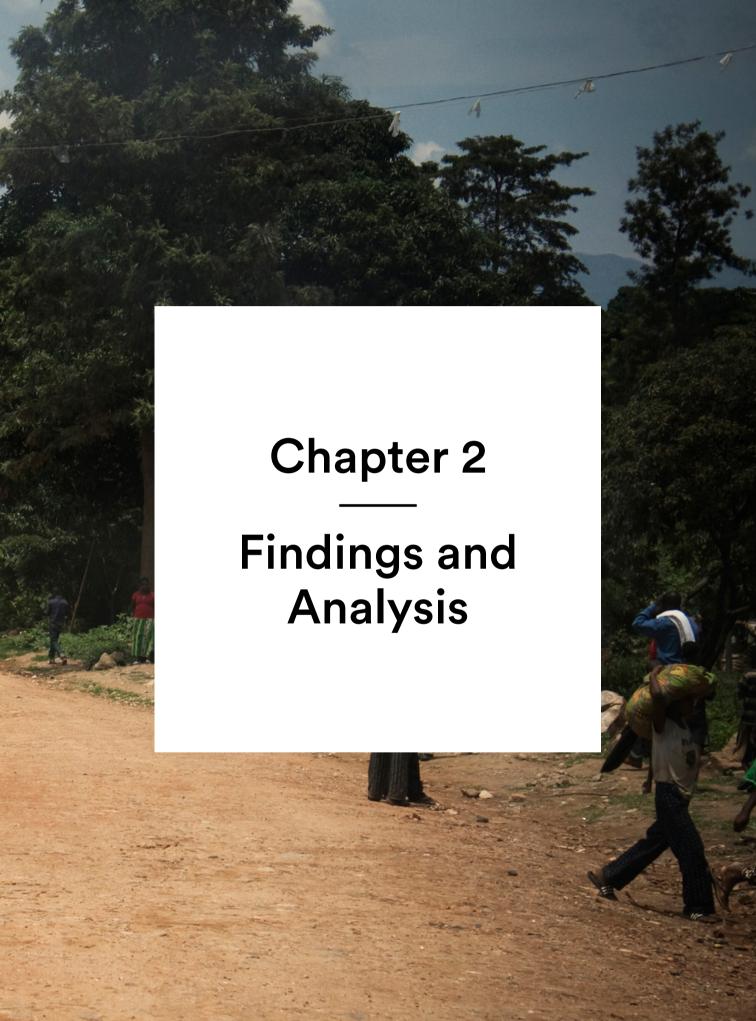
The gender audit builds on earlier work by The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation and International Alert respectively, such as Engendering the Peace Process34 and Re-thinking gender in peacebuilding.35 The audit was done over a period of 30 days between August and October 2015. A two-week visit to Gisenyi (Rwanda), and Goma, Bukavu and Kinshasa (DRC) complemented the literature review with key informant interviews (KII). There were a total of 55 informants (23 men and 32 women) from government, civil society, INGOs, UN and donors in DRC (see list of contacts in Annex I) note that the role of regional organizations was not assessed for this report. Some stakeholders who reside in other countries or were absent during the field visit were contacted via Skype or telephone. Many other people, groups and institutions were not contacted due to lack of time or access, for example: the millions of displaced women and men who bear the brunt of cyclical conflicts, the demobilized combatants and their dependents, the survivors of SGBV (including sexual violence), the customary chefs and the religious leaders - many of whom could play a

much greater role in promoting gender equality than they currently do – and others. Despite the relatively limited time spent in DRC and the region, the consultant feels that sufficient data was gathered to undertake an informed and credible analysis.

Interviewees were selected from name lists provided by International Alert and Kvinna till Kvinna and were supplemented by additional key informants that were suggested during the course of the interviews. The consultant was assisted in organizing interviews and meetings by email and telephone before the consultant arrived, and the consultant made additional contact as was necessary. A guide (see Annex II) provided a flexible framework for open interviews, accommodating varied experience and involvement with the PSCF by different stakeholders. Interviews were conducted either in English or French, according to the preference of the interviewee.

The consultant incorporated all responses recorded during the interviews into an Excel evidence matrix tool to collate and analyze data from various sources. The report is structured by identifying emerging themes that were largely grouped under the original question-based structure: Context, Implementation and Monitoring, and Coordination with crosscutting issues in each of the sections.





2. Findings and Analysis

"It's not the government who's pushing women to take part in peacebuilding efforts; it's the suffering that pushes them". 36

2.1 Context: Gender and the process that led to the signing of the PSCF

Gender is not a new concept in development and peacebuilding in DRC and the region.37 Yet, the way in which institutions and organizations implement gender programmes and policies, gender equates to women only. Women in DRC continue to be defined as mothers and/ or in relation to male family members rather than as essential beings.³⁸ They are often portrayed as poor, rural, and vulnerable (i.e. passive) victims, particularly victims of sexual violence. As victims, they are in need of assistance and unable to do anything for themselves due to lack of education, socio-cultural patterns that oppress them, patriarchal institutions that exclude them and national laws that do not favour them or else when they do, they are not fully implemented.

This description of women as objects of charity does not include their active role in either peace or in conflict. Women can be frontline defenders,39 for example, the Congolese women who were a small minority in the Sun City talks in 2002: they came from opposing political parties and from civil society and formed a women's caucus in order to work together and influence the debates and the content of the agreement They did this by forming a human chain blocking the exits of the committee room until a deal was signed. Women can also be perpetrators of violence, instigators and enablers: for example, one interviewee mentioned the wives of armed men who do not want

them to demobilize, as it might be the only source of livelihood. 40

An analysis of the PSCF text reveals a lack of gender perspective: language is not gender sensitive, mention of displaced persons does not take into account that the majority of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) are women and children; the differential impact of the conflict on women and men is reflected nowhere, nor are the contributions of civil society and women's organizations to peacebuilding. The PSCF does not mention the problem of militarized masculinities, and although sexual violence is mentioned once in paragraph three of the agreement, it is described as an act rather than a crime.

The process that led to the signature also lacked any formal representation of women: all eleven signatories to the PSCF were men, and out of four witnesses, there was only one woman⁴¹ The few women from civil society had observer status with no decisionmaking power, despite the fact that many women and men have been working and continue to work for peace back in their communities.

Enough is enough – The soft diplomacy of women at Solidarité des Femmes Activistes pour la Défense des Droits Humains (SOFAD)

As executive secretary of SOFAD, Gege Katana has been concretely promoting women's rights in DRC in the Uvira territory of South Kivu province for more than 30 years: "It's my life", she says. She and her team intervene in conflict-affected communities.

They have supported the establishment of diverse community structures, such as peace clubs (composed of women only) and community dialogue groups (which include both men and women), and some women are members of both. These groups have regular meetings where they discuss gender, governance, security and peace issues.

Some of these groups also act as conflict resolution structures. They do participatory action research to find out who is causing insecurity and how they can be approached. After first contact is made, they ask for a private appointment. This is usually carried out in a place agreed by the people involved where they do not fear any safety risk: "We need to ensure that the person invited is safe, even if he's the enemy. Our goal is to enter into a dialogue about how they can lay down their weapons and contribute to peace".

SOFAD also organizes *Tribunes d'Expression Populaire*. They usually invite everyone in the village to a cultural event with SOFAD All Stars, a music and theatre group that passes on messages about women, peace and security. During the event, they invite members of the local groups to the stage to give them the opportunity to exchange with the leaders of their communities.

SOFAD has managed to get women and men from different ethnic groups to sit around the same table. SOFAD believes that dialogue at the grassroots level is the solution to peace and reconciliation, and women's efforts in this sense needs to be recognized and built upon.

The lack of gender integration in the PSCF can only be read through an analysis of the context in which it was signed. As described above, on 20 November 2012 Goma was seized by the M23, as MONUSCO proved unable to defend the city and the national army (the FARDC) fled. On their way, some

of these army troops were reported to have raped more than two hundred women and girls⁴² in Minova and neighbouring villages. The date 20 November 2012 has come to symbolize the weak capacity of the Congolese State: six years after the first free elections and nine years after the Sun City peace agreement, the Congolese State showed its incapacity to restore its authority and to build a solid and cohesive army.

Beyond the escalation of violence in the East, the PSCF (by not mentioning the M23 or any other armed groups) "has grander ambitions than just dealing with this recent outbreak. It wants to tackle the unfinished business of the Lusaka-Sun City peace process (1999– 2006) and address the root causes of violence in the region. It sees these as the failure to build strong, accountable institutions in the Congo; and the persistent meddling of the region in the east of the country".43 The six engagements for DRC summarizes everything that, after forty years of independence, the Congolese state should do to end the root causes of insecurity, but without the participation of civil society and women's organizations, the analysis of the root causes misses the link between gender inequality and conflict.





2.2 Implementation and monitoring: Gender and the progress of the PSCF

At the national level

"The PSCF created a very cumbersome bureaucracy that appeared more preoccupied with establishing long lists of metrics and objectives than in getting the job done".⁴⁴

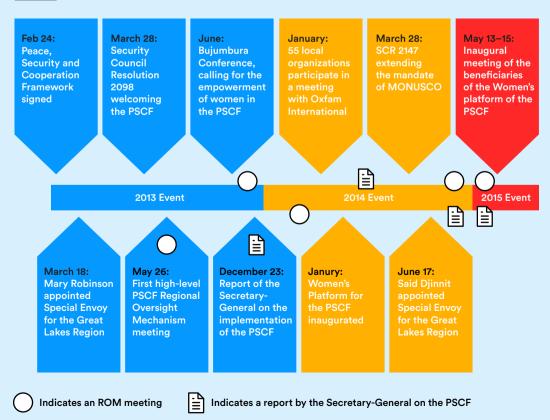
The PSCF was called the *Framework* of *Hope* because it provided "what we

hadn't had for many years: the semblance of a peace process, with outside monitors and clear benchmarks and goals."⁴⁵ Interviewees, who were asked to rate on a scale between one and ten the current level of implementation of the PSCF by the government in DRC, gave it between two to seven, mostly agreeing that it was under an average of five. By way of progress, interviewees recognized the defeat of M23, the establishment of the national demobilization program (on paper), the progress on supply chain due diligence in the mining sector, a slew of laws passed on

Figure 2

This timeline displays the events that have taken place since the signing of the PSCF, which are analyzed in this section.

Figure 2



elections and security sector reform, the nomination of a special adviser to the president on fighting against SGBV and the recruitment of children, among other actions. Sceptics argue that this would have been accomplished with or without the PSCF and criticize that there has been little progress on key PSCF objectives, mainly due to a lack of real dialogue and disagreement among Congolese political forces over key aspects of the reform agenda.

The national monitoring mechanism (MNS in French) and benchmarking process is controlled from Kinshasa. The MNS has two organisms: a steering committee chaired by the president and composed of the prime minister and the ministers of foreign affairs, national defense, interior and security, justice, budget and finance; and an executive committee led by the national coodinator, Mr Francois Mwamba, and two deputy coordinators (one of whom is the only female member of the MNS), but the foreseen group of experts was not established. The planned conseil consultatif, where representatives of women's organizations as well as youth could have been included with the objective of "formulating observations on the functioning of the MNS and making useful recommendations on the implementation of reforms", was not established either.46 Therefore, despite the formal representation of one official representative of civil society in the redaction committee for the benchmarks, civil society has been involved in a very limited consultative role rather than a participatory one, and the poor communication on these benchmarks with civil society and the population more broadly is one factor that explains little progress the PSCF has shown so far.47 Without further involvement, local actors in DRC continue their peacebuilding work but lack the information needed to hold their government accountable for progress with the PSCF national commitments that can translate into real security.

The matrix for the DRC national PSCF engagements was established during a long and complex process of more than two years and has 46 benchmarks with 247 indicators for the monitoring and implementation of necessary reforms. Out of these, no more than 10 indicators track gender-related issues, and these are not, strictly speaking, gender-sensitive indicators because they do not require sex and age disaggregation of data, nor do they measure changes in male and female populations over time (see Figure 3). As much as the matrix can be considered poor in terms of gender inclusion, the scattered references to women, youth and civil society can also be read as an official recognition so that these actors can advance their priorities. None of the PSCF-related documents reviewed for this gender audit dealt with the (gendered) category of youth in any depth beyond its use in the phrase women and youth.

In May 2015 a three-day seminar gathered members of government, the diplomatic corps, development partners, civil society representatives, private sector, confessional organizations and the UN system in DRC as well as the sectorial thematic groups to narrow the existing benchmarks into 81 priorities and assign a corresponding budget for 2016. Despite a very good start on the first page, which makes mention of the army's (FARDC) policy action plan to combat sexual violence and prioritize capacity strengthening to provide security around the elections and ensure police take gender into account, the rest of the document includes very little mention of gender. Worryingly, one indicator puts girls and people living

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with disabilities in the same sentence encouraging them to enroll in schools as if the strategy needed would be the same for the two groups. In the last engagement, number six, gender has a section of its own, promoting women's autonomy and supporting the implementation of National Action Plan 1325, the Strategy on fighting Sexual Violence and the strategy for women's political participation. At the time of writing this report, the benchmarks and budget are pending approval.

Civil society undertakes monitoring in parallel with the official MNS monitoring: RRSSI issues biannual reports (third issued in June 2015).48 Among many coordination efforts in DRC have been CORDAID's workshop in Bukavu in March 2015, SOFAD's workshop in Uvira in August 2015, and International Alert's workshops with the network of local peace actors (Reseau Congolais des Artisans de Paix) in Goma and Bukavu in September 2015. Obstacles are identified and recommendations issued for further progress under each engagement.49 A formal channel for civil society and women's organizations to monitor and implement the PSCF is required beyond mere consultation (in the form of the consultative committee that should have been in place in the MNS, or other mechanism).

In conclusion, the mainstreaming of gender within the PSCF and its benchmarks is very limited. What it would require is a different starting point, one where both women and men are considered key actors for an inclusive and durable peace. But without going as far as redrafting the whole exercise, the mere inclusion of gender-sensitive indicators requiring sex and age disaggregated and avoiding putting women in with all the other *marginalized* categories, would allow for the progress

achieved to be assessed in terms of its impact on women, men, girls and boys.

At regional and international levels

At the regional level, the perception from stakeholders interviewed in DRC is that progress is even less. There is a Monitoring Mechanism and an Action Plan for the implementation of the regional engagements in the PSCF. Since Reilly and Warren (2014) analyzed the inclusion of gender in 2014,50 there has not been another plan as the 15 priorities chosen continue to be relevant at present time. The reports from meetings by the Regional Monitoring Mechanism explicitly mention women in various instances, i.e. recognizing the importance of women and youth in economic development, asking development partners to put in place rapid impact projects at regional and local level, targeting in particular women and youth, and promoting multi-sectorial approaches focusing on developmental initiatives, specifically for women and youth. Gender-related requirements in the regional action plan are listed in Figure 3.51

Two women's organizations are mentioned as being responsible for the implementation of activities in 1.5: FAS (Femmes Africa Solidarité) and Forum des Femmes CIRG. A large exercise explicitly including participation of women's organizations was led by the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary General for the Great Lakes Region (OSESG) to complete civil society restitutions of the state of implementation of the PSCF in DRC, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and then together in a regional restitution.

At the international level, when interviewees are asked about gender, they mention the platform of Mary Robinson,

that is, the Great Lakes Women's Platform for the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework (from now on, the Platform), launched in January 2014.52 The Platform was created to support the active involvement of women in the framework and to ensure that their voices and aspirations were effectively communicated across the region in line with SCR 1325. A gender adviser was recruited under the OSESG. In May 2015 a first meeting in DRC with the beneficiaries of the Platform took place in Goma and was followed by a monitoring exercise on what is happening at the grassroots level. The UNSG referred to the Platform as "an unparalleled vehicle to ensure that Great Lakes women's voices are heard and that they actively participate in decision-making, as well as in social and economic development, in the region".53

Nevertheless, despite having created a momentum around the key importance of the political leadership and empowerment of women, in DRC many interviewees had little information on the status of the Platform⁵³ and some argued that beneficiaries were handpicked by the government, and that the lack of a transparent process and criteria for beneficiaries became a bottleneck for other organizations to join.54 But apart from the functionality or lack thereof of the platform, it seems to have remained at sporadic funding of women's organizations rather than promoting women's political participation at higher levels. Within the next steps planned for the Platform there is an external evaluation of the Platform and a robust resource mobilization to scale it up.

The regular reports from the UN Security Council on the progress of the PSCF and the mandate of the MONUS-CO (see Chronology with bibliography in Annex III) highlight SGBV issues and the impact of conflict on women and children, call for UN Women Protection Advisers to engage with parties to conflict, demand special attention to women and children amongst demobilized combatants, and refer to SCR 1325.55

The key elements under the four pillars of SCR 1325 (prevention, participation, protection, and relief and recovery) are included in both the regional and national benchmarks to different degrees (see Figure 3). Nevertheless, the links between the PSCF and SCR 1325 are not made explicit, which creates two parallel processes that do not feed into each other. There are Regional and National Action Plans on 1325. The DRC National Plan was developed in 2010 and reviewed in 2013. However, the only change in this revision was the new budget on the front page and the establishment of steering committees (Comité de Pilotage) at different levels (national, provincial and territorial) that do not work. The national steering committee has recently installed an Executive Secretariat which, with only one month before the anniversary of 1325 in New York, seeks to assess what has been done, so one interviewee described these as structures with little content.

Despite all the awareness raising and SCR 1325 being translated into local languages, the reality is that the PSCF demonstrates little inclusion of gender or genuine participation of women. This links to the first point made above regarding the discriminatory practices and policies in DRC, which ranks amongst the bottom ten countries in the Gender Equality Index. SCR 1325 relies on changes in the enabling environment that require concerted efforts at all levels. The scarce national budget, the geographic area, the country's complex decentralization, and a plethora

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of structures and frameworks lead to many ratified conventions with zero implementation, especially in a country where the majority of the people live in remote rural areas where these legal and policy instruments are unknown. Progress is, therefore, slow.

The economic integration and reinforcement of the *Communauté Economique des Pays des Grands Lacs* (CEPGL) are part of the national action plan dis-

cussed above, so there would be proper conditions for women to play a key role in economic governance, protection of rights and commercial and economic development. If peace were also understood as social and economic development, this engagement would be a priority for the signatory governments. Nevertheless, their weak commitment to progress on this is demonstrated by the uneven payment of membership contributions to the CEPGL.

Left

The women's organization, MIFA, in Congo works to help women who have been abused and provide information about existing legislation on sexual violence. They use music, among other methods, to engage and create a connection.

Figure 3

Four pillars of SCR 1325.



Figure 3

Participation

SCR 1325:

calls for increased participation of women at all levels of decision-making, including national, regional and international institutions; in mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict; in peace operations, as soldiers, police, and civilians; and as Special Representatives of the UN Secretary General.

PSCF National benchmarks:

There is only a mention of 'number of measures taken to integrate gender within the army' and a measure of the police's operational capacity to fight sexual violence, but without explaining how or what exactly this means. There is no injunction to disaggregate data when measuring 'the degree of satisfaction by the population in relation to the services provided by the police', where men and women might have radically different perceptions. Inscription of women in electoral lists is the only indicator for the engagement on democratization.

PSCF Regional benchmarks:

Points 1.5 a/b/c related to the participation of civil society and women's associations in the regional peacebuilding efforts, namely, the creation of the Platform; a Regional Committee for the Regional Action Plan for SCR 1325; and the reinforcement of the partnership between women's associations, the Youth Forum and the civil society forum.

Protection

SCR 1325:

calls for protection of women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence, including in emergency and humanitarian situations, such as in refugee camps.

PSCF National benchmarks:

Sexual violence is mentioned regarding measuring the operational capacity of the police and number of 'aggressions' committed, and sexual harassment at schools is also addressed.

PSCF Regional benchmarks:

Points 6.1a/b/c call for the development and/or implementation of national criminal legislation; the exchange of lessons learned in at least two regional workshops; the support for current interventions (notably those of Panzi Hospital and Heal Africa): points 7.3 a, b and c call for the inauguration of the regional SGBV training centre in Kampala; and training of the security and juridical sectors.

Prevention

SCR 1325:

calls for improving interventions in the prevention of violence against women, including prosecuting those responsible for violations of international law; strenthening women's rights under national law; and supporting local women's peace initiatives and conflict resolutions processes.

PSCF National benchmarks:

In the conventional sectors of socio-economic integration. education and health, there are indicators tracking women, youth, and elderly persons' access to bank accounts; increased parity between boys' and girls' education at primary, secondary and professional levels: increase of female teachers; women's access to family planning; and coverage of antiretroviral treatment among pregnant women. In terms of socio-cultural diversity, again, the Ministry of Gender is mentioned for the adoption of international instruments to fight intolerance, but when the indicator measures the 'number of measures taken to fight against sectarianism, stereotypes, discrimination and racial or tribal insults', sexist insults are not mentioned despite that government officials interviewed for this report commented that it was a problem.

PSCF Regional benchmarks:

point 4.1d calls for the creation of economic opportunities for women and youth (microfinance, creation of markets and cooperatives) and capacity strengthening for cross-border traders.

Relief and Recovery

SCR 1325:

calls for the advancement of relief and recovery measures to address international crises through a gendered lens, including by respecting the civilian and humanitarian nature of refugee camps, and taking into account the particular needs of women and girls in the design of refugee camps and settlements.

PSCF National benchmarks:

Under consolidating state authority, the indicator 'measures taken to facilitate the return and reintegration of IDPs and refugees', assumes, perhaps incorrectly, that involvement of the Ministry of Gender will mean specific attention will automatically be paid to the different needs of men, women, boys and girls. On reconciliation, 'measures taking into account the role and interests of women in mechanisms and structures for reconciliation and reparation' are mentioned, as is targeting 'young vulnerable women' amidst ex-combatants.

PSCF Regional benchmarks: points 2.1a, 2.3a regarding the

DDR/RR national plan and particular attention required for youth, women and vulnerable children associated with armed groups and sex-specific programs for combatants and their dependents is called for.

2.3 Coordination: Gender and the different actors involved in the implementation of the PSCF

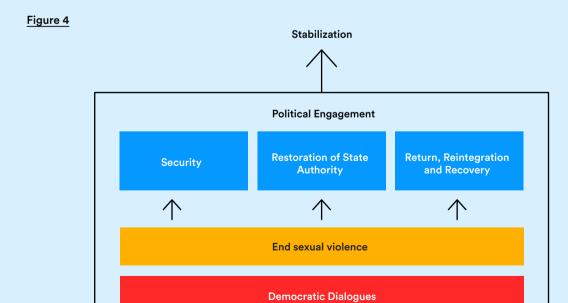
"The role of Congolese women in peacebuilding must not be consultative, but participatory".

The Ministry of Gender, Family and Children is the focal point for national and International NGOs and donors working on gender issues. The title of the Ministry reveals once more the association of women as mothers or related to a family member. The Ministry could and should act as the watchdog for a gender-sensitive benchmarking process for the PSCF. Nevertheless, an organizational and institutional analysis of the Ministry in 2013⁵⁷ found that it lacked the capacity to implement its mandate; it lacked technical expertise

on gender and gender mainstreaming, and the gender focal points deployed to the provinces do not have appropriate technical and institutional support. Without the MNS having provincial representation, the provincial Thematic Group on Gender and its subgroups could play a key role in implementing and monitoring the engagements under the PSCF, but both the Ministry and the provincial focal points need institutional and technical support as well as resources.

STAREC is the main governmental mechanism, under the Ministry of Planning, for the attribution of resources for stabilization of selected priority zones affected by conflict, and it should therefore be considered and used as a key actor for the implementation of the PSCF. Nevertheless, STAREC does not have sufficient resources for implementation.

Figure 4
Five pillars of ISSSS
Strategy 1.



Even prior to the signing of the PSCF, a process of revision of the ISSS had started, based on a critical review of the inadequate results of the first phase of stabilization. The new ISSSS focuses on the root causes of the conflict to which programmes should respond through the 5 pillars outlined below (Figure 4). Gender is a cross-cutting theme, with the strategy arguing that interventions will be designed, planned, implemented and evaluated to avoid a negative impact on conflict dynamics and enhance a positive one, and to have a positive impact on men, women, boys and girls, and the relations between them.58 Nevertheless, it will be important that gender does not stay as one sector within the sexual violence pillar but that it is truly mainstreamed across the pillars, as government officials state the contrary: "Gender, women... all that we'll treat through the fight against sexual violence,"59 reinforcing the stigma of women as victims of sexual violence only.

In the ISSSS and the needs assessments that were conducted for the elaboration of provincial action plans, four conflict dynamics are identified: security dilemmas, mobilization around land and identity, regional dynamics, and the exploitation of natural resources. Nevertheless, rather than looking at how gender plays out in each conflict dynamic, the analysis tended to be reduced to a separate paragraph focused on women. This is already a missed opportunity for the resulting provincial level strategies and action plans validated by the Ministry of Planning at the national level in April 2015, to be funded by a trust fund through a call for proposals. Nevertheless, in order to ensure that M&E is integrated into the implementation of ISSSS, the UK, through its Department for International Development (DFID) and in support of STAREC and MONUSCO, has

committed to funding the design and management of a robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system that can track progress on meeting the objectives of ISSSS and provide evidence to support wider decision-making by all stakeholders. The ISSSS is the global logical framework for the strategy to measure impact but could be also used as a tool to measure how ISSSS is contributing to the different components of PSCF. Therefore, indicators should widen the language to capture gender dynamics and their transformation.

After a process of reconfiguring the mission from the West to the East of the country, MONUSCO, in collaboration with the OSESG, is recognized for having established a link between the PSCF monitoring and implementation by the MNS and civil society through its Civil Affairs Section. Nevertheless, the focus is on supporting the FARDC and combating armed groups in the East, whereas political dialogue on women's participation that should happen at the highest levels in Kinshasa is seen as a lesser priority. As a political tool, the PSCF can help MONUSCO engage at the higher levels and ask the right questions: not only how many women to put in politics, but also the place and the space the government and other political actors are ready to give them. For MONUSCO, this means that to promote women candidates in the elections, the classical more technical work with women's organizations will continue, but other interventions are also needed, i.e. talking to political parties about how including women in their lists (as they represent over half of the population) will actually help increase their chances of winning. This is particularly relevant within the context of the revised Electoral Law from January 2015 as it removed the quota system (30%) that was in the previous version

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of the law, so there is no real obligation for political parties to include women in their candidates' lists.

Resources have been pledged to the region by various development partners: the World Bank pledged \$1 billion to support activities in the region that further the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework and at least €3.2 billion has been allocated to Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia under the Eleventh European Development Fund (2014-2020). DFID has a large Peace and Stabilization program in Eastern DRC that it did not have before the PSCF, so although the PSCF is not a donor coordination framework it has acted as a catalyst for putting peace and stability at the forefront of the development agenda. A closer link between the PSCF and the ISSSS should be developed, although other donors do not see the value added of the PSCF and continue business as usual sector programmes on health, education, etc. while implementing INGO's channel donors' funds to local organizations and providing different capacity-building support.

Civil society influences policy making more through advocacy than through consultation, as national authorities and international actors rarely consult civil society. The specific role of women's organizations within civil society involves lobbying and advocacy action by Congolese women from different alliances with the Congolese government and parliament, the UN, and the regional communities (SADC, CIRGL, COMESA). Inside and outside the remit of the Platform, women's organizations have met at the local, national and regional levels on various occasions to discuss the implementation and monitoring of the PSCF. So-called women's issues are seen as the exclusive preserve of women, whether in civil society or in public life. As recommended in the DRC Gender Country Profile 2014, "donors should engage both women and men on so-called *women's issues* and encourage national and other international stakeholders to do the same" and "perhaps time has come to insist on the need for meaningfully integrating the women's movement as well as women's participation into civil society and broader decisionmaking spheres".⁶¹

Many interviewees highlighted the need for a strong dynamic or platform of women's organizations speaking with one voice, and organized with a calendar of activities, that can monitor progress, share information, etc. Currently, the movement is small and fragmented after years of conflict and competition for resources. In many ways, it suffers from the same ills that the government does in terms of going from one event to the next without doing a restitution of the information received to their constituencies and translating it into concrete impact on the ground. Because they are small and fragmented, few women's organizations receive funding directly from bilateral donors. Innovative ways to strengthen civil society are needed, at the national and regional levels, particularly when regional state relations are tense.

Right

The campaign Rien sans les femmes (Nothing without women) has gathered more than 50 women's rights organizations in DR Congo to demand the equal representation of women and men at all levels of decision-making. Pictures from peaceful marches in Bukavu. South Kivu, May 2015. Photo: International Alert.

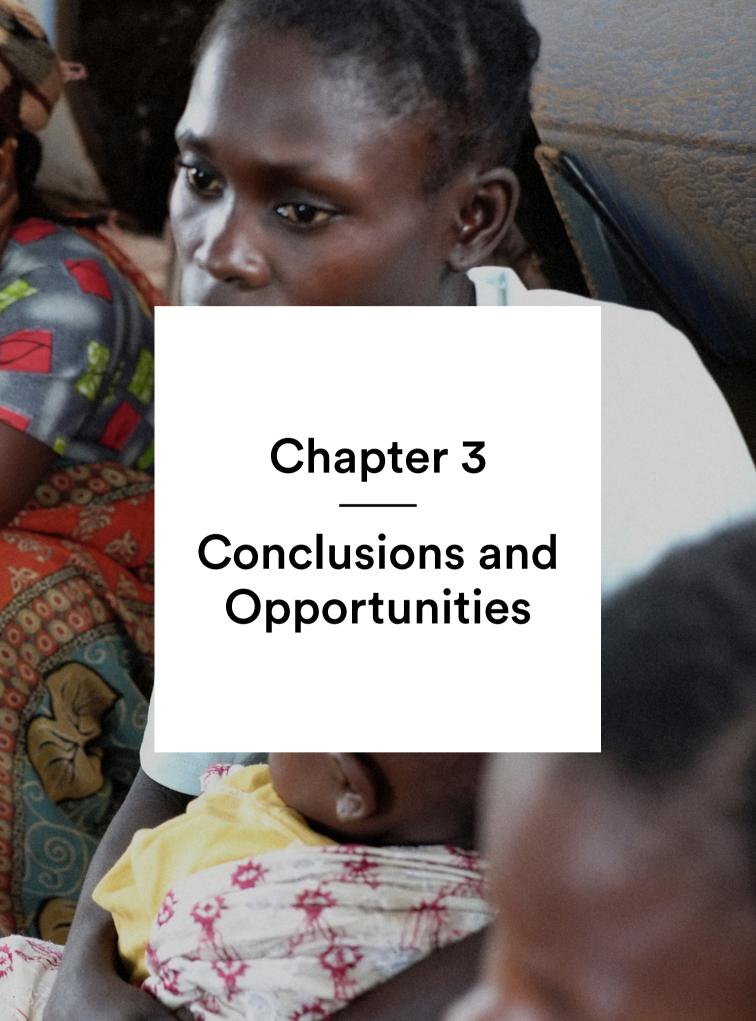












3. Conclusions and Opportunities

"The scope of the commitments is the largest in decades and covers all aspects of human security and democratic expression. In this sense, it is potentially a very useful tool for any serious implementation of a reform process in the country". 61

The PSCF correctly identified two key drivers of the conflict: foreign interference in the DRC and the dysfunction of Congolese state institutions. It has, particularly with the six national engagements, an ambition to create a decisive momentum to address the root causes of recurring conflict in the DRC and the Great Lakes region. After two years, it has not yet achieved its goals. At the national level, the six engagements are neither fully owned by state structures nor civil society in general outside of a small number of organizations participating in writing follow-up reports and holding sessions on the degree of implementation of the national engagements. Several interviewees argued that after the defeat of M23, there seems to have been a shift in position by the DRC government, who may considering the PSCF a burden rather than a framework to which they are committed and which is a useful tool to address the causes of conflict.

However the PSCF has helped focus attention on a core set of issues, and create a set of common benchmarks for tracking progress at national and regional level. In a pre-electoral context where there is a risk of increasing instability, the PSCF should be considered as the International Community's most powerful tool to accompany any attempts of the DRC government (and civil society) to seek to address the core issues outlined in the PSCF, "for there will not be any new occasion in the foreseeable future to catch the attention of the UNSC and the AU on the

DRC case, after two decades of failed attempts to convince the DRC leadership that its country's greatest challenge was itself."62

Below is a set of opportunities for engagement based on the analysis of gender integration in the process and content of the PSCF.

3.1 On the redefinition of gender in peacebuilding

There are many different gender-related concepts applied in DRC, including gender analysis, gender-based violence, sexual violence in conflict, women's political participation, gender parity etc. However, it is not clear how they fit together and the prevalent notion of gender equals women and therefore victims of sexual violence undermines the formulation of more effective gender equality programs. If the PSCF is to be used as the key framework for bringing peace and stability to the DRC and the region, key stakeholders involved need to broaden and deepen the concept of gender in peace-building: acknowledging that women and men as social actors play multiple and different roles; that women and men experience conflict and peace differently; that they have differential access to resources (including power and decision-making); that they have different practical needs and strategic interests relating to gender power relations.

Concrete steps would involve the following: ensuring in every text women and men are conceptualized as productive contributors to peace; using gender-sensitive language and avoid referring to women and children, women and youth or associate women with marginalized categories; and providing for train-

ing on gender awareness and sensitivity for all members of key bodies.

This would allow for a more nuanced and better analysis of the dynamics in Eastern DRC, enabling more targeted activities (e.g. not just use the blanket women and youth approach but look in a more detailed way at particular vulnerabilities as well as capacities), and changing expectations on masculinities and femininities that perpetuate inequality and exclusion.

3.2 On the key participation versus mere consultation of women's organizations in particular and civil society in general

Congolese women and men in their communities and organized in women's groups and civil society organisations have worked to broker peace and to shore up the resilience of communities during continuing armed conflict, but that did not gain them an invitation to the PSCF signing in Addis Ababa in 2013. As one informant to this report bluntly put it, "It doesn't matter if there are women, or men, or dogs around the table, it's about Heads of State dealing with State relations". Evidence shows that men and women bring different issues to the table and, therefore, it does matter.63

Despite acknowledged efforts by MONUSCO and the OSESG to engage civil society and women's organisations in the monitoring and implementation of the PSCF, their role has been one of consultation rather than meaningful participation at decision-making level. Beyond the predominantly-male political and military elite which controls track-one processes, local-level or track-

two mediation efforts where women play a major role every day in DRC need to be acknowledged as part of the peace process. This needs to happen not only at programmatic level through small grants but at the political level also.

Concrete steps would involve the following: establish a formal channel for civil society and women's organizations to monitor and implement the PSCF (in the form of the consultative committee that should have been in place in the MNS, or other mechanism); specify minimum quotas for women on key monitoring and implementing bodies; develop a mechanism to ensure or track funding for women's participation in implementation or monitoring, along the lines of gender budgeting.

At regional level, reinforcing regional initiatives to allow for meaningful participation of a wide cross-section of civil society and women's organisations is all the more important while inter-state relations are poor,⁶⁴ through a coherent mechanism⁶⁵ that is inclusive, open, transparent, and accountable.

3.3 On the need for continued technical assistance on gender-responsiveness

The majority of development and cooperation programs in the DRC still lack meaningful integration of gender, and implementation of the agreed priority actions within the national and regional engagements of the PSCF will require technical assistance on gender-responsiveness at the national and regional levels.

Concrete steps at the national level point at the need for a detailed mapping and understanding of local conditions with the active participation of women and men before programmes are designed, formulated or implemented: the reinforcement of the Ministry of Gender to be able to effectively lead the process of monitoring and implementation of the PSCF is paramount. At regional level, in the same way that the World Bank and the OSESG have established a facility for technical assistance to ensure that projects to be implemented in the region are conflict-sensitive, technical assistance to ensure that projects related to the regional integration objectives of the PSCF are gender-responsive should also be provided.

women and men, and donors should make funding conditional to a gender-responsive implementation of the PSCF national and regional benchmarks in line with internationally agreed commitments under SCR 1325 and related resolutions on Women, Peace and Security.

Right

It has traditionally been men who make decisions. The organization CEDEJ, where Sandra Magarama is active, challenges this tradition. She fights violence against women and for more women to be involved in the decision-making of the community.

3.4 On concerted efforts for sustained change

Despite many efforts to promote SCR 1325 and draft national and regional action plans, the content has not produced concrete impact on the current peace framework. To achieve any sustained change, a number of factors that give rise to violence need to be addressed to avoid escalation and prevent re-occurrence. These include youth unemployment, bad governance, resource-based conflicts, environmental degradation, economic hardships, and proliferation of small arms. In each of these, gender considerations need to be analyzed, understood, and taken into account for an appropriate response.

Civil society groups, especially women peacebuilders at the local level, are the main drivers of the 1325 agenda. This factor must be recognized in all policy and programming by the Congolese government and all signatories to the PSCF, international organizations and donors. The review of the indicators for the ISSSS strategy should ensure sex and age disaggregated data allows for the measuring of the impact on







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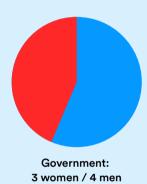
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- 52. The Platform specific objectives are to: provide support to org of women's rights through grants; gather beneficiary groups for collective actions and exchange of experiences; communicate the successes of women's groups and demand donors the increase of resources in favor of women's movements and community-based solutions- budget: 700.000 USD per year during 3 years 2014-2016 for 4 countries: RDC, Burundi, Uganda,

Rwanda. The five partners for the implementation of the platform are the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary General for the Great Lakes region, the Global Fund for Women, Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS), the Special Representative to the UN for the Fight Against Sexual Violence in Conflict, and the Fonds pour les Femmes Congolaises (FFC).

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Annex I: List of contacts met, September 2015



Men and Women Interviewed (Government)

- Mécanisme National de la Suivi de l'Accord-cadre
- CEPGL
- STAREC Stabilization and Reconstruction Plan for Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo





Civil Society: 13 women / 5 men

Men and Women Interviewed (Civil Society)

- RRSSJ Réseau pour la Réforme du Secteur de Sécurité et de Justice
- Caucus des Femmes pour la Paix (Bukavu)
- WILPF Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
- SOFAD Solidarité des Femmes Activistes pour la Défense des Droits Humains
- SOFEPADI Solidarité Féminine Pour la Paix et le Développement Intégrale
- Afiamama
- Artisans de la Paix, Kalehe and Lubero
- Dynamique des Femmes Juristes
- Coordination de la Société Civil NK
- Synergie des Femmes Contre VS
- Pole Institute
- AFEM South Kivu Women's

Media Association

• Organisation Centre Olamé



UN: 7 women / 8 men

Men and Women Interviewed (UN)

- MONUSCO
- UN Women
- UN Special Envoy



Donors: 5 women / 2 men

Men and Women Interviewed (Donors)

- DFID Department for International Development
- SwedishEmbassy
- European Union
- American Embassy



INGO: 4 women / 4 men

Men and Women Interviewed (INGO)

- InterPeace
- Oxfam
- ILC Initiative for a

Cohesive Leadership in the DRC

• Kvinna/International Alert (interviews apart)

Annex II: Interview guide

Context

Questions	Sub-Questions	Sources	
How do you consider that the political dynamics in the DRC and broader Great Lakes region influenced the signing (and have continued to influence the implementation of) the PSCF?	 How was the agreement drafted and by whom? What was the number of women and men participating in the negotiations of the framework and in its signature? Where women and men able to contribute to the process, and if yes, how? On what issues? Which women and men were able to participate, who wasn't? Were priority needs of women and men identified and reflected in the final text of the PSCF? Specify here how age, class, location, ethnic background, dis-/ability might intersect with gender both for women and men 	Reports Interviews	
What are there critical reflections on the success/failure of integrating gender into peacebuilding in DRC amongst different actors?	 What role does gender play and how it is understood by various peacebuilding actors? (is it women-focused? SGBV-focused?) International versus regional/domestic actors? 	Interviews	
How can the gender considerations in the PSCF be improved in the future?	What actions would in your opinion be required, by whom/which stakeholders, in order to advance gender sensitive implementation of the PSCF?	Interviews	

Implementation and monitoring

Questions	Sub-Questions	Sources	
Does the PSCF achieve its objectives as stated in the national, regional and international commitments? ("Big picture" question)	 On a scale from 1 to 10, how would you evaluate the current state of implementation of the PSCF? What do you consider to be the key strengths and principle blockages to the implementation of the accord, and what opportunities do you see to advance its implementation? 	Interviews, PSCF documents, focus groups	
Who is responsible for implementation and monitoring and what is their level of gender awareness?	 How is the representation of women and men in the different implementation and monitoring bodies? What are the national and international norms and regulations in relation to gender considered in the PSCF? 	Interviews, documents	
• Are PSCF benchmarks and implementation plans gender-sensitive?	What is level and extent of gender considerations within the PSCF, the regional benchmarks, the DRC national benchmarks and the DRC National Action Plan to implement the PSCF. To what extent these documents take into consideration the principles and clauses of UNSCR 1325 and CEDAW?	Interviews, documents	
What evidence is there of PSCF contributing to the advancement of gender equality?	What is being done in relation to gender advancements? How does the implementation impact men and women differently? Have there been any unforeseen impacts on gender equality? How, if at all, do PSCF interventions affect the longer-term vulnerabilities of men and women and the gendered power dynamics in target communities?	Interviews. Document review	

Actors/Coordination

Questions	Sub-Questions	Sources	
What is the level and scope of involvement of men and women from different backgrounds?	What percentage and in what capacity have men and women been involved in consultations, drafting, implementation and monitoring of the PSCF? How are women compared to men in urban/rural/remote communities aware of the PSCF? Specify here how age, class, location, ethnic background, dis-/ability might intersect with gender both for women and men	Interviews. Meetings. Document review.	
 What is the added value in INGOs accompanying the PSCF? What is the added value of national actors in the construction of the PSCF? 	 What is the role of the Great Lakes Women's Platform, launched by the Office of the UN Special Envoy to the Great Lakes, in the implementation of the PSCF? What has been done so far? What is the involvement of partners? Who does what and how on gender issues – are there any particular differences between Inaland national/local approaches? How can complementarity be increased? 	Interviews, PSCF docu- ments, observation.	
How does the PSCF link with longer term interventions towards gender equality?	 Does the PSCF reinforce and/or complement provisions on gender equality contained in various national policies? How does PSCF support or undermine local peace building mechanisms and capacity and the promotion of gender equality? 	Interviews, document review.	

Cross-cutting Issues

Questions	Sub-Questions	Sources
How do other identity markers apart from gender figure in the PSCF?	 Are different needs taken into account by the PSCF? Are there certain groups who are inappropriately included or excluded? How are these issues factored in across the PSCF implementation? 	Observation. Review of benchmarks, documents. Interviews.

Annex III: Chronology of PSCF with bibliography

Date	Event	Participants	PDF PDF	
02/24/2013	Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework signed	11 countries signed: DRC, Rwanda, Burundi, CAR, Angola, Uganda, South Sudan, South Africa, Tanzania, and Republic of Congo; two additional countries later signed; Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Chairperson of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, Chairperson of the South African Development Community, and the Secretary-General of the United Nations		
03/18/2013	Mary Robinson appointed Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region	UN Secretary-General, Mary Robinson	Link	
03/28/2013	Security Council Resolution 2098 Welcoming the PSCF	Security Council	PDF	
05/26/2013	First high-level PSCF Regional Oversight Mechanism meeting	Heads of state of DRC, Angola, Burundi, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia; SADC; ICGLR	Report	
06/2013	Bujumbura Conference/Declaration, calling for the empowerment of women in the PSCF	Mary Robinson; women's organisations	PDF, p 24	
09/23/2013	Second high-level PSCF Regional Oversight Mechanism meeting	UN Secretary-General; heads of state of DRC, Angola, Burundi, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia; SADC; ICGLR	Report	
12/23/2013	Report of the Secretary- General on the implementation of the PSCF	Secretary-General; Security Council	Report	

Date	Event	Participants	Documents
01/31/2014	Third high-level PSCF Regional Oversight Mechanism meeting; Kenya and Sudan added as signatories	Heads of state of DRC, Angola, Burundi, Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, Sudan, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia; SADC; ICGLR	Report
01/2014	55 local organizations participate in a meeting with Oxfam International	Oxfam International, civil society	PDF, p 24
01/2014	Women's Platform for the PSCF inaugurated	Women's organizations	PDF, p 24
03/05/2014	Report of the Secretary- General on the implementation of the PSCF	UN Security Council; UN Secretary- General	PDF
07/17/2014	Said Djinnit appointed Special Envoy for Great Lakes Region	UN Security Council; UN Secretary- General, Mary Robinson	Report
09/22/2014	Fourth high-level PSCF Regional Oversight Mechanism meeting; presented by Said Djinnit; first progress report of PSCF implementation	Robert Mugabe, President of Zimbabwe; Manuel Dmonigos Vincent, Vice President of Angola; UN Secretary- General; Deputy-Chairperson of the AUC	PDF
09/24/2014	Report of the Secretary- General on the implementation of the PSCF	Secretary-General; Security Council	Report
01/31/2015	Fifth high-level PSCF Regional Oversight Mechanism meeting; presented during the 24th AU Summit	Heads of state of DRC, Angola, Burundi, Republic of Congo, Kenya, South Africa, Sudan, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia; UN Secretary-General; SADC; ICGLR; AUC chairperson	Report
03/13/2015	Report of the Secretary- General on the implementation of the PSCF	Secretary-General; Security Council	Report
05/13-15 2015	Inaugural convening of the beneficiaries of the Women's Platform of the Peace, Security, and Cooperation Framework	Beneficiaries of the platform	PDF
22/09/2015	Report of the Secretary- General on the implementation of the PSCF	UN Security Council; UN Secretary- General	PDF
28/09/2015	Report of the Secretary- General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo	UN Security Council; UN Secretary- General	PDF

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