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Gender, conflict and development

Volume I: Overview

Report prepared at the request of the Netherlands' Special Programme on WID, Ministry of Foreign Affairs on a conference on gender, conflict and development of the Vrouwenberaad Ontwikkelingssamenwerking

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**December 1995
(revised July 1996)**

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACORD	Agency for Co-operation and Research in Development
DRI	Disaster Relief Initiative
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
FIS	*Front Islamique de Salut* Islamic Salvation Front
FLN	*Front de Liberation Nationale*, National Liberation Front
GAM	*Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo*, Mutual Support Group
GIA	*Group Islamique Arme,* Armed Islamic Group
ICRC	International Commission of the Red Cross
n.d.	no date
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
ODA	Overseas Development Administration
PAC	*Patrullas de Auto-defensa Civiles,* Self-Defence Patrol
PTSD	Post-traumatic stress disorder
UK	United Kingdom
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNTAC	United Nations Transitional Authority for Cambodia
UNDHA	United Nations Department for Humanitarian Affairs
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIFEM	United Nations Women's Fund
WID	Women in Development

1. INTRODUCTION[1]

This report was commissioned by the Netherlands Special Programme on WID, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DGIS) of the Netherlands as a background paper for a conference on gender, conflict and development organised by Vrouwenberaad Ontwikkelingssamenwerking to be held in Amsterdam in January 1996.[2] Vrouwenberaad Ontwikkelingssamenwerking set up a project group at the beginning of 1995 to work on the issue of gender, conflict and development as a result of their concern of the lack of a gender perspective in work on conflict. Vrouwenberaad Ontwikkelingssamenwerking held a workshop on gender, conflict and development at the Forth World Conference on Women, NGO Forum in September 1995. This, and the forthcoming conference in Amsterdam form part of their ongoing work on the subject. This report was prepared by BRIDGE (briefings on development and gender) at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex and is based on a review of published and unpublished literature, as well as on information from agencies operational in conflict areas. Volume I (this report) provides an overview of issues of gender, conflict and development, drawing selectively on case study material. Full case studies of conflict situations in Kosovo, Algeria, Somalia, Guatemala, Eritrea, Cambodia and Rwanda are provided in Volume II. The two main questions to be addressed in both the main report and the case studies are[3]:

- how are gender relations affected in the four phases of an armed conflict?
- which strategies could be pursued to enhance women's bargaining power in decision-making processes in conflict and peace negotiations?

At a global level, conflicts are on the increase. In 1960, there were estimated to be ten major wars underway.[4] By 1992, this figure had risen to 50, ten of which had started since 1985. In addition, by 1993, there were 84 wars recorded which caused casualties of less than 1,000 and 60 disputes which caused under 100 casualties per year (Adams and Bradbury, 1995: 7). Over the last century, conflicts have followed a disturbing trend, with the increasing involvement and killing of civilians. In the First World War, only five percent of the casualties were civilian, by the Second World War, the proportion had risen to 50 percent and in current major conflicts, it is estimated that

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[1]Volume I of this report was drafted by Bridget Byrne, Research Assistant, BRIDGE, under the supervision of Sally Baden, who also edited and revised the draft. Volume II was written by Bridget Byrne, Tanya Power-Stevens and Rachel Marcus, Research Assistants, BRIDGE, also under the supervision of Sally Baden. Advisory inputs are also gratefully acknowledged from Robin Luckham (IDS Fellow) and James Fairhead (Fellow, SOAS) Other individuals and organisations who provided information and gave interviews in association with this report are listed in the appendices following each case study in Volume II.

[2]Vrouwenberaad Ontwikkelingssamenwerking is a network of gender experts in international co-operation in the Netherlands which presently includes 35 member organisations ranging from development co-operation organisations to education and research-based institutes.

[3]The terms of reference for the report are attached in Appendix I.

[4]The exact numbers of wars and of casualties are a subject of debate and depend on how a 'war' is defined. A generally accepted definition of a major armed conflict is one involving more than 1,000 battlefield deaths per year. However, few official records of casualties are kept, in particular civilian casualties, which are not included in this definition (Adams and Bradbury, 1995: 67).

around 95 percent of casualties are civilians (el Bushra and Piza Lopez, 1993: 6). The increase in internal as opposed to interstate wars is reflected in the growth in war refugees and displaced persons.[5] Most of the current internal wars are taking place in the South.[6]

These conflicts threaten achievements in development since the end of the Second World War and the independence of many formerly colonised nations, providing a challenge to the United Nations, donor agencies and non-governmental agencies working to reduce poverty in the Third World. 'Armed conflict, then, currently stands at the centre of the concerns of agencies working with poverty and injustice' (el Bushra and Piza Lopez, 1993: 6). The escalating violence has been interpreted by some as more than a temporary interruption to development, a sign that development and the assumption of the universality of social progress on which it rests are in crisis. Duffield writes that '[the aid apparatus] has been powerless and uncomprehending in the face of growing systemic crisis and political fragmentation, a trend that is the antithesis of the developmental world view' (Duffield, 1994: 38). In this context, a thorough re-evaluation of the objectives and practice of development interventions is required, examining how development can contribute to conflict and how development interventions could give more support to those forces which contribute to resolution of conflicts. A gender analysis is an important part of this re-evaluation, highlighting the ways in which development has served to increase gender disparities and the gendered nature of conflict.

In the modern 'total war' situation, there is no 'theatre of war' or a delineated front-line. Whether it be through the use of long-range missiles or fighting carried out in villages and homes, 'ordinary' people are directly under attack. This means that the stereotyped image of men going off to battle with women tending the home fires, has to be radically revised. Women are major victims of war - whether directly as war fatalities or casualties, or through the effect of dislocation on their livelihoods and social networks. However, women are not merely passive victims of conflict. They are also actors in supporting or opposing violence and in trying to survive the effects of conflict.

The social divisions along ethnic, cultural, religious, linguistic or national lines which underlie conflict situations are cross-cut by gender divisions. The militarisation[7] of societies, leads to shifting definitions of masculinity and femininity and to shifting responsibilities for men and women. Conflict centres on struggles over power and resources. A gendered analysis can illuminate how men and women are caught up in different ways in this struggle, through their different identities, differential access to and control over resources, an through changes in gender ideologies. 'Gendered analysis contributes to the study of power relations by pointing out the way in which power finds expression in the structural relations between men and women. These

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[5]In 1970, there were 2.3 million war refugees. In 1992, there were 17.5 million, with a further 24 million displaced persons, of whom 45 percent are in Africa (Adams and Bradbury, 1995: 7).

[6]Of 79 countries recorded by the UNDP as experiencing war and political violence in 1993, 65, or 87 percent were in the South (Adams and Bradbury, 1995: 7).

[7]The militarisation of a society is the process whereby military values, ideologies and patterns of behaviour achieve a dominant influence over the political, social and economic affairs of that society. It frequently involves the manipulation of gender identities and the exaggeration of sexual differences.

ways both parallel and cross cut the structural imbalances of power which leads to armed conflicts' (el Bushra and Piza-Lopez, 1993: 31).

Section Two of this report will draw on the limited available literature of development and conflict, giving a typology of conflicts and examining various possible causes of conflict. It will introduce possible frameworks for looking at conflicts and suggest ways in which these could be adapted to looking at peace from a gender perspective.

Section Three will draw on other sources for building a gender analysis of conflict including feminist-pacifist and ecofeminist writing on war; feminist analysis of militarisation and gender ideologies and writing on women and Third World liberation struggles and ideology. This section will challenge essentialist views which equate women with peace by examining the active roles which women have played in supporting conflict, including the participation of women in liberation struggles. The polarisation of gender ideologies will also be explored, pointing to the ways in which masculinity and femininity are re-defined in ways which serve state military and nationalist objectives. It will also seek to identify the ways in which there may be space for the re-negotiation of gender identities, particularly during times of conflict when conventionally defined gender roles may become unsustainable.

Section Four gives a more detailed account of the gender dimensions of conflict, drawing on case study material and showing how the economic, social and psychological effects of conflict differ by gender.

Intervention in situations of conflict is inevitably a subject of controversy. In recent years, there has been a questioning of the concept of humanitarian objectivity, with calls for more politically sensitive responses based on ideas of solidarity and justice. Section Five will draw out the gender implications of this debate for gender analysis of conflict. It will also investigate strategic points and different types of intervention in conflict situations which are suggested by the material presented in Section Four on the gender dimensions of conflict.

2. UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT

It is only relatively recently that the development literature and development researchers have begun to systematically study and attempt to generalise and theorise about issues of conflict. This section draws on a handful of pioneering efforts in this field.

2.1. A typology of conflicts

Figure 1 shows how conflicts can be divided into international and intra-state conflicts, although these are not necessarily mutually exclusive categories. An international conflict, such as the Gulf war, is inextricably linked with other internal and regional conflicts (el Bushra and Piza-Lopez, 1993: 6).

Whereas in the past conflicts were generally ideologically driven nationalist or socialist wars of liberation (or at least were more explicitly framed as such by their leaders and ideologues), there is a shift towards resource wars which lack clear social programmes. Wars of state formation have been superseded by political violence linked to state disintegration and, in the context of systemic crisis, violence has become an important part of economic and political survival (Duffield, 1994: 38).

Figure 1: Types of conflict
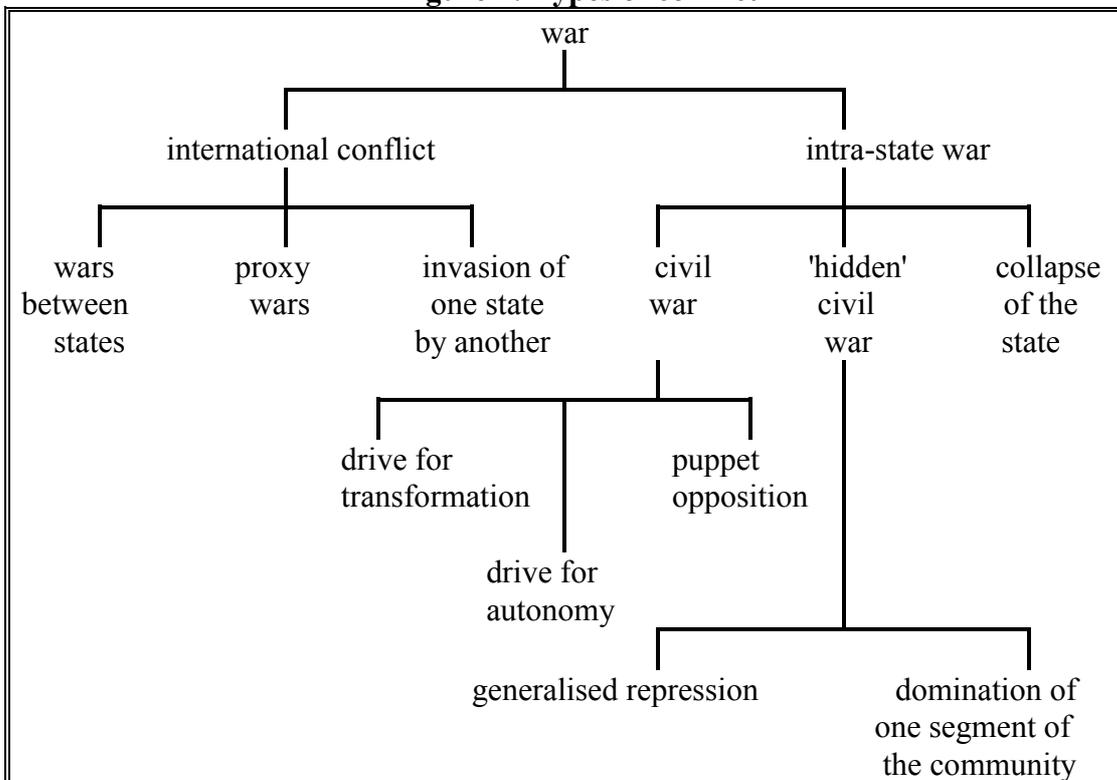
Source: Judy el Bushra in el Bushra and Piza Lopez, 1993: 13

International conflicts are those where one state invades and occupies another, or where two or more states are at war. They are usually formally declared and high-profile wars with organised armies using sophisticated weaponry. These wars can be destructive for the civilian populations, not only by direct fatalities, but also through the decimation of the infra-structure, pollution of the environment and distortion of the political and social structures through the process of militarisation. International wars also include proxy wars, which whilst appearing to be internal wars, are actually fomented by states appearing to be external to the conflict operating through one of the warring parties (el Bushra and Piza-Lopez, 1993: 12).

In international wars, gender relations are affected by the militarisation of the state, often polarising masculine and feminine identities and leading to conservative attitudes towards appropriate gender behaviour which restricts women's freedom of movement and expression. Women may also become the target of pro-natalist policies. Government expenditure is drawn away from spending on development and welfare which is likely to disproportionately effect women as they carry the greatest burden for the shortfall in social services.

Intra-state wars can be civil wars where one, often marginalised, group is seeking autonomy or transformation of the state. They can also be conflicts caused by the fragmentation of the state, such as in the former Yugoslavia or Somalia. In intra-state wars, violence may not be the outcome of formal military operations and is not confined to any 'theatre of war'. As fighters are often informally organised, the distinction between civilians and armed forces may be blurred (el Bushra and Piza-Lopez, 1993: 12). Gender relations will be affected by the increase in physical, economic and emotional insecurity in intra-state or civil wars. Men of combat age may be particularly at risk of being killed or conscripted. In the absence of adult men, through fighting, death, injury or flight, women have to bear the major burden for the maintenance of their families under situations of physical risk and insecurity. Intra-state wars, in particular, lead to large numbers of refugees, with women often forming the majority of adult refugees.

Beyond the classifications of more visible wars and conflicts, some extend the notion of conflict and violence to less visible processes. In many countries there may not be outright fighting but the militarisation of the state may inhibit fundamental freedoms, or 'structural violence' means that a large proportion of the population live in situations where their opportunities to fulfil their potential are severely constrained. This is particularly significant in terms of gender relations, where in a situation of 'peace', women often face not only structural disadvantage in economic, political and social terms but also high levels of violence which are often overlooked because it takes place in the private sphere (Longwe, 1995: 6; Dalby, 1994:608). From a gender perspective, a genuine peace (as opposed to an absence of fighting) might involve addressing these structural and systemic forms of repression and violence against women.

2.2 The causes of conflict

Attempting to trace the roots of any individual conflict is an extremely complex process as conflicts have multiple and interconnected triggers and underlying causes. It may include the volition of individuals and groups of actors, structural inequalities and institutionalised injustice, unresolved issues of identity and sovereignty, issues of governance and democracy, poverty, uneven development and environmental change. The causes of conflict are both local and linked to transformations in the international political economy and military structures (Adams and Bradbury, 1995: 12). In the vast majority of cases, women do not initiate wars and the direct trigger of war or its underlying cause can rarely be seen to be inequality in gender relations. However, in almost all of the factors mentioned above, the processes leading to conflict situations are played out in, and affected by, gender relations.

Adams and Bradbury (1995) have outlined the three sources of conflict that political analysis has identified:

- **a 'constitutional' crisis caused by a disjunction between the State and society.** Often this crisis has its roots in colonialism and 'incomplete nation building,' with the imposition of centralised structures of government on various indigenous political systems. Struggles continue between the government and the losing parties at independence. In many cases, colonially-determined borders continue to be a source of conflict. Cold war ideologies of nation building often acted to suppress discontent to some extent but in the aftermath of the Cold War, states are being challenged to legitimise their sovereignty at the same time as Western powers are disengaging from, or reformulating their political role, in much of the Third World. The colonial and Cold War legacies can be seen in the centralisation of economic and political power and uneven patterns of development between regions and between ethnic, linguistic or religious groups. It can also be seen in the military control of the state both politically and economically, leaving few resources available for or accessible to marginalised groups (Adams and Bradbury, 1995: 14-16).

- **poverty and degenerative change arising from unequal development.** Whilst many of the world's current conflicts are occurring in the poorest countries of the world, poverty, in itself, is not a sufficient condition for conflict as the poor rarely have the resources to mobilise. However, it is possible to see poverty as a manifestation of structural inequality and unequal distribution of power, which may provide the context for violence. Development models and programmes which increase inequalities, favouring certain groups over others and leading to insecurity for some, increase the potential for violence. This happens when development models ignore power differentials and are dictated more by security and economic interests rather than concerns to reduce poverty in Third World countries (Adams and Bradbury, 1995: 18-19).

- **a systemic crisis arising from transformations in international political economic and military structures.**
  During the 1980s, the integration of the global economy was accelerated within a process of regionalisation which left non-bloc areas, such as Africa, marginalised. As a result, economic and social development in these areas has gone into reverse with a fall in foreign development investment and the negative economic impact of liberalisation. This process of marginalisation is reflected in the geographic shift of conflict which has increased in Africa and Euro-Asia whilst there has been a reduction in political tensions in East Asia and Latin America (Adams and Bradbury, 1995: 20).

An important factor in understanding both the cause of conflicts and the reasons for their continuation is the 'parallel economy' which develops as a result of war and in turn can fuel wars. This underlies the notion that not only are wars organised rather than spontaneous or chaotic events but also that in all conflicts there are winners as well as losers. This economy, which lies outside the control of the state, is fuelled by the transfer of assets that occurs as a result of people selling off their assets in order to survive. It is also characterised by looting.

> 'The violent extraction of assets from the politically weak by the powerful
> has its own logic when it becomes a means for political parties to ensure
> their own political survival. The parallel, asset-transfer economy is extremely
> destructive of the subsistence economy on which it thrives.'
> (Adams and Bradbury, 1995: 23)

There are clear gender implications to the growth of the parallel economy under conflict as women are politically weak and also, in many parts of Africa, make up the majority of subsistence farmers. Thus the security of women and their livelihoods is often put at most risk. The parallel economy - and its gendered nature - has important implications for policy in conflict situations. If measures are taken to support coping strategies, or compensate losers, without an understanding of political and economic process, it may function merely to support the powerful at the expense of the weak through the process of appropriation or taxing of aid. This in turn, increases the likelihood that the conflict will continue.

The political analysis presented by Adams and Bradbury (1995) gives a largely ungendered view of the origins of conflict, thus failing to recognise the ways in which the international and national structures of power and patterns of resource allocation are based on gender inequalities. Power is distributed unequally between genders as well as between regions and social or ethnic groups in a country. With the occasional exception of a few elite women, the mass of women rarely have an input into national or local decision-making processes. Women's lack of access to political power may be accentuated under militarisation as power becomes more centralised and shifts to the almost entirely male preserve of the military. Equally, gender inequalities are often increased through a process of unequal development. Women generally but specifically poor women and female-heads of households are rarely consulted or considered in the formulation of development strategies, programmes or projects and thus are often further marginalised in the process of development.

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2.3 Frameworks for looking at conflict

In order to examine the effect of conflict on gender relations, this paper divides conflict into four phases:

- run-up to conflict (pre-conflict);
- the conflict itself;
- the peace process;
- reconstruction and rehabilitation, or post-conflict

Using this approach, it is possible to examine the impact of conflict on gender relations in its different phases, and thus be in a better position to find strategic moments and avenues for intervention.

However, the determination of what phase a conflict is in at a particular moment in time often constitutes a political decision which may be hotly contested. Different parties in a conflict may, for instance, have interests in claiming that conflict is taking place, or that there is a process of peacemaking occurring. Also, the different phases in a conflict may occur in varying orders, for instance with a peace process leading to an escalation in conflict. Indeed, phases may be skipped all together. In addition, conflicts often reoccur and should be understood in their historical context as unresolved problems and tensions at the end of one conflict lay the basis for the development of the next.

Another framework for understanding conflict is that outlined by Judy el Bushra of ACORD (see Figure 2) which views conflict as a process evolving over time and responding to and altering different underlying factors. This framework presents critical thresholds - moments when a situation is poised to move in either a positive or negative direction. These are moments, during the process of degenerative change, the run-up to conflict, during the conflict and during fragile peace, when the situation is susceptible to influence. In each situation there are also stabilising points, or elements within a situation which tend towards stability. The key to successful development intervention is to ascertain when those critical moments occur and how stabilising elements can be supported. As well as emphasising the potential for positive intervention and positive change, this framework also makes clear that the progression or escalation from one stage to the next is not inevitable and that threat of conflict does not have to lead to war. However, the key to preventing the outbreak of conflict is to address the underlying causes which have led to degenerative change.

Though having some advantages over a simple 'phase' approach, this framework also needs to be more clearly articulated with a gender analysis. In particular, a gender analysis of power and institutions is required to underpin understanding of how interventions at critical moments might serve or damage women's interests and what forces or stabilising elements could be supported in furtherance of women's interests.

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3. TOWARDS A GENDER ANALYSIS OF CONFLICT

Current frameworks for understanding conflict and development are not yet fully integrated with a gender and development approach. This is the result of the lack, until relatively recently, of attention to both gender and conflict issues within development thought and practice. Thus, there are few attempts to examine conflict from a gender and development perspective. There are however, other areas of analysis which can be drawn on as a step towards constructing an analysis of conflict from a gender and development perspective. These include: feminist-pacifist and ecofeminist writing on war; feminist analysis of militarisation, particularly in relation to gender ideologies; as well as the writing on women and Third World liberation struggles and ideologies.[8] These different literatures are based on different, and sometimes conflicting, conceptualisations of men and women and their relationship to conflict. As a result, the strategies which they suggest for a gender and development approach are also different.

3.1 Pacifist and ecofeminist approaches

In many respects, war can be justly argued to be a male phenomenon. Men are largely responsible for initiating wars and for fighting them. Much of the rhetoric of war-mongering and combat is embedded with particular views of masculinity. In this view, women are often seen as merely the passive victims of war and conflict struggling to cope with the effects of war on their lives. The many historical examples of women's attempts to achieve peace through mediation in the face of male warfare are often seen as evidence of women's greater preference for peace (see Box 1).

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[8]This paper cannot provide a comprehensive overview of feminist thought on war and conflict. There is no single feminist response to the phenomenon of war, conflict and male violence. 'There is and must be a diversity of feminisms, responsive to the different needs and concerns of different women and **defined by them for themselves**' (Sen and Grown, 1987: 18-19). There is a bias in the report, in that it is written in the North by a Northern researcher with an over-dependence on Northern sources. Many Third World women would also wish to distance themselves from the term feminist as it is associated with divisiveness and the attempt to entrench and extend bourgeois privilege (Cock, 1994:165).

Box 1: Women and pacifism

There is a long history of links between the women's movement, feminism and pacifism, beginning perhaps with the sex strike declared by the women of ancient Greece in Aristophanies **Lysistrata** in order to persuade their husbands to stop fighting.

Women have also organised for peace, attempting to unite women across political, religious and national divides. The First World War prompted the first international feminist peace movement which was started at the Congress for Peace in the Hague. The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom is active currently in attempting to bring an end to conflicts and in campaigning for peace. Women have been active in organising against nuclear weapons and nuclear testing and, by establishing women-only communities such as in Greenham Common in the UK, have asserted their belief in the peace-loving nature of women. Military order and masculine uniforms and equipment are contrasted with feminine symbols such as photographs of children and families, peace symbols and ribbons which were tied to the fences around military bases (Segal, 1987: 29). In Japan, a peace camp was built by women at the base of Mount Fuji to protest against the loss of their Shibokusa homeland to the military (Vickers, 1993: 123). The Women in Black movement was begun by Israeli women as a protest against the occupation of Palestine. They were joined by Palestinian women in holding silent vigils every Friday. This movement has inspired a world-wide Women in Black movement protesting against violence and conflict, especially in the former Yugoslavia and highlights in particular violence committed against women in wartime.

The dominance of conflict by men and the active role of women in seeking peace, lend weight to ideas which view aggressiveness as inherently male, in contrast to women's 'nurturing' nature. Within this position, there are tensions between those who regard men's aggression and women's nurturing as natural tendencies and those who regard them as the product of patriarchal structures, social and economic forces. For some, male biology is seen as inherently violent and opposed to the female essence of life-giving, nurturing and empathy, as symbolised by their mothering roles.

> 'War is a foolish game, invented by men and played by men. It should be stopped by women. War is a game which men enjoy - more aggressive, more uncompromising and more destructive than football. They like the uniforms, they like to the marching up and down, and waving flags. They like saluting each other. Most of all they like killing.'
> (Longwe, 1995: 6)

In this discourse, men's dominance of technology, including the technology of warfare, is contrasted with women's affinity or closeness to nature. The subordination of women by men is linked to the subordination of nature by men, particularly in ecofeminist positions:

'We are a woman-identified movement and we believe we have a special work to do in these imperilled times. We see the devastation of the earth and her beings by the corporate warriors, and the threat of nuclear annihilation by the military warriors as feminist concerns. It is the same masculinist mentality which would deny us our right to our own bodies and our own sexuality, and which depends on multiple systems of dominance and state power to have its way.'
(Mies and Shiva, 1993: 14)

The belief in women's peaceful and inherently nurturing nature leads to a desire for the preservation and creation of a female counter culture which values feminine qualities and will lead to peace and security:

'Life for women, life for the earth, the very survival of the planet is found only outside the patriarchy; beyond their sad and shallow definitions; beyond their dead and static knowing; beyond their wars - wars which unmask the fear, insecurity and powerlessness that form the very base of patriarchal rule. To end the state of war, to halt the momentum toward death, passion for life must flourish. Women are the bearers of life-loving energy. Ours is the task of deepening that passion for life and separating from all that threatens life, all that diminishes life; becoming who we are as women; telling/living the truth of our lives.'
(Barbara Zanotti quoted in Ferris, 1992: 1)

For other feminists, the origins of conflict are found in patriarchal structures themselves rather than individual men, as conflicts are largely in defence of patriarchal interests, particularly as embodied by the nation state.[9] Thus, it follows that women can have little to gain from wars or conflicts and will have common interests in opposing war. For some who hold this view, women's activism for peace is seen as a diversion from the real issue: the ending of patriarchy. In other words, war cannot be eliminated without eliminating patriarchy and there can be no true or lasting 'peace' or 'security' until the underlying patriarchal social structures and relations of female subordination are transformed (Carroll and Hall, 1993: 16).

These positions are valuable because they highlight the interconnections between the structures of female oppression, violence against women and the origins of conflict. However, they have a tendency towards essentialist understandings of men and women which set in stone ideas of masculinity and femininity. In reality, these are variable over time and context. The image of conflict as intrinsically male masks the ways in which women are affected by, and involved in, conflict. It is particularly problematic to have unquestioning and fixed notions of masculinity and femininity at a time when gender identities and relations are, as a result of conflict, in a considerable state of flux. The view that women have common interests and will always be able to unite across the 'male-defined' barriers of class, race and nationality can be seen to deny women agency. Women are not seen as agents within the social,

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[9]Whilst the phenomenon of nation-state building and its relation to patriarchy has been extensively explored through feminist perspectives, there is, as yet, little feminist research and analysis on the situation in an increasing number of conflicts where the nation state appears to be disintegrating.

economic and political structures like men but are somehow 'above' these forces, remaining in their 'natural' states of nurturance and peacefulness.

A major criticism of Western feminism by Black and Third World feminists has been its tendency to assume that all women share an unproblematic set of common interests. As Mohanty writes: 'Sisterhood cannot be assumed on the basis of gender; it must be forged in concrete historical and political practice' (Mohanty, 1991: 58). In a Third World context, as will be seen below, revolutionary feminism, for example in South Africa, is frequently militarist, asserting women's equal right with men to take up arms against repression and justice (Cock, 1992: 166).

3.2 Militarisation and gender identities

Moving beyond essentialist views of gender, feminist analysis can illuminate the process of militarisation is through its understanding of gender ideologies and the ways in which both masculinity and femininity are reconstructed in the process of militarisation (see Box 2).

Box 2. Gender identities

Gender identities - the roles and behaviours which are designated to one gender or the other - are one way in which the distribution of power between the genders is expressed. Gender identities are largely culturally created and are subject to shifts, changes and manipulations. They are 'ideal' models for the genders, which actual individuals may not live up to. Masculinity and femininity, whilst they may change, remain in oppositional relation to each other - to be feminine is to be that which is not masculine. In addition to being oppositional, masculinity and femininity are intimately tied up with the subordination of women. Those qualities which in a given situation are power-enhancing are those which tend to be defined as masculine and associated with men. It is important to recognise that there may be multiple and competing notions of masculinity and femininity in any given time and context. In conflict situations, gender identities become intensely politicised and the process of militarisation can be traced in the reforming and restating of gender identities, through legal reforms and changes in employment patterns, propaganda and cultural discourse, education and the socialisation of children.[10]
(Hooper, 1995: 4; Zalewski, 1995: 341)

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[10]Militarisation, whilst intimately bound up with redefinitions of gender ideologies, is not confined to the ideological sphere: it covers almost all spheres of life. Both men and women as people, parents, and workers, have been made an integral parts of military systems in the process of a general encroachment of the civilian arena - cultural, industrial, agricultural and educational - by the military institution.

3.2.1 Militarisation and gender identities

Most commonly, in situations of militarisation, traditional gender ideals are stressed: men's 'masculinity' is called on to encourage them to take up arms in defence of their country, ethnic group or political cause - and in defence of 'their' women. Women become the bearers of the culture that the men are fighting to defend and thus what is 'feminine' and appropriate behaviour for women may be redefined. For example, in former Yugoslavia, women are assigned the mythical roles of 'Mother Juvoica' (the mother who sacrificed nine sons and her husband to the homeland, without tears) and 'Daughter of Kosovo' (the daughter who tends injured soldiers) (Cetkovic, 1993: 2). It can be argued that the exaggeration of sexual difference which is characteristic of many warfare situations is a reassertion of patriarchy. This may be the result of threats to the basis on which patriarchy is functioning at that particular time.

Feminist researchers in both the north and south have done considerable work on militarisation and on the dependence of the military on polarised notions of gender identity. Notions of masculinity are bound up in the military which is almost always defined as male, symbolised by such images as the film character Rambo, who is widely recognised across the world. Generally, women who are employed directly by the military undertake 'feminine' roles of nursing or clerical work. Often women who take more active roles are de-sexed and no longer regarded as feminine women. However, the masculinity demanded by armies and the military does not come easily: 'Wars do not occur because men are eager to fight, on the contrary, military aggression always requires carefully controlled and systematic action at the state level, which plays upon public fears, vulnerabilities, prides and prejudices' (Segal, 1987:178). Often, the training of men in armies involves the drilling into men of a particular notion of aggressive masculinity which is intimately related to misogyny. In Guatemala it is estimated 'that at any one time, 20 percent of the rural male population is serving in the Guatemalan army, undergoing violent and humiliating initiation ceremonies and being socialised into violence and a strong *macho* ethic. This includes visiting sex workers as a demonstration of male virility and sexuality, and forcing women to wash and cook for them' (Guatemala case study). The language of armies often reflects this construction of masculinity as the most common insults are those that suggest that a soldier is homosexual or feminine. The misogyny of armies is intertwined with both homophobia (as seen by the opposition to allowing open homosexuality in the military in both Britain and the US) and racism. Both women and members of ethnic minorities who enter the military are frequently subjected to sexual and racial harassment.

Women have been excluded from decision making surrounding the making of both war and peace and from positions of influence within armies (see Box 3).

Box 3: Women excluded from political and military decision-making

International negotiations, whether over trade agreements, diplomacy or war are overwhelmingly carried out by men who are, with few exceptions, the governmental leaders, diplomats and high-ranking international civil servants. This is largely due to the under-representation of women in national and often local structures of power and decision-making. When women do reach decision making positions of, they are more likely to deal with 'soft' issues of social policy, education, culture and environment than with defence. In 1988, of the five nuclear nations, there were approximately 800 key decision-making positions. Of these, five were occupied by women (Ferris, 1992).

Whilst women do participate in armies in some countries (for instance, there were 33,000 American soldiers involved in the Gulf War), they are almost always vastly outnumbered by men. In most armies in which women are employed they are excluded from combat, as there is often a taboo against women fighting, and killing. For instance, in Britain in the Second World War, women in the airforce flew planes but were not allowed to fly on bombing raids and their work was restricted to the transportation of bombers. This taboo does not solely derive from a desire to protect women. In the UK, women who operated the searchlights and guns to locate enemy planes were particularly vulnerable because they were not allowed to pull the triggers of the guns which they were aiming (Segal, 1987: 174). Cock (1994: 167) points out that although most armies still exclude women from combat, this is often largely symbolic as in situations both of guerrilla warfare and high-technology warfare, it may be difficult to make distinctions between combatant and non-combatant roles. However, without experience of combat and leadership in times of war, it remains extremely unlikely that women will ever rise to positions of power and influence within military structures which place great value on that experience.

There is a debate over the effect on military ideology of the inclusion of more women in the armed forces and over whether women would be able to make armies less sexist and abusive of human rights. There is a view that not only will women be able to change military attitudes and practice but also that as long as women are excluded or marginalised from armies, they will never be able to achieve equality.[11] Cynthia Enloe is less optimistic:

> 'The experience of women who have been militarised - women who have serviced the military as wives, prostitutes, nurses, soldiers, clerks and electronic assembly workers - suggest quite a different direction than suggested by the equal opportunity approach. All women are affected by the military's need to exploit and yet ideologically marginalise women. Women will remain society's 'camp followers' so long as the military as an institution and militarism as an ideology are widely accepted as guarantors of the social order.'
> (Enloe, 1983: 17)

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[11]Women have had greater representation among fighters among fighters in guerrilla armies with a liberation ideology, but there is doubt as to whether this has translated into increased gender equality post-conflict (see Section 3.3)

3.2.2 The gendered impact of militarisation

The relationship between militarisation and the oppression of women should not be
confused with the idea that all men will necessarily benefit from the making of war, or
that women will have no room to renegotiate the formation of gender identities. In one
very obvious way, men are the primarily losers in war - i.e. they make up the majority
of casualties in situations of conflict. Even though conflicts increasingly affect
civilian populations, men are often those most targeted in civilian populations. The
dominance of refugee populations by women is a reflection of men's specific
vulnerability in situations of conflict. This is most starkly seen in the former
Yugoslavia where tens of thousands of men are missing having been selected for
death or imprisonment purely on the basis of gender (Jones, 1994: 119). Men, or
particular men, may also lose out in the assertion of a particular notion of masculinity,
possibly replacing multiple and more fluid notions of what masculinity is and how
men should behave. As was mentioned above, the military ideal of masculine identity
does not come naturally, many men - such as older men who cannot live up to the
masculine ideal of combat -, may find an erosion in their power and influence as a
result of the constrictions in the definitions of masculinity. Equally, as a result of
wars, men may be unable to fulfil roles which are expected of them, such as the
protection of their families and may lose self-esteem and respect as a result.

Women can also lose out through the political manipulation of gender ideology as part
of the process of militarisation which can lead to the erosion of women's human rights
and restrictions on their mobility. Women become the bearers of the cultural heritage
of a nation or community and the modes of behaviour acceptable for them may
decrease. In Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan, the influence of the religious leaders
was increased, obliging all women - including urban women who had formerly been
accustomed to relative freedom of movement - to go into purdah. The erosion of
women's human rights can be seen in the introduction in Iraq of a law legitimising the
murder of women suspected of offending family honour.

The holding up of women as symbolic bearers of caste, ethnic or national identity can
expose them to the risk of attack. The widespread occurrence of rape in times of
conflict has attracted particular attention and has been seen as directly related to the
position of women in communities as bearers of cultural identity. The rape of women
in conflict situations is intended not only as violence against women, but as an act of
aggression against a nation or community.

'Sexual sadism arises with astonishing rapidity in ground warfare, when the penis becomes justified as a weapon in a logistical reality of unarmed non-combatants, encircled and trapped. Rape of a doubly dehumanised object - as woman, as enemy - carries its own terrible logic. In one act of aggression, the collective spirit of women **and** of the nation is broken, leaving a reminder long after the troops depart. And if she survives the assault, what does the victim of wartime rape become to her people? Evidence of the enemy's bestiality. Symbol of her nation's defeat. A pariah. Damaged property. A pawn in subtle wars of international propaganda'
(Brownmiller, 1993, quoted in Jones, 1994: 117)

Just as the development of an idealised 'macho' identity for men in times of conflict should not be taken to represent reality, equally it should not be assumed that women are caring, nurturing and largely passive people. Widely reported cases in Rwanda show that women are capable of participating in horrific acts of genocide. (African Rights, 1995) Women may be inspired to act by similar same political, economic, religious, nationalistic, or racist motivations that lead men into battle. How they express their desire to defend their cause, however, depends to some extent on the nature of gender identities and what behaviour is considered appropriate for them. Inflicting violence on others, the use of weapons and participation in armed forces are all power-enhancing activities which, with some exceptions, are considered 'masculine' and thus reserved for men. However, there are growing numbers of women serving in armies across the world. In the most notable cases where women have fought in conflicts it has been at least partly the result of a liberating ideology which seeks to reduce gender inequalities, for example in Nicaragua or Eritrea. In Rwanda, Africa Rights (1995: 1) claim that the involvement of women in the genocide was the result of a strategy of the political, military and administrative hierarchies to ensure that all sections of the population - men, women and children - would be complicit in the killings.

Whilst women rarely fight in conflict situations, they participate in wars in other ways, through economic support of the 'war effort', through inciting men to commit violent acts, or through refusing to protect or feed the 'enemy' and, importantly, through the socialisation of their children to militaristic ideologies. This can be seen from an abstract from a An, a Vietnamese woman who was active in the struggle against both the French and the Americans in Vietnam:

'The war needed men at the front. Young women had to join the fighting. Behind the scenes were middle-aged women. Women stayed at home, fed the babies, looked after the house and also joined the battle. ...We paid for the fight with blood and bone, and we paid for production with blood and bone too. When we worked in the fields we'd carry a stretcher [in case someone was killed]. The hard work was done by women.'
(Bennett, Bexley and Warnock, 1995: 165)

Women may gain status from encouraging the perception that they are the guardians of cultural identity for their society and may find that, in times of war they may gain some power over men, to the extent that they are able to accuse them of not being 'manly' enough to defend their nation or community. In the First World War, middle

class women handed out white feathers to humiliate men who refused to fight. In Chile, female supporters of Pinochet surrounded barracks chanting 'chicken' at soldiers inciting them to join the coup d'état. In contradiction to the heightened femininity offered by militarised gender ideologies, conflict situations offer women the opportunity to expand the roles available to them. By necessity, war may become 'women's passport into the experiences and world of men' (Segal, 1987:171) It may be partly as a means to fulfil their aspiration for entry into new spheres that women embrace the militaristic ideologies and nationalism.

However, there may be high costs to transgressing the culturally imposed boundaries between masculine and feminine behaviour. As we have seen, men who refuse to fight risk being ridiculed, imprisoned or even killed for their lack of 'courage' or masculinity. Equally women who contradict female stereotypes by killing are often regarded as much more deviant or unnatural than men. Women in the Shining Path of Peru provoke both fear and anger and are described - much more readily than their male counterparts - as monsters, killing machines and crazed automatons. In this situation, rape becomes a sexual punishment for those who have been seen to transgress traditional gender boundaries. (Richters, n.d.: 43) In contrast to this vilification of female killers, Africa Rights (1995: 5) claims that it is because women are considered unable to commit the acts involved in the genocide in Rwanda, that many women guilty of atrocities are able to go free.

3.3 Women's National Liberation Movements

In contradiction to the relationship that some western feminists draw between feminism and pacifism, there are relatively high levels of participation of women in military struggles for National Liberation and/or revolution. These are sometimes accompanied by the development of a feminist consciousness. For example, in Nicaragua, women made up an estimated 30 percent of the Sandinista army and held positions as commanders, even of full battalions (Mason, 1992: 65). This participation of women in armed struggle reflects the fact act on their class, ethnic or national interests as well as on their gender interests. Also, struggles for national liberation or revolution often appeal to aspirations of greater gender, as well as social justice and equity, providing an incentive to women to take up arms.

However, the relationship between feminism, revolution and national liberation is far from simple. Some feminists argue that any form of nationalism is inherently patriarchal. Patricia McFadden argues that:

> 'nationalism can be understood as essentially a male defined and patriarchally
> rooted ideology which emerges at a particular time in the history of a people,
> as a response to oppression and external domination.' (McFadden, 1992: 511)

and she goes on to point out how nationalism in the context of South Africa is dominated by older men who seek to exclude women from positions of authority - or at least to ensure that those women who do break through the sexist hierarchy do not maintain a feminist stance.

'Very few nationalist leaders conceive of women beyond their being a social resource domestically - as wives, daughters, lovers and mothers. Politically, women are viewed essentially as voters, providers of shelter, couriers and 'cannon-fodder' in times of war' (*ibid.*: 513).

Rohini Hensman argues that anti-colonial or anti-imperialist nationalism, which is based on the rights of people to govern themselves, should be distinguished from ethnic nationalism which is based on the establishment of a privileged position for a particular ethnic group. The latter is considered inherently anti-democratic and authoritarian and incompatible with feminist objectives. The case of Sri Lanka shows how both types of nationalism may coexist within a single movement, as is the case with both Sinhalese and Tamil nationalism (Hensman, 1992b: 507). Thus, feminists have to tread a difficult line in supporting and fighting for an ideology and cause which offers potential openings for women's liberation. They also have to struggle within the liberation movements to ensure that ethnic nationalism does not gain primacy and that the movement is genuinely liberatory (Hensman, 1992b: 508).

However, whilst feminists assert that their inclusion within liberating movements can only ensure that the movement is truly liberatory for all, within struggles for national liberation or revolution, there is often great suspicion of feminism and the call for gender interests. Within national liberation movements, there is a fear that, in times of resistance when unity is crucial, taking up gender concerns will lead to divisions.

One response by women's movements to this fear is to focus on non-divisive issues and prioritise the resistance struggle above a struggle for gender interests. This can be seen in the case of Palestine:

'regardless of the diversity among the various political organisations and their affiliated committees as to ideology, the common and unifying agenda was national liberation and self determination. All other agendas, such as gender and class, were for the most part relegated as secondary and seen essentially as relevant issues for post-independence society' (Glavanis, 1992: 465)

Within the Palestinian movement there are calls both for unity and democracy. However, the call for unity, whilst crucial for the struggle for Palestinian self determination, contradicts the desire for democracy. Democracy can provide the space needed for all marginal social and political forces, including those advocating gender interests, to express themselves in the ongoing struggle against hegemony within Palestinian society (Glavanis, 1992).

The women's movement in Palestine was wedded to the struggle for national liberation and the fight against Israeli occupation. Women's committees of the four political parties concentrated on supporting resistance. While they made no attempt to challenge the central, patriarchal unit of the family in Palestinian society, in the early years of the Intifada, the participation of women in the struggle was seen as a highly significant step.

'Women were seen to have broken the traditional patriarchal barriers to an activist role in the nationalist struggle, whereby they took to the streets in

unprecedented numbers, physically fighting against heavily armed Israeli soldiers, thus challenging the predominant stereotype of the domesticated and repressed Arab woman' (Glavanis, 1992: 465).

However, more recently, the women's movement in particular and women's freedoms and liberties in general are coming under attack from conservative social and political forces in Palestinian society. The Palestinian women's movement was slow to challenge the attempt by Hamas and other conservative forces to impose a dress code among women in the Gaza Strip (and to lesser extent the West Bank). As a result, even though Hamas and all nationalist political organisations now officially condemn the imposition of such dress codes, women are unable to walk freely in the Gaza strip without wearing headscarves. This has led to a period of re-evaluation and self-criticism within the Palestinian women's movement. A feminist consciousness is arising whereby the contradictions between the struggle for national liberation and the struggle for gender equality are being examined. However, there remains within Palestinian society hostility to feminism, which is seen as Western and equated with sexual libertarianism and therefore thought to be antithetical to family-oriented and gender hierarchical Palestinian society (Glavanis, 1992).

Women have been agents in nationalist liberation or revolutionary struggles and have taken up arms in the cause of these movements. In doing so, they have exposed the tensions between the potential gains for women through liberation struggle, and the patriarchal basis of nationalism. Women have been able to claim for themselves public and political roles and to call for gender equality. However they have frequently found that the liberating ideology that their comrades in arms uphold does not necessarily extend to the liberation of women. As a result, in the post liberation state, women may find themselves under pressure to revert to more conventionally defined female roles, as for example in the case of Eritrea.

3.4 Gender relations in conflict: possibilities for transformation

Feminism centres on the idea that all women are oppressed by virtue of their gender. However, this does not necessarily imply that all women will be oppressed in the same way or that the origins of their oppression are the same. Thus, the phenomenon of conflict across the world and its gender implications should not be understood as saying that all men are more violent than women or that conflict is the inevitable result of patriarchy. It is important to ground gender analysis in an understanding of the political economy of conflict and processes of militarisation.

Some strands of feminist thinking on conflict and war rely on essentialist views of gender difference and rest on a belief in the peaceful nature of women. This idea often translates into the view that women have a specific role to play in mediation and peace-making. Some feminists also believe that a feminine counter culture is needed to counter the dominant male culture of violence, exploitation and militarism and that women's interests are best served by withdrawing and creating a separate culture. Other strands of feminist thinking see peace as a diversion from the real issue - which is patriarchy: there can be no peace until patriarchy is ended. However, it is not clear

in practice how this will be brought about and these views tend towards the kind of separatist strategy as the more essentialist views.

Essentialist views of women and war have been challenged here because they ignore the active roles women have played in supporting conflict, both in combat and in acts of violence against civilian populations. Women's support for conflict does not arise simply from manipulation or coercion under patriarchal systems. Because of the structural disadvantage and socio-cultural and ideological constraints faced by women, they may derive benefits from wartime shifts in gender ideologies, whereby they are accorded enhanced status in their role as guardians of cultural identity and as mothers. Some women may support conflicts as a means to give them access to public arenas closed to them outside conflict situations, such as employment outside the home.

Neither is it clear that all men stand to gain from conflict situations. In many respects, men lose out in war situations, in different but severe ways, compared to women, and specifically due to their concentration in armed forces and among wartime casualties and fatalities. Men who fail to live up to masculine ideals of bravery and strength during conflict may lose status and influence or even be severely punished.

Third World women's movements and feminists also challenge the identification of women with peaceful aspirations and strategies and the assumption that women have common interests across other social divisions. Women, including feminists, in the South, have willingly and actively participated in liberation struggles of various kinds, including as combatants, seeing their ethnic, national or class interests as well as their gender interests as being served by a revolutionary challenge to the existing order. Some national liberation movements have also challenged traditional gender ideologies and divisions and thus forged alliances between gender and other interests within national liberation movements. Third World women activists have often been willing to downplay their gender interests in the cause of national unity in liberation movements. However, many are now questioning the capacity of nationalist movements to deliver to women and questioning the terms of their engagement in such struggles.

In conflict situations, there is often a polarisation and politicisation of gender ideologies and identities. Masculinity and femininity are redefined in ways which serve state military and nationalist objectives. At the same time, it often becomes impossible for women and men to effectively play out their conventionally accepted role under conflict, for example, as breadwinners and protectors of families; or as caring wives and mothers.

As will be seen in the next section, which gives a detailed account of the gender dimensions of conflict, drawing on case study material, conflict has a wide range of economically, socially and psychologically damaging effects which differ by gender. And yet, because gender ideologies and relations are in flux during conflict, there are transformative possibilities for women in conflict situations, as well as the possibility for recourse to renewed conservatism surrounding gender relations. It is not obvious how these possibilities will play out and much will depend on women's own responses and strategies. For example, national liberation struggles do not necessarily form the

basis for transformative outcomes for women, at least not in obvious ways, often leading to disillusionment among women fighters and activists. Equally, in ethnic or other conflicts where challenging gender norms is not an explicit focus (e.g. Rwanda), the impact of conflict may give rise to situations where there are possibilities for strategic gains in women's rights and bargaining power, e.g. over land rights.

4. THE GENDER DIMENSIONS OF CONFLICT

Each conflict will have very different effects on men and women, gender relations, the gendered balance of power and gender ideologies. The effect which conflict has will depend on gender relations prior to conflict, which are in turn influenced by the cultural, political and economic make-up of the country. It will also differ according the origins and nature of the conflict: a civil war waged as a liberation struggle will impact on gender relations in a different way from one which is based on ethnic divisions. Both will differ from inter-state tension.

This section will draw out some of the ways in which the run-up to conflict, conflict itself, the peace process and post-conflict rehabilitation impact on gender relations. This is done by looking at the cross-cutting dimensions of political, legal and human rights; demographic and health issues; economic issues; social welfare and social organisation; socio-cultural and ideological issues and personal psychological factors. These dimensions not only cross-cut all stages of the conflict but are also clearly interconnected. In order to illustrate some of these questions, examples are drawn from Volume II which contains case studies of the gendered impact of conflict in Algeria, Cambodia, Eritrea, Guatemala, Kosovo, Rwanda and Somalia. As far as possible, the relevance of particular issues to specific phases are highlighted.

4.1 Political, legal and human rights

4.1.1 Run-up to conflict

During a run-up to conflict, the tensions within a country are likely to increase, as different groups assert their claims on resources and positions of power. In many cases, the different resource claims are expressed as ethnic tensions with particular groups being repressed. This phase is characterised by an increase in state repression, including extra-judicial killings and imprisonment without trial and repression of freedoms of association and speech. Women may take on a particular symbolic importance for different groups, the behaviour of women may be contested, or they may come under attack as the husbands or mothers of fighters. In some situations, women may also take an active role in protesting, joining militias or political activity and therefore be subject to repression. Many of the inequalities, legal, political or human rights which women experience in the pre-conflict situation will be exacerbated during the run-up to conflict, with women further excluded from the loci of power with the process of militarisation and particularly if the military control the state. Violence against both men and women is likely to increase with the growth of militias and a clamp down of state control. This was seen in the Kosovo case study with the Serb police and military targeting ethnic Albanians for attack:

'During 1993, Serb police and some security units embarked on a campaign of raids on specific houses and whole villages which continues to the present day under the pretext of weapons searches...During the raids, people have been arrested and even more have been beaten. The vast majority of those beaten, often in front of their families, have been men. When women have been beaten, it seems that it is because the men sought are absent from the family home. Reports have, where it is mentioned, stated that police have used 'vulgar and insulting language' towards women. However, some of the most recent reports from Kosovo are describing how police are abducting women and holding them hostage in order 'flush out' wanted husbands and sons (AI 1994i). In 1994, ten women were taken hostage (KCB #203, 1995). In September 1995 alone, three women were taken hostage when their husbands could not be found by the police (KCB #238, 1995). Increasingly, women are being targeted as an indirect way of attacking men. ' **Kosovo Case Study**

Under military governments, women may also find that their rights are restricted or withdrawn. In Chile, during the Pinochet era, women found that legal gains, in the form of maternity benefits and labour rights, were revoked and at one stage there was even an attempt to ban women from wearing trousers. Employers were no longer obliged to provide or subsidise child care for female employees and a new law made it possible for employers to sack pregnant employees. As a result, prospective female employees were increasingly required to submit to gynaecological examinations.

4.1.2 Conflict

Political participation

Conflict impacts on the distribution of power and its gender dimensions in many different ways. Women are rarely in a position to make direct decisions about the waging of conflict. However, in some cases, power structures may be broken up and decentralised and there may be opportunities for women to gain access to decision-making bodies, at least at a local level. Or women who have access to power may, like their male counterparts, be able to wield it more forcefully. This was seen in the example of Rwanda where women in local government were at times vociferous in their support of the genocide. However, it is more likely that in times of conflict, as in the run-up to conflict, there is increased centralisation of power and women are further excluded from decision-making processes. In Algeria, the actions of both the Islamists and the government have ensured the exclusion of women from participation in formal politics:

'In the first free elections since independence held in 1990, domination of the political arena by Islamists and the threats of violence against women, by them, ensured not a single women was elected...Men have been able to vote on behalf of wives and since 1970, for all female members of their extended family. The FLN has consistently denied women in Algeria a political voice'. **(Algeria Case Study)**

In Guatemala, new structures were developed in a response to conflict - the PACs, or self defence patrols, which were designed to identify and attack 'subversives in the

community'. As a result, women and older men lost a degree of influence within their communities:

The formation of the PACs in rural areas has wrested power away from the traditional community political structures, the indigenous civil-religious hierarchy, and the mayoral system, instituted on a nationwide basis. Whilst women were not publicly involved in community political structures in most indigenous villages, they had specific places in the civil-religious hierarchies accompanying office-bearing husbands, and older women, in particular, often exerted considerable influence through discussion of community matters with their husbands (Mamá Maquín/ CIAM, 1994). Membership of PACs is the duty solely of men, and thus the ascendancy of younger men, accustomed to violence, and not to the deliberation and consensus-seeking methods of traditional political structures, has often served to reduce the power of women and older men, in community decision-making, and also to grant greater legitimacy to violence as a means of conflict resolution. **(Guatemala Case Study)**

On the other hand, where resistance movements and forces command sufficient support and resources, alternative political structures may be created during periods of conflict with are more inclusive of women and their interests. In the Eritrean conflict there was an asserted attempt by the EPLF to organise civil society, including women:

During the liberation struggle, ordinary Eritreans were organised into the National Unions of Peasants, Workers, Women, Youth, Professionals and Students, which formed the basis of the EPLF's organisational structure. Members of these National Unions elected representatives to sit on the EPLF Central Committee, which formulated policy in relation to all EPLF zones with a mandate to oversee its implementation (Green, 1994:36). The women's mass organisation, the National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEWmn), provided a structure for women's political representation from village to national level and thereby women's concerns were integrated into the national policy-making process (Wilson, 1991:50). The NUEWmn also campaigned for increased female participation in education, for equal pay for equal work, and for the implementation of family law at a local level (Connell, 1993:17). Local NUEWmn activists were responsible for a process of grassroots organisation and politicisation of village women in EPLF controlled areas, which encouraged women to participate in the processes of social transformation, including land reform and the introduction of local marriage by-laws (Green, 1994:36). **(Eritrea case study)**

Human rights

Human rights, particularly the right to security and protection, are clearly under threat in times of conflict. All conflicts involve widespread killing and this is increasingly involving civilian populations as well as soldiers. Civilians are killed in conflict either because of the use of long range weaponry, as in the Gulf war, or conversely because the field of conflict is in the towns, villages and fields where people live and work. In many cases civilians are directly targeted, particularly in attempts at 'ethnic cleansing'. Conflicts also result a rise in the general feelings of insecurity and a breakdown of law

and order. In some cases, the increase in suspicion and lack of security can lead to an increase in charges of witchcraft and the killings of suspected witches. In many cases, women are the majority of those charged with witchcraft with older or richer women particularly likely to come under suspicion (*The Economist*, 9-15/12/95). In Somalia, the breakdown in law and order led to an increase in looting, to which certain groups and some women were particularly vulnerable:

Looting has traditionally been a feature of Somali society, but it was always controlled by traditional social structures. During the conflict, as the social structures broke down, looting and the violence associated with it, increased. Looting became widespread at the local level between clans, eroding family livelihoods, although it was looting of international humanitarian assistance which was most publicised. The most vulnerable were the minority clans, and small households, particularly female-headed ones. **(Somalia Case Study)**

As well as killing and injuries, human rights are violated in times of conflict by imprisonment, torture, 'disappearances' and forced conscription. In most cases, men, particularly men of combat age, make up the majority of those killed through conflict. Men are also more likely to be imprisoned or conscripted against their will. Thus men, due to their public roles and their increased participation in armed forces, have a specific vulnerability. In some contexts, the ideology of women as in need of protection serves to protect them. However, as was seen in both Somalia and Algeria, conflict frequently has the result of weakening codes of honour which prohibit the harming of women:

Since early 1994 the GIA have also conducted a programme of abducting women with the aim of forcing them into temporary pleasure marriages with fighters. Women who have refused, have been held against their will, often forced to clean and cook for militant groups, raped and in some cases murdered. This is a grave violation of the code of honour in Algeria, and according to Kapil, 'indicates the extent to which Algerian society is coming apart at the seams' (Kapil 1995:5). **(Algeria Case Study)**

Women who are often economically and socially dependent on men, are affected by the disappearance of their husbands and fathers. Women are also killed and imprisoned in times of conflict. When in prison, women also suffer gender-specific violence, sexual torture and mental abuse which is designed to attack their identity as women. Women are also vulnerable to attack or injury due to their culturally assigned roles, such as queuing for food or fetching firewood and water. In Somalia, women queuing for food aid were attacked by militias looting food. Women and children who have to travel distances to collect firewood or water are at risk from anti-personnel mines and attack. As was the case in the run-up to conflict, conflicts are characterised by increased attention on the behaviour of women as bearers of cultural identity. This can lead to violations of their human rights:

A Somali woman perceived to be too friendly with French troops was stripped, beaten and imprisoned by the community until rescued by a women's organisation. **(Somalia Case Study)**

The case of Algeria shows other ways in which women are subject to attack on the basis of their gender:

'Women's behaviour, dress and conduct are becoming the focus of the Islamist agenda. A slogan which appeared during Ramadan in 1994 warned 'O you women who wears the *jilbab* (full robes), may you be blessed by God. O you women who wears the *Hijab* (head scarf), may God put you on the straight road. O you who expose yourself, the gun is for you'. Women have been killed for not wearing the veil, but two women have also been killed by the Organisation of Free Young Algerians, claiming to represent the secular FLN, because they were wearing the veil. Women's colleges and university dormitories have been besieged by FIS militants who threatened women residents and prevented them from entering and leaving.' **(Algeria Case Study)**

Conflict and sexual violence

Rape and sexual violence appear to be a universal and widespread characteristic of warfare. This is seen clearly in the Cambodian case study:

'Women were subject to rape by Khmer Rouge officials during the 1975-9 period and this continues in present-day contested areas (Human Rights Watch-Asia, 1995:33). Rape and pillage are also frequently committed by the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (Human Rights Watch-Asia, 1995). Women in the border refugee camps, which were operational between 1980-93, complained of the lack of security and their vulnerability to sexual violence, particularly at night, when all day-time law enforcement agents went home. In addition to the trauma of rape, women and girls in the camps were also at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS (Contact, 1995:2), particularly from soldiers returning to the camps for periods in the wet season. This vulnerability to sexual abuse continues in displaced person settlements within Cambodia (*ibid.*).' **Cambodia Case Study**

Sexual violence against women in times of conflict appears to be both a result of the general breakdown in law and order, but also the result of a policy to demoralise the community.

'The deep-seated cultural conception to women as passive, vulnerable and in need of male protection may find political expression in the violent sexual exploitation of women as a strategy for weakening the enemy's resistance' (el Bushra and Piza Lopez, 1993: 26).

It is likely that men also suffer from sexual abuse in conflict situations. This has been documented in situations of imprisonment and torture. As with women, the rape of a man can signify the ultimate expression of power, and in many cultures a man who perpetrates a rape on a man is not considered homosexual. There is, however, very little documentation on this subject, which is likely to be the result of the even greater social taboo against men talking of being raped. In situations of the forced conscription of young boys, there are accounts of boys being brutalised by having to perpetrate sexual abuse on other boys or girls. Sexual abuse is thought to be

widespread among Rwandan orphans, particularly those in prison under suspicion of participation in the genocide.

Rape and sexual violence has severe, long-term affects on women's and men's health and emotional, economic and social future. Rape is often accompanied by mutilation of women and has long-term health effects. Women are exposed to unwanted and highly traumatic pregnancies, and as a result may risk dangerous forms of abortion. They are also exposed to infection by HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. The health consequences are particularly severe for women who have already undergone female genital mutilation. Rape and abduction by the military may have serious social consequences for women as they are often rejected by their communities and find that they are unable to marry.

Whether or not the rape of women is officially sanctioned by military or government authorities, they are complicit in the violation of human rights by not taking action to prevent it or punish the perpetrators. Equally, the international community has an obligation to prevent and punish violations of human rights. Although there is increasing attention given to the incidents of sexual violence in times of conflict and despite commitments made in the Fourth UN Conference on Women to the protection of women's rights, there has, as yet, been little progress on the protection of women's human rights in times of conflict. There are, for example, no women on the Bosnia war crime investigation panels, so that it is unlikely that it will be possible to fully investigate abuses against women (el Bushra and Piza Lopez, 1993: 27). There are also examples of sexual abuse of women by forces representing the international community and who are supposed to be peacekeeping or protecting the population. The militaristic ideology of misogyny and aggressive masculinity often overrides the remit of protection under which these forces work. Large-scale military operations frequently result in an increase in prostitution and sexual harassment, as was the case in Cambodia:

During the peace process, male UNTAC personnel created such a problem of sexual harassment of Cambodian women, and of female UNTAC staff, that complaints were made to Yasushi Akashi, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General in Phnom Penh. 170 people signed an open letter to him, calling for measures to redress sexual harassment, an advisory committee on gender issues to be set up and dissemination of a code of conduct for UNTAC personnel (Open letter to Yasushi Akashi, reprinted in Arnvig, 1994:179-182). As a result UNTAC agreed to set up an office to handle complaints of sexual harassment, agreed to enforce a code of conduct among UNTAC personnel and to provide education about sexually transmitted diseases (Colm, 1992:1). **(Cambodia Case Study)**

Human rights and refugee situations

Sexual violence remains a serious problem in refugee camps with women suffering abuse not only at the hands of the refugee population but also from those who are meant to be protecting them. This was seen in the case of the Rwandan refugee camps in Tanzania:

> The provision of humanitarian relief and the protection of human rights is severely compromised in many of these camps by the dominance of Hutu extremist militias using the camps as military bases. Women are particularly vulnerable to the lack of security in the camps with frequent rapes and attacks on women as well as general terrorisation of the refugee population (Moran, 1994: 1). There are also reports of Tanzanian soldiers attacking groups of refugees and raping women and girls who have attempted to go to Tanzania after the border between Tanzania and Rwanda and Burundi was closed in March 1995 (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 1995: 9). **Rwanda Case Study**

Women who are forced to flee and seek refuge in other countries, may encounter difficulties in being granted asylum. Gender-specific violence is rarely recognised as a sufficient basis for an asylum petition. Women may be at risk because of the activities of male members of their family but at the same time may not know sufficient details of their political activities to satisfy immigration officials. Frequently only men are registered in refugee camps which causes particular problems for women in gaining legal refugee status and claiming resources. Displaced people are particularly vulnerable to attack and abuse as they do not qualify for international protection. Large refugee camps which may be receiving better services than the surrounding population may cause considerable hostility from the host population. Women may bear the brunt of such hostility:

> In Chiapas, women also stated that they were vulnerable to rape and physical assault from Mexican men as they went to gather firewood, or to draw water. This relates to localised conflict between Guatemalan refugees and Mexican hosts over the use of resources **(Guatemala Case Study)**

4.1.3 Peace Process

Peace can occur through the military victory of one of the parties, or through a negotiated settlement, which may be imposed by the international community. It is often the case that, despite an end to official fighting, conflict and tensions remain and continue to affect the lives of both men and women. Thus, the peace process may have more to do with high-level negotiations and bargaining than actual peace and reconciliation. Women are very largely excluded from this level of diplomacy and their gendered concerns are almost always entirely neglected, despite women's prominent participation in peace movements. A recent example of this is the Dayton, Ohio negotiations aimed at resolving the conflict in the former Yugoslavia: despite the many organisations representing women in the former Yugoslavia, there were no women involved in the negotiations. In the Somalian conflict, it was only through the pressure of the President of Ethiopia and the Life and Peace Institute that Somali

women were able to gain entry to a peace conference in Mogadishu and even then it was only as observers.

The exclusion of women from high-level peace processes is a result of their frequent exclusion from positions of political decision-making in general but is also a result of the structure of international law and diplomacy with its emphasis on the abstract entity of the state. The effect of the structures with which the international community works can be to give legitimacy and increased power to leaders of particular militias who have no accountability to the community they are said to represent. This can also be the result of humanitarian efforts to provide supplies by negotiating 'safe routes' with militias and warlords, thus in turn giving them power, influence and often resources in the forms of bribes for co-operation (Obibi, 1995: 46). The question, therefore, is not simply one of including a few women in the high-level negotiations. This alone would raise many questions, such as whom these women represent and whether they could be said to represent gender interests. What is important for meaningful peace making, is for wider processes of representation to be developed which would include women's organisations.

Women, despite their exclusion from formal peace processes, have often been active, for example in Somalia and Sierra Leone, in opposing militarisation and promoting peace. In Somaliland, due to the frequency of inter-clan marriages, women have been able to act as clan ambassadors. In some cases, women traditionally have a symbolic role in peace process. However, often this does not confer power on women, as peace is made by men exchanging their control of women:

> There is a Somali proverb, 'The stains of blood should be cleansed with a fertile virgin woman' and women are often exchanged to seal peace settlements between clans. The exchange of women represents trust between the clans that each will be responsible for the young women, who will also perform a reproductive role to replace lives lost in the conflict. **(Somalia Case Study)**

In Guatemala, as in many other Latin American countries, women have been actively involved in human rights groups and have often used their gender identities as mothers and wives as the pretext for entry into the public arena.

> *Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo* (GAM, the Mutual Support Group), was initiated by a group of mainly indigenous wives and mothers of disappeared men, under the banner of 'Until we find them'. GAM continues to campaign prominently for the setting up of a Truth Commission to investigate killings and disappearances and for broader peace and human rights issues, such as an end to forced recruitment of young men for the army. From its inception GAM has been targeted by military/security forces. **(Guatemala Case Study)**

3.1.4 After the conflict

The end of conflict often heralds a period of transition, where gender relations and identities are re-negotiated. This period can offer opportunities for women to formalise their increased participation in public life and assert new roles for themselves. However, it can also be a time when women are made more vulnerable. As international aid is withdrawn and the competition for power and resources continues, women can be further marginalised. The need for men to assert particular masculine identities may lead to women being forced to resume submissive identities and cede power and influence to men. This was the case in Algeria in the immediate post-independence period, when women failed to build on the challenges to gender relations which had been made during the struggle for independence. As a result of this lost opportunity, there was a re-imposition of neo-traditional demands as a part of national self-assertion after 1962. (Algeria Case Study)

In Cambodia, Khmer women, to a limited extent, were able to assert their rights in the construction of the new constitution, although the position of ethnic Vietnamese and Chinese Cambodian men and women was less secure as they were not assigned Cambodian citizenship.

The drafting of the Kingdom of Cambodia Constitution, during the UNTAC period, involved a consultative process with women of all socio-economic classes and from all parts of the country, supported by UNIFEM (Martha Walsh, personal communication). The reconstruction of the country during the transitional period thus provided an opportunity for Khmer women to further their rights and interests. The Constitution now mandates specific attention to rural women, guarantees that housework and work outside the home are equal in value and that women cannot be dismissed from employment because of pregnancy. In practice, the majority of these provisions remain 'paper rights' (Mackay, 1995).

Political representation of women has declined since the general election. Since the May 1993 elections, only six seats in a National Assembly of 120 are filled by women (Mackay 1995). This may mean that there is limited impetus to push for gender-sensitive legislation in parliament, and there is scope for certain bills, such as the draft women's law, which outlawed domestic violence among other provisions, to be watered down (Heng, 1995:3). The new Secretariat for Women's Affairs is headed by a man who appears to be supportive of gender issues, and promulgated the draft women's law. However, the Secretariat receives only 0.12 percent of the national budget in 1994 (Boua, 1994:19), suggesting that gender issues remain a low priority. At district and provincial level, there are no recorded women representatives (Leiper, 1995:17). Women constitute approximately 0.5 percent of village chiefs (Mehta, 1993). This may have negative implications for women in the handling of local disputes, domestic violence and land claims. **(Cambodia Case Study)**

For women in Guatemala, exile in refugee camps gave them the opportunity to organise and participate in representative bodies, as well as to form their own organisations to promote women's interests.

The Permanent Commissions were initially, however, an entirely male institution, set up along the lines of traditional indigenous community decision-making structures, which as a public forum was the domain of men. Because of this exclusion, in 1989, women who had previously participated in economic projects and literacy classes (and continue to do so), formed the *Mamá Maquín* organisation to ensure that women's needs would be met in the return process, and to ensure that women were represented on the committees in charge of the return. *Mamá Maquín* also continued to organise development projects for women in the camps. Since 1992, women have been elected to the Permanent Commissions and to the leadership of the return groups of different zones. By 1994, *Mamá Maquín* had over 7000 members in 85 camps in southern Mexico (Mamá Maquín/ CIAM, 1994). Like *Ixmucané*, another refugee women's organisation, *Mamá Maquín* considers itself part of the wider Guatemalan economic, social and political struggle, and plans to work inside Guatemala with returnees, whilst continuing to work with refugees in Mexico.**(Guatemala Case Study)**

The end of conflict brings with it the problems of repatriation and rehabilitation. For many of those returning from refugee camps, the future is extremely uncertain. Ninety percent of refugees return without any official help, many before the conflict is over, perhaps to harvest crops, or because the situation in exile is untenable. Women without male protection face a repeat of the dangerous journey they made to escape the journey. The elderly and disabled are particularly vulnerable. There may also be concerns about whether on return women, particularly women heads of households, will be able to uphold their claims on resources. In Rwanda, the issue of land is particularly important:

In the aftermath of the genocide, there is great concern about the lack of property rights of widows and the possibility of widows being forced off farms, or unable to return. As property passes through the male members of the household, widows who do not have male sons, risk losing their property to their deceased husband's relatives. According to a report for the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, the Ministry of Rehabilitation has requested help to support advocates for widows so that they could uphold their rights (O'Neill, 1995: 3). UNICEF has instituted a review of Rwandan law within the Ministry for Women's Affairs to see how it discriminates against women (Lindsey Hilsum, personal communication). However, it is not clear whether the government will change the property laws to give women full property rights. The ownership of land is a particularly contentious issue in Rwanda, with land shortages used as one of the reasons for excluding Tutsi refugees before conflict. Thus, it seems unlikely that this issue will be easily resolved. **(Rwanda Case Study)**

The stresses for both men and women in adjusting to changes in gender divisions of labour and responsibilities on return to their communities result in increased violence against women and children as well as family breakdown. This is a particular problem in the context of the demobilisation of soldiers and where there is high unemployment, with large numbers of dissatisfied and armed young men roaming the countryside.

4.2 Demography and health

4.2.1 Changing demographic structure

Demography is often an important issue in the run-up to conflict. In Rwanda, conflicting land claims and the exclusion of large numbers of refugees from the country was one of the underlying factors of the conflict. (Rwanda Case Study) The run-up to conflict is often characterised by population movements, between regions within the country, or externally.

As well as leading to high levels of mortality and morbidity through both fighting and the increased spread of diseases, conflicts can prompt significant movements of population, causing large numbers of displaced people both within countries and into neighbouring countries. Women and men have specific vulnerabilities as a result of their gendered roles. Men are more likely to be killed, either because they are soldiers or because they are regarded as potential fighters. This leads to distortions in the sex ratio of the population and the high incidence of female headed houseship. Women are then left to face flight and making a living without male protection, labour, or access to the resources and networks which men dominate. In the context of demographic imbalances, there may also be changes in marriage patterns, including a reduction in women's rights with the increase in, or re-legalisation of polygamy as is seen in Rwanda and Cambodia, as well as pro-natalist policies. As well as an increase in the numbers of female-headed households, there is also the creation of a large number of orphans as a result of conflict. Whilst for many orphans, the best solution is to cared for by relatives or other members of the community, they are also extremely vulnerable to abuse in this situation.

Large numbers of children have become orphans as a result of the conflict in Guatemala. Manz (1988:92) reports that while many children have been taken in out of kindness, some are kept as 'virtual slaves'. For girls this would mean being an unpaid domestic servant, in both rural and urban areas. Rural boys may also be expected to work very hard, assisting with farming and gathering and chopping firewood among other tasks. The majority of children have been given homes by relatives or neighbours; a considerable number of children are, however, in orphanages or live on the streets. Street children in Guatemala are often targeted by the police and security forces, just because they are street children; boys in particular are likely to be considered criminals and beaten or killed; girls are especially vulnerable to sexual abuse. **(Guatemala Case Study)**

The displacement of populations and the deterioration of conditions of health often begins before the outbreak of widespread fighting. In Kosovo, there are movements out of the region of Albanians - largely young men seeking to improve their economic prospects or avoid conscription and inward movements of Serbian refugees from Croatia and Bosnia-Herzogovenia in Kosovo. Many of these refugees are women, children and the elderly and they are often being settled in Kosovo involuntarily. As a result there is an increase in female headed households, many of whom do not receive remittances from abroad. The Serbian refugees, largely unwelcome and with few social networks of support, are likely to find it difficult to support themselves in the increasingly poor economic conditions.

4.2.2 Deteriorating health conditions

Women, due to their reproductive role are likely to suffer more as a result of the deterioration of health provision. This is related both to the specific vulnerability of pregnant and breast feeding women, as well as to the risks of unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases and to women's responsibility for caring for the sick and disabled. Women's responsibility for hygiene and the collection of water, means that they have increased contact with water and faeces-borne diseases. Women and girls also have gendered vulnerabilities to the effects of ill-health, due to men's preferential access to health care. The burden of supporting their family emotionally as well as physically also falls on women, with detrimental effects on their own mental health.

Kosovo also gives an example of the health problems which the population, or particular sections of the population, face in a situation of low-intensity conflict.

The health of Albanians is deteriorating dramatically in this period of low intensity conflict. Sanitation is a problem in Kosovo: only 46 per cent of the population drink tap water and 28.9 per cent of households are linked to sewage systems (HRW/H 1993:134). Even those that do have water are cut off because they cannot pay the bills. Women are responsible for resource provisions in the household and if they do not have water supplies to the house they must collect water from the nearest well or streams. Overcrowding and extreme economic hardship combined have meant a resurgence of tuberculosis, typhus, polio, meningitis and lice carried diseases, particularly among children. Epidemics are on the increase, particularly haemorrhage fever epidemic, also known as 'black death'. During the first half of 1995, there were 87 recorded cases of haemorrhage and mice fever (KCB #234, 1995). In a clinic in a small town in northern Kosovo, Dr. Kransniqi said there were 20 new cases of tuberculosis every week. This is probably an underestimate because shame prevents many Albanians going for diagnosis since TB is linked to poverty. Ninety-nine per cent of cases of TB are contained within the Albanian community which reflects the separate existence of Serb and Albanian communities in Kosovo. In the hospitals there are shortages of medical supplies and in particular incubators. Where facilities exist, Serbian patients are given priority in receiving them.**(Kosovo Case Study)**

The example of Rwanda shows how a health system can be targeted for attack, leading to its almost entire destruction, with serious consequences for health:

During the genocide, hospitals and health centres were targeted by those involved in genocide. Prominent and educated Tutsis and moderate Hutus and were the first to be targeted in the genocide and many doctors and other medical staff were killed. As those who had been wounded in the massacres sought medical attention, the killers pursued them and others who sought refugee in hospitals. Patients were routinely pulled out of hospital to be killed.

By the end of the conflict few if any of the health centres were open as the staff had been killed or fled and the centres looted by the *interahamwe*, or taken over by displaced people. Hospitals were functioning at decreased capacity and in many cases are dependent on expatriate staff. An estimated 50 percent of the countries former health personnel have fled or were killed (UNDHA, 1994: 10).

The dismantling of the national health system, in a context of large numbers of casualties and breakdown in the sanitary system, has caused a rapid deterioration of the health of large portions of the population. As a result of the fighting, large parts of the country have no electricity or functioning water pumping stations and many spring water sources in rural areas are no longer safe. There have been serious outbreaks of diseases such as dysentery, malaria, measles and meningitis, causing increased rates of morbidity and mortality. National vaccination programmes and programmes to combat AIDS and tuberculosis have been halted due to the conflict. **(Rwanda Case Study)**

In the post conflict situation, there are a wide range of health needs, due to the breakdown of the health system and the spread of contagious diseases. Women and girls may have less access to hospitals and health services, due to the priority given to male health within households. Many men, women and children are likely to be in need of mental health care, which is often lacking.

4.2.3 *Reproductive Health*

Frequently the disruption to the health system means that contraceptive services in particular, and reproductive services in general are not available. The result is a rise in unwanted pregnancies and an associated rise in maternal mortality.

Women, particularly in refugee situations may be under pressure to increase their fertility in order to replace the population that was lost. Family planning is rarely considered a priority in relief situations. There may be a reluctance on the part of aid agencies to provide contraceptive services as this is seen as culturally, and in situations of ethnic tension, politically sensitive. However, it is important to distinguish between the desires and needs of women and those of male leaders and to recognise and protect women's rights to determine their own fertility.

Women in conflict situations are particularly at risk of HIV infection, due to the high levels of sexual violence and rape. These dangers are not over once the peace process is underway. The case of Cambodia shows how the stationing of peace keeping forces can also contribute to the spread of sexually transmitted infections:

The stationing of the peacekeeping forces also saw an enormous increase in the number of commercial sex workers in Phnom Penh, from 6,000 in 1992 to 20,000 in the following year (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 1993:16). This reflects both the demand from foreign personnel, but also one of the few viable strategies left to women who have lost other assets and means of making a livelihood during the war. Their lack of economic bargaining power may mean that insisting on condoms is a luxury that sex workers cannot afford (Baden, 1992; Marcus, 1993). By 1992, 10 percent of female sex workers in Phnom Penh and 38 percent of female sex workers in Sihanoukville, a south coast port with strong links to Thailand were HIV positive. Dr Phalla of the National AIDS Committee estimates that 20 percent of sexually active men (i.e. 400,000 people) regularly visit sex workers but do not use condoms (Kahane, 1995:2). Clearly, the non-use of condoms is putting both sex workers, their clients and the wives of their clients at risk of HIV infection. **(Cambodia Case Study)**

4.2.4 Disability

There are increases in the proportion of disabled people in countries which experience conflict, particularly as a result of anti-personnel mines. The gendered distribution of those affected depends in part on the sexual division of labour. In many countries it is women and children who are most at risk due to their responsibility for the collection of firewood, for tending animals as well as for working in the fields. This is particularly the case in female-headed households. However, in Cambodia it appears to be largely men who are affected:

There are an estimated 350,000 disabled people in Cambodia, at 0.04 percent of the population, one of the highest proportions in the world. Most disabilities are a direct result of land mine injuries, through which approximately 500 people are killed or injured each month in the most heavily mined areas (Davies, 1994:21). Despite attempts to ban mining and mine clearance activities co-ordinated by the Cambodia Mine Action Centre, new mines are still being laid in disputed areas. The majority of mine accidents occur whilst farming, or whilst cutting grasses or wood. Ironically, the lack of usable land in heavily mined areas is forcing people to depend more on the sale of cut wood, grass and bamboo, and thus to risk disability and death (*ibid*: 56). Davies (*op. cit.*) argues that whilst such activities are not strongly gender-typed, more often it is men who perform them, and who are thus at greater risk of mine accidents. However, there is clearly also a significant risk for women, particularly in female-headed households, or where husbands or older children, who might otherwise undertake such work, are disabled **(Cambodia Case Study)**

The gender differentiated effects of disability in all countries is under-researched. Both men and women suffer psychological trauma as a result of disability and are inhibited in working or supporting themselves. Given women's role for caring for others, and the difficulties in remarrying for women, particularly in contexts where women out-number men, it would seem likely that women who have been made disabled are more likely to be deserted by their husbands than vice versa. In Cambodia, it was found that women were less likely to be fitted for prosthetic limbs, due to a lack of female doctors and the unwillingness of women to attend to male-run clinics. Due to women's responsibility for child care, they were also less likely to be

able to take the time and travel the distance that a visit to a clinic would require. (Cambodia Case Study)

4.3 Economic

In pre-conflict situations, there are likely to be severe economic pressures, such as rising inflation, unemployment (sometimes linked to targeted expulsions from employment) a decline in household incomes and the growth of the informal and parallel economy, as well as population movements, disrupting livelihoods. During conflict, there are likely to be more significant displacements of population, a collapse of formal economic structures and markets and a burgeoning of the parallel and informal economies as well as increased recourse to subsistence production, foraging and other survival strategies drawing on the natural resource base. The loss of assets by seizure and looting are also commonplace. In the peace process and post-conflict phases, rehabilitation comes to the fore, with asset claims, the effects of destruction of the physical infrastructure and environmental resource base prominent issues. New forms of economic organisation may emerge in this phase.

Conflict has a wide range of effects on the division of labour, of economic responsibility and of access and control over resources between men and women and between generations. Conflict acts to destroy livelihoods by forcing people off land or making farming untenable, by disrupting marketing mechanisms or by causing crippling inflation which makes production un-viable. However, there are also economic winners in conflict and the potential gains to be made from conflict may have the result of triggering and prolonging fighting. Attention to the economic gainers from conflict situations is relatively recent and it is generally not gender disaggregated. It is likely that the primary winners are men given that those who are able to manipulate conflict situations to their own benefit are largely the military themselves, or those who have close connections to those with armed power. However, it is also possible that some women, particularly traders, are able to benefit from the parallel economy and women may also be employed in black marketeering as, in some situations, women may have more freedom of movement than men.

Conflict may bring changes to women's economic roles and changes in the sexual division of labour. This is particularly the cases for those women who are have to shoulder the burden of providing for their households by the absence, death or disablement of adult men. Female-headed or maintained households, whose numbers may increase sharply in times of conflict[12], are likely to be poorer as they have less access to adult labour and earning power, restricted access to community structures and women may have to adopt survival mechanisms for which they are ill-equipped, untrained or which are socially unacceptable.

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[12]In Cambodia, in some villages, the percentage of female headed households rose to 76 percent of all households (Cambodia Case Study).

4.3.1 Survival strategies

Communities, households and individuals have a range of coping or survival mechanisms which they adopt in times of crisis, including changes in crops and production methods, accessing alternative sources of income, sale of assets, and migration. However, in conflict situations the options available may diminish very rapidly , as people are forced off their land and as market and employment mechanisms collapse. Women face particular constraints in employing the different survival strategies, as they have lower levels of education and often fewer skills to offer, access to lesser assets and greater constraints on their mobility (Byrne with Baden, 1995: 10). In pre-conflict and conflict situations, particular groups may face expulsion from employment, or restrictions in gaining employment on the basis of their ethnicity or religion, as for example in Kosovo where it is estimated that 70 percent of employed Albanians have been dismissed from their jobs. This leads in particular coping strategies, in which women may be at a disadvantage. In Kosovo, one coping mechanism adopted in the face of a run-up to conflict and deterioration of the economy was the migration of young men to other countries seeking employment. Women are often unable to migrate if they have responsibilities for child care or face opposition from their families. Older men may also be constrained by family responsibilities, as well as fewer employment opportunities.

Many women who are often the majority of subsistence farmers in their country[13] are extremely unwilling to leave their farms which are their only means of survival. This can be seen in the testimony of Edisa, from Uganda:

> 'I was firm and had not thought of leaving my home, although the situation was really bad with rampant killings and the older children had run off to town....I knew that wherever I would go, I would have the problem of feeding my children - so I persisted and remained there with my two youngest. After some time my husband came back to take us where he and the other children had settled. I was still against the idea of leaving our home.....This annoyed him very much and he asked 'Why do you want to die because of food?'
> (Bennett *et al*, 1995: 93)

4.3.2 Changes in the gender division of labour

As a result of the absence of male labour, women frequently have to take over tasks which were formerly considered male. This means that women's labour load, which is frequently heavier than men's in times of 'normality,' will be further increased. Particularly in the context of food, water or firewood shortages which mean that women's usual tasks take longer and involve more work. In Guatemalan refugee camps in Mexico a survey revealed that women were working twice as long as men. (Guatemala Case Study) Children, particularly girls will also have to bear some of the increased workloads, especially in female-maintained households, further limiting

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[13]In Somalia, for example, women made up 85 percent of subsistence farmers (Somalia Case Study).

their ability to go to school. In some contexts, taking over male roles, or expanding their economic activities may lead to a further recognition of women's economic contribution and skills.

In Somalia ' there has been a burgeoning of women petty traders. This is the most significant aspect of the Somali war with regard to gender relations...Economic necessity has brought women out of the homes in this area of economic activity. Moreover, it has reduced their 'invisibility', and there has been an increased level of respect for the important role women are playing in meeting the economic burdens of supporting the family. This is an area which women need to capitalise on in the future if they are to increase their voice in decision-making. Recognition by women of the necessity of petty trading has also led to some co-operation, including that between women from different clans which will be important in future periods of peace and reconciliation. Women have pooled their resources and strengths, increasing the potential of their livelihood strategies. Women with some education assist illiterate women and groups have established small co-operatives. In many cases women are forced to hire men, often relatives, to protect their stores, sleep in shops and warehouses which women are not socially permitted to do (Bennett *et al* 1995).
(Somalia Case Study)

To some extent, women may benefit from changes in the gender division of labour and responsibility, despite increased work loads. However, this is only to the extent that an increase in responsibility is accompanied by an increase in control of resources. Women may also be forced into activities which carry high risks. This is particularly the case with sex work, which not only risks infection of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, but in some cases is likely to incur harsh legal or social sanctions. In some cases, men may take over some areas which are traditionally considered the preserve of women. However, this is generally in those cases where the activity can produce marketable crops, or a waged income. An example of this is Somali male refugees enrolling in Child Health Worker training programmes in Kenyan refugee camps. Box 4, using the case of Uganda shows how changes in the division of labour can result in both gains and loses for women.

Box 4: Gains and losses for women from shifts in gender relations: Uganda

Before the 1960s and 1970s, in Uganda, there tended to be a clear division between men's and women's tasks and the resources needed to perform them. In northern Uganda, women had sole access to some fields which were farmed for consumption only, and men controlled livestock and farmed cash crops, with some assistance from women. This division was backed up by a framework of marriage dominated by the husband's authority but within which wives had certain defined rights, upheld by the clan and community.

As a result of war, male labour migration and pressures to find cash, gender relations have changed in that women have a greater share of responsibility and work, yet still the same limited control over resources and few enabling rights. In some cases men have moved into women's activities where there is profit in them, and women have lost access to their own subsistence land, reducing food security. Men are no longer considered responsible for paying school fees and providing basic household necessities, increasing the pressure for women to work to find cash.

This situation is to some extent encouraged by the government's Women in Development policy which promotes women's employment in intensive income-generation, thus increasing their burden of work, without making changes to increase their status in society or their control over resources.

Source: Judy el Bushra in el Bushra and Piza Lopez, 1993: 54-57

4.3.3 Control over assets and resources in rehabilitation

Access to resources is a crucial issue in influencing the impact of conflict on the economic position of women. In particular, access to land is a key issue, in which women may be severely disadvantaged. For widows in Rwanda, for example, women's lack of property rights mean that they risk being turned off their land by their husbands male relatives and forced to find other means of survival, often in the towns. Land was an important issue in the negotiations between different parties in Rwanda and in the peace process. However, the issue of women's property rights was not addressed. Where women do have access to land, it is often of poor quality. Conflict frequently contributes to environmental degradation, which increases women's workloads, particularly in the provision of fuel wood.

In refugee situations, resources are often distributed to men, resulting in a weakening of women's position. This was seen in the Eritrean refugee camps in Sudan:

In the transit camps, all assistance such as land, tools and seeds, was issued in the name of men, except in the case of female-headed households. Thus married women were constructed as men's dependants, rather than as partners in the rural production process, as they had been in Eritrea before flight. For many women, employment opportunities were further restricted by local gender norms which expected women to remain secluded. This affected both Christian and Muslim women. Kibreab concludes that 'in the transit centres and settlements, the subordination of women has been intensified more than ever before' (*ibid*.). **(Eritrea Case Study)**

Intervention at the time of reconstruction and rehabilitation after the conflict can have important gendered implications. The policies followed by international agencies and NGOs will be crucial in determining how repatriation occurs, whether social networks are allowed to remain intact during the process of repatriation and to what extent women gain or retain control over resources. The distribution of crucial inputs of seeds and farming equipment, if given to men, could further weaken women's position. For many women, particularly female heads of households, the return to 'normality' may constitute a deterioration of the conditions that they had experienced in refugee camps. This was seen in the case of Cambodia:

Given their economic and social problems on returning to Cambodia, overall, two thirds of female headed households felt that their lives were better in the camps, in comparison with two thirds of the general population who felt that life in Cambodia was better than in the camps (Geiger, 1994: 200) **(Cambodia Case Study)**

However, if women's important role in agriculture is recognised, and their claims to land and resources supported, their bargaining positions within households could be improved.

4.4 <u>Social welfare and social organisation</u>

Conflicts frequently occur in the poorest areas of the world where access to health and education may be extremely restricted, particularly for women. If visits to clinics or hospitals involves travelling distances, and thus spending time away from domestic responsibilities, women's ability to attend them is also constrained. Girls in these countries frequently have lower levels of enrolment in education and higher drop out rates, particularly beyond primary level.

Conflict has an extremely disruptive effect on both state and non-state provision of welfare services, as was seen in the case of Rwanda in section 3.2. This means that children's education is disrupted. The continuing education of their children is often an issue about which women are particularly concerned, partly due to the extent to which women invest much of their own future in that of their children. With deteriorating health conditions, women are often left to care for the sick as well as compensate for lost labour. In refugee camps, education provision, in particular, may be very inadequate. Those training services which are provided are often inaccessible

to women, due to their responsibilities for child care and due to cultural constraints which there may be on women attending classes.

Informal networks of support are also disrupted by the displacement of large sections of the population. This disruption extends to family and household structures. Conflict may be a result of ethnic tensions and divisions which can break up cross ethnic structures, such as the Church-based self-help groups in Rwanda from which many women drew considerable support. Women who are in ethnically mixed or cross-clan marriages, for example in Somalia, may suffer particularly in this situation. In Cambodia, the conflict has served to disrupt interpersonal relationships.

Many observers comment that Cambodian social networks and family structures have broken down, or at least been seriously impaired by decades of conflict, and particularly by the Khmer Rouge regime. Suspicion also characterises many interpersonal relationships outside the home, as people suspect the political loyalties of colleagues who were formerly allied with another faction (Martha Walsh, personal communication). One Khmer woman told Mysliwiec (1988:59)' Relationships have changed very much; families used to be intact and supportive. Husbands and wives were loyal to each other. The men now are not good. They are deceitful and corrupt. they say one thing and do another. We can no longer trust each other'. Desertion of spouses is reportedly much more common since the end of the conflict (Davies, 1994; Mackay, 1995). **(Cambodia Case Study)**

As the provision of social welfare is generally considered a responsibility of women, it falls on them to make up for the gaps in provision. Thus women have often been responsible for the establishment of new social networks in conflict and especially in post conflict situations. As we have seen, women in Somalia, with their cross-clan loyalties and common interests in setting up trading networks and co-operatives, were in a better position to build mutual support mechanisms than men. This may also be the case in Rwanda and other situations where widows are able to come together and recognise mutual interests. However, it should not be assumed that women will automatically find that they have the basis for co-operation. There may be rivalry and competition between women, particularly at times of ethnic/clan tension and scarce resources. There may also be divisions between women who have the support and protection of men and those who are alone. This can be seen in the testimony of Elise from Sri Lanka:

> 'The women who suffered the same fate have a tendency to visit each other. We avoid going to houses where there are males, due to suspicion. The woman next door is suspicious about my dealings with her husband who is old. If I speak to him his wife argues with him, accusing him of spending for my needs. ' (Bennett *et al*, 1995: 141)

The social support networks which develop in refugee situations depend to a large extent on the social make up of the refugee population, whether whole communities have been displaced together, as in Guatemala, or whether families have been broken up during flight. In cases such as Guatemala, strong networks of support can be developed. Aid agencies can also encourage or inhibit the development of support networks in refugee situations. For instance, the practise of establishing separate

camps for widows or the elderly, may ensure that these groups are protected but will also have the effect of cutting them off from many sources of potential support. If proper consultative processes are established in refugee camps, this is likely to have the effect of encouraging mutual support. However, it should not be assumed that women will automatically have common interests and the basis for mutual support, particularly in times of ethnic tension and competition over resources.

Refugees returning home may have increased difficulties in locating themselves in social support networks as they may encounter resentment about the fact that they left or were able to leave.

4.5 <u>Socio-cultural, ideological</u>

The militarisation of a society, whereby violence is seen to be the solution to problems, is closely tied up with gender ideologies and the conceptions of masculinity and femininity. Gender ideologies and the appropriate behaviour for men and women become highly contested. This may be the result of the manipulation of gender identities to assert ethnic, religious, clan or national identity, or the product of a concerted attempt to forge new gender identities in the process of a political struggle. In both cases, in situations of conflict, a notion of masculinity is likely to be promoted that stresses courage, aggression and often the protection of women - at least those women who are not the 'enemy'. For those women who, by virtue of their behaviour, political position, religion or ethnic origin, are considered the enemy, the masculinity promoted often permits the exercise of power through sexual abuse and rape. For women, there may be competing ideologies promoted. Women may be held up as the mythical mother or daughter of the nation or ethnic group, who is in need of protection and respect, although even the notion of protection may serve to put women at increased risk. Harmej explains how, during the partition of India, the imperative of saving the honour of their daughters led parents to tale drastic measures:

> 'It was a terrible situation. Muslims took away quite a number of girls - at that time some people threw their daughters in wells, rather than [let] the Muslims take a way their religion....their honour. They said that every man should try and save himself, but women shouldn't do anything by themselves. And so the girls would die [saying], 'We don't want to go with the Muslims'...'We don't want to go from one religion to another."
> (Bennett *et al*, 1995: 119)

But in some struggles, a new image of womanhood is developed, that of fighter. In Eritrea, there was a strong ideology of equality within the EPLF with women participating in the fighting and men taking on equal responsibility for those tasks, such as cooking, cleaning, fuelwood and water provision, which had been formerly been considered the preserve of women. (Eritrea case study) Nevertheless, even when women fight, it is unlikely that the ideological importance of their role as mothers will be totally relinquished, not least by the women themselves. As a result, women have to face very contradictory pressures as can be seen in the testimony for Lanh from Vietnam:

> 'I brought my children to Phouc Ving Sn to stay and took part in revolutionary activities. When I had an assignment I always had to think a lot about who'd take care of the children...There were two different thoughts in my mind. One was love for my children. They were the dearest things I had and it was very hard to leave them with other people....I decided to put aside my [family] feelings to complete the work I had been assigned. Nowadays when I think of that period I feel sorry for [my children]......They were so lonely....Oh God! That difficult period is over now. It's impossible to explain....Sometimes I had to go on for months and couldn't visit my children' (Bennett *et al,* 1995: 159-160)

As gender identities are always highly contested, the end of conflict often raises further questions about which gender identities will have primacy. Often, the exigencies of war mean that women are forced to go beyond their culturally prescribed roles. This may have a liberating effect for women and result in changes in gender ideologies. But it also can have social costs. Being accepted by the community is more than a matter of emotional or psychological concern for women as it can have real economic implications. Stepping beyond the bounds of what is acceptable can affect their ability to find a marriage partner and thus have a life-long effect on women's economic, emotional and social future. In those situations where a liberating army has promoted gender equality, there may be a reassertion of more polarised gender identities after the conflict. The new identities promoted may become a focal point in the general conflict over the allocation of resources in influence in a newly reconstituted state. Those women who have embraced the notions of equality may find problems in re-integrating into their communities:

"In the field, the men respected us - our brains, our strength ... But in this society of ours, they now respect make-up, nice hair, being a proper housewife.. If we kneel down to what they want, we'll end up back in the kitchen.' (Amair Adhana, cited in The Economist, 25 June 1994:719). **(Eritrea Case Study)**

In many conflicts, there is a breakdown in power structures, particularly inter-generational influence. This may be the result of a concerted effort to disrupt parental control, as was the case in Cambodia. Women may be particularly affected by the loss of control of their children who formerly would have provided labour and status for them. The control parents exert over their children's marriages may be broken, with either political parties, or the people themselves choosing marriage partners. In the post conflict situation, parents may attempt to re-assert their power, including demanding that their children divorce and remarry the partner of their choice. This is the case in both Cambodia and Eritrea, with parents insisting that their sons re-marry to virgin brides. Women are less able to find new partners.

In the conflicts that ensue over gender ideology after the supposed end of the official conflict, it should not be assumed that women are passive pawns. They have a large stake in the conclusion and will act to either re-assert their traditional positions or to attempt to forge new roles and identities for themselves. For many women, more equal notions of the genders may constitute a threat to the basis on which they have built some influence and thus they are likely to oppose it. This is particularly the case of older women who have gained respect and influence by virtue of their age and

experience. However, for others the experience of surviving the conflict will have contributed to a lasting change in their self-image:

> A refugee woman in Chiapas said: 'We learned to be women in Guatemala. Our mothers taught us to obey and to work in the home without complaining about anything. In refuge, we are opening our eyes. We are coming to know our human rights. Here, women are different from before, though we didn't think it would turn out this way' (cited in Mamá Maquín/ CIAM, 1994:41). **(Guatemala Case Study)**

4.6 <u>Personal and psychological issues</u>

War is deeply traumatic, causing serious disruption at both community and personal levels. Many people will have lost members of their families and even seen them being killed. They may have suffered injury themselves, been imprisoned or tortured or been raped, they may have feared for their lives and safety for a considerable time and been forced to abandon all their possessions and family in flight. Many will have lost their homes and the basis of their livelihoods. In post-conflict situations, they will have to rebuild their lives, or build new lives whilst attempting to overcome the traumas that they have experienced.

Trauma, a psychological state resulting from extreme experiences, is only poorly understood and the majority of the research has been done in Western contexts. There are a wide range of symptoms which are understood to make up Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (el Bushra and Piza-Lopez, 1993: 20). These symptoms include depression, suicide, increased incidence of mental illness, fatigue, listlessness, recurrent recollection of traumatic events, startling easily and explosions of anger. Reaction to post-traumatic stress tend to form a sequence in which initial shock is followed by efforts to cope with and manage the situation (el Bushra and Piza-Lopez, 1993: 20). The struggle to find food, continuing insecurity and the feeling of being out of control inhibits the ability to cope with stress. Conversely, community support and good social networks can aid recovery.

Clearly, both men and women will experience trauma in conflict situations, although the origin of the stress may be different. Men are more likely to have directly experienced fighting and the associated traumas, although women are likely to have a more profound feeling of lack of control than men. Those women who have been raped may have to deal with the additional stress of keeping their experience a secret, unwanted pregnancies and social stigma. Women who are in cross-clan or ethnic marriages may suffer particularly from the stress of dual loyalties and the loss of their families. Women who have to support their families alone will have had to adapt to new roles in times of insecurity and fear, adding to their stress. As Sabaah of Somaliland said:

'But we war widows, those who the problems have really touched, we are always very busy. We are always worried about how to feed out children and look after them, for we have become both mothers and fathers. We feel crushed by personal problems that appear to us bigger than those of Somaliland.' (Bennett *et al*, 1995)

Both men and women are likely to feel lack of control and a failure of responsibility at the death of their loved ones.

The trauma of parents is likely to affect children who may well be traumatised themselves. Parents may withdraw from their children, or feel unable to control them. The experiences which children have undergone may be, in effect, lessons in violence and brutality. As Jenneth of Uganda said:

The children we are bringing up these days are disobedient, and lovers of guns and violence. We parents have a big task to change this attitude of our children.' (Bennett *et al*, 1995: 107)

Men who experience trauma, particularly those who have been conditioned into violence may have difficulties in sustaining social relationships, particularly if they can no longer find a role for themselves in households which have had to survive in their absence. This may lead to an increase in domestic violence, and it is important that ways are found to aid the re-integration of men into families and communities.

There is some evidence that men and women react differently to trauma. From studies of refugee communities in Mozambique, Zambia and Central America, it appears that women tend to worry most about family issues such as their relationships with their children and husbands whilst men worry more about factors outside their family such as lack of access to facilities. The studies also showed that women had greater feelings of helplessness and fewer social networks beyond their families. Single women were particularly isolated. However, for some marriage was a further source of stress rather than a support (el Bushra and Piza-Lopez, 1993: 20).

Factors which help people overcome trauma include support from others and a safe space with people they trust where they can work through their feelings. Being with those who have had similar experiences is also beneficial. Western methods of therapy and counselling may not always be appropriate. Often participation in positive work, taking part in rehabilitation, or campaigning for human rights, can have a therapeutic effect. In Latin America, personal testimony has provided a form of socio-therapy and been used as a means to challenge entrenched power structures and re-appropriate moral standards (Richters, nd: 166). The ability to carry out traditional burial practices is an important part of the process of coming to terms with bereavement and some agencies are beginning to recognise that provision of less standard relief items, such as burial shrouds, may help to ease the process.

5. CONFLICT AND INTERVENTIONS

5.1 Introduction

No intervention by an aid agency can be said to be neutral. In situations of scarcity, the distribution of resources will always have an political, social or economic impact. Equally, no intervention can be regarded as gender-neutral. Interventions in any sector are likely to have an impact on gender relations. Distribution of resources, capacity building or services delivered, either to men or women will affect gender relations, to the extent that it changes or reinforces the status quo. In conflict situations the politics of intervention, what should be done, when it should be done and with whom it should be done are particularly complex. Conflict is, by its very nature, a situation of change and it is important to assess how interventions will affect both those forces which lead to an escalation of conflict and those which tend towards stability. In this context, it is important to remember that the transformations which conflicts bring about are not necessarily negative and that conflict may be a product of a situation which is untenable.

Conflict situations, or complex emergencies (defined as major humanitarian crises of a multi-causal nature that require a system-wide response) are an increasingly common occurrence and yet responses to conflicts, particularly internal conflicts, are the subject of increasingly heated debate. Some of the current debates about the politics of humanitarian intervention, which have been prompted by recent experience of conflicts will be examined in this section, raising questions about the objectives of intervention and the constraints on neutrality. The gender implications of this debate will also be drawn out.

5.2 Responses to conflict- recent trends and new ways forward

In recent years, there has been a shift in aid expenditure towards relief rather than development operations. In 1980, under one percent of overseas development assistance was spent on relief. By 1991, this had risen to seven percent. This is, in part, a response to the rise in the number of conflicts and emergencies. Increasingly, this relief spending is being channelled through the large number of NGOs which are emerging, in response to the decreased capacity of state structures. Donor agencies and the United Nations are funding NGOs to do relief work, sometimes, as was the case in Ethiopia, in circumstances where they would have political and legal difficulties in working directly (Borland, 1993).

The Gulf war and the Kurdish crisis prompted another development in response to conflict situations. In the context of the end to the Cold War, military intervention and a breach of sovereignty was possible and was used to deliver relief to the Kurds. This was to be repeated in Somalia, Bosnia and Rwanda. The Gulf war also prompted several donor agencies to create directly operational sections, such as the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), created in 1992 and the UK ODAs Disaster Relief Initiative (DRI), established in 1991. The development of these units were prompted by the lack of NGOs with knowledge and experience in the Gulf region.

Concern has been raised about these developments - the dominance of NGOs and also the rise of 'military humanitarianism' - which are both interpreted as part of a tendency of the North to reduce its response to political crisis in the South to the provision of relief. The humanitarian or relief response to complex emergencies has been criticised for the way in which conflict situations are not distinguished sufficiently from other emergencies, and thus the responses to them are not adequately tailored to their specific nature.[14] This concern is linked to a questioning of the notion of humanitarian neutrality. (Duffield, 1994; African Rights, 1994)

Relief can prolong wars by providing material assistance, directly or indirectly to the army or other forces controlling a particular area, by directly providing food, or other assistance to armies or tolerating diversion of resources by providing income, renting vehicles, premises or staff and by paying fees and taxes. Strategic protection is also provided when the military or political objectives of the controlling authority coincide with the logistical requirements of the humanitarian operation, such as keeping roads, airfields and ports open, maintaining supplies to garrison towns-cum-relief shelters. (African Rights, 1994: 4, 13) In this way a synergy can be developed between relief and violence. In Sudan, African Rights argued that the pioneering programme Operation Lifeline Sudan, which provided humanitarian relief to civilians on both sides of the conflict, became intimately involved with the conflict, rather than promoting a dynamic of peace. The aid meant that neither side was forced to be accountable to their constituents, whilst at the same time a stalemate was created by the constraints on military strategies as a result of the agreed delivery of aid (African Rights, 1994: 4, 13).

The synergism of relief and violence is enhanced by the development of 'military humanitarianism'. The use of military forces to deliver relief, brings in a new set of concerns and modes of operation which means that humanitarian objectives can often get lost, particularly once security considerations for UN forces take precedence over humanitarian needs (Adams and Bradbury, 1995: 34). Negotiated access programmes can sustain the war economy and weaken alternative civil structures, as described above. This is particularly significant for gender considerations. War economies are largely run by men and the civil structures which are undermined include those most likely to address women's gender interests. In addition, as has been documented in Somalia, Cambodia and Bosnia, the introduction military forces - even those which are mandated to protect civilians - contributes to the processes of militarisation of a society leading to the exploitation of, and violence against, women.

Relief can also contribute to violence if it is provided on the basis of 'misguided neutrality' and where human rights are given a low priority. African Rights (1994) argues in the case of Rwanda, that there was a contradiction between humanitarian aims and the human rights objective of both stopping the genocide and bringing the killers to justice, which failed to be examined. African Rights argues that a distinction

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[14]Complex emergencies differ from other disasters in their explicitly political nature They erode or destroy the cultural, civil, political and economic integrity of societies. In complex emergencies, the social system and the networks on which it is based are themselves under attack. In a complex emergency, humanitarian assistance itself can become a target of violence and appropriation and can also serve to prolong the crisis (Duffield, 1994: 38).

should be made between 'operational neutrality', as practised by the ICRC - which is rooted in the refusal to take a stand supporting one side or the other - and 'human rights objectivity', which requires passing a judgement in favour of one side or the other. Whilst the ICRC has developed complex rules to try to protect its neutral status, NGOs are attempting to achieve neutrality without full recognition of its political difficulties or potential costs and thus are lacking in systematic accountability. The costs of neutrality include maintaining full offices for each side of the conflict and protracted negotiation with the parties before a programme can be established, as well as being prepared to withdraw if agreements are flouted. The ICRC's mandate obliges it to raise human rights abuses privately with the controlling authorities and constrains the publicity that it can give to even the most appalling abuses of human rights (African Rights, 1994: 24).

The idea of 'human rights objectivity' comes with a notion of solidarity and the pursuit of justice. According to African Rights this would require:

- a commitment to pursuing an agenda based on a set of rights;
- consultation with and accountability to the people with whom solidarity is expressed;
- shared risk and suffering with the people;
- concrete action in support of the people and their cause. This may include providing relief and/or political or human rights lobbying and advocacy.

(African Rights, 1994: 27)

Whilst some relief operations could be described as solidarity operations, such as the community-implemented relief programmes in Eritrea and Tigray and the various anti-apartheid campaigns and funds, this form of operation is difficult to achieve. In practical terms, solidarity operation requires political sensitivity and a level of analysis and long-term perspective that are often absent from short-term relief operations. They also require a high degree of partner co-operation.

For many organisations and donor agencies, there may be no mandate or political will to adopt this sort of solidarity-based stance, or to undertake this form of operation. However, the distinctions drawn, and the contradictions exposed between operational neutrality and human rights objectivity remain a useful basis from which to examine potential interventions. They also have important gender implications.

5.3 Gender issues and responses to conflict

Operational neutrality has certain implications relevant to gender concerns. When the attempt to get resources to both sides of the conflict leads to negotiation with the warring parties and an acceptance of 'fieldcraft' (the need to make compromises with authorities for the greater good), the likelihood is that gender issues will be marginalised and women will be negatively affected. Dealing with controlling authorities often involves the diversion of resources to militias that are needed by civilians. This not only means that women, who are more likely to be in the needy civilian population than the militias, fail to get much needed resources, but it also strengthens the hand of the militias, promoting militarisation with negative

consequences for women, including increases in violence and threats to women. Organisations in civil society, which are striving for peace and/or represent women will also be further marginalised from the locus of power.

The prioritising of relief over human rights also has important gender implications, particularly as abuse of women's human rights is commonly given a much lower priority than other forms of human rights violation. As a result, with the focus on humanitarian assistance, there is unlikely to be any serious attempt to prevent violation of women's human rights. This can be seen in the failure to protect women in refugee situations, despite growing awareness of the extent of violence against women in camps. It can also be seen in the failure to act to stop the 'rape camps' in former Yugoslavia and to prosecute those responsible for the use of rape as a military strategy.

If, as African Rights are suggesting, solidarity and justice should become the motivating factors for responses to conflict, these concepts need to be considered from a gender perspective. There needs to be a real commitment to women's human rights, and processes of consultation should be established which permit the participation of, and accountability to, women. However, in some cases, the pursuit of political solidarity may seem to be in conflict with a commitment to women's human rights and to the full consultation and participation of women. There may be cases where community or group rights, including the right of refugees to 'maintenance of culture' as laid down in the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) come into conflict with upholding women's gender interests.

Gender relations are an extremely political area, particularly during times of conflict and turbulence. It is important that efforts to transform gender relations are not made in ways which ultimately serve to make women more vulnerable, by increasing gender-based conflict. However, equally it should again be emphasised that no intervention is gender neutral.

Drawing on Section 4 and the gender dimensions of conflict, it is possible to identify potential entry points for intervention in the four-phase framework. It is clear that it is always important to recognise that different groups - and men and women - have different interests. A key concept is that of accountability and the need to develop and foster mechanisms and organisations through which women can express their gendered needs and interests.

Run up to conflict

The run-up to conflict is characterised by the increasing militarisation of society, with military authorities or groups monopolising resources and power and society becoming politically and socially polarised. There may be displacement of populations and the erosion of human rights. Gender identities may also be polarised, and women's freedom of mobility and expression may be compromised. Pro-natalist policies may be adopted which also affect women's reproductive rights.

Key areas of concern in this phase include:

- the **violations of human rights**. Human rights violations may be gender specific - for example restrictions on women's freedoms and reproductive choice - or affect men and women in different ways. For instance, the arrest or killing of men results in a rising incidence of vulnerable female headed households.

- **Displacement**. Ethnic oppression and low-intensity fighting can lead to large-scale displacement of populations even before conflict has fully developed. It is important to have an analysis of the social, including gender, composition of displaced populations. Single women, children, the elderly and disabled are likely have the most difficulties in fleeing and in establishing a livelihood.

There are attempts to improve the identification of situations which are likely to result in conflict and seek means to offset conflict. According to the UNHCR, early warning is an aspect of preventative diplomacy and should, as such, be directed at the root causes of conflicts, going beyond the scope of humanitarian concerns alone. This involves the promotion of human rights, economic development, conflict resolution, the establishment of accountable political institutions and environmental protection. If true accountability is to be established and all levels of communities involved, it is clearly crucial that women's groups and interests are represented. Where these initiatives do exist, women are often active. In Sierra Leone, for example, the 'Women's Movement for Peace' have organised a number of meetings to discuss the practical design and application of conflict prevention strategies. Their action plan identified the areas of education, rehabilitation, advocacy, and documentation and research as particular areas of concern (Obibi, 1995: 46-7). Another example of such initiatives are the new women's organisations developing in Kosovo:

A major women's organisation is Motrat Qiriazi, established in 1995 under the sponsorship of Oxfam. The aim of the group is specifically for women to 'examine ideological parameters of their lives' (Motrat Qiriazi Leaflet). A central focus of their work is education, literacy, increasing the opportunities of children who are deprived educational services due to the current situation, and particularly in breaking attitudes which prevent girls from receiving education. The group based its projects in Has to counter oppressive patriarchal traditions there, including the practice of promising girls in marriage before they finish primary school. The group also supports skills training, particularly sewing courses. Although traditional and thus meeting notions of a 'legitimate' skill for women, sewing can offer women some income opportunities and does enable them to reduce household expenditure. **(Kosovo Case Study**

Development agencies should consider whether their activities reduce or increase the likelihood of conflict. For instance, it has been argued that the support which development agencies gave for communal work (*umuganda*) in Rwanda contributed to the creation of the *interahamwe* militias that played a central role in the genocide. Thus both a political and historical analysis of the situation is crucial. It is also important to recognise the ways in which agency activities can strengthen or weaken women's position and contribute to intra-household inequalities and conflict (African Rights, 1994; Adams and Bradbury, 1995: 40).

During the conflict

Interventions during conflicts occur at several different levels and include: the meeting of basic needs; mediation and negotiation and political considerations, promotion of justice and rights, development programmes, such as training and institution-building, physical rehabilitation, social rehabilitation and reconciliation. During conflicts, agencies have to be flexible and ready to adapt swiftly to people's changing needs. (Adams and Bradbury, 1995: 39-40)

Key gender considerations at this stage include:

- **Distribution.** It is crucial that in the fulfilment of basic needs and the provision of food, water, shelter and medical treatment, the question of both intra-household distribution and the specific vulnerabilities of female-headed households and other groups are addressed by the distribution mechanisms. An example of a programme which addressed these issues is ACORD's emergency distribution of tools and seeds in Gulu, Uganda. The *kenoor* (cooking fire) was used as the registration, thus ensuring that women, who did most of the agricultural work, received the tools. However an exception was made for single men who were also registered. (Adams and Bradbury, 1995: 45)

- **Protection** is also a fundamental basic need and the protection of refugee and displaced women is often overlooked. The UNHCR has brought out guidelines on the prevention and response to sexual violence against refugee women, which includes recommendations on the consultation of women over issues of camp security and the provision of counselling for victims of violence. However, the crucial issue remains the implementation of the guidelines, which is at least partially dependent on the employment and training of more female staff.

- **Supporting women's organisations.** The processes of mediation, negotiation and political attempts to institutionalise a peace process often occur in a way which further marginalises women and women's organisations. Although women are not necessarily inherently more peaceful than men and are also politically motivated, many women are active in seeking peace, often because conflict inhibits them from fulfilling their role as carers. Seeking peace is likely to include the promotion of a redistribution of power and the construction of new political procedures, for instance in the enforcement of cease-fires. It is important that, at this stage, the processes that led up to the conflict, the underlying causes and the culture of militarisation are addressed.

- **Human rights.** Women are often unaware of their human rights. Informing and educating women about their human rights and monitoring violations should be an integral part of the process of promoting justice and rights during war.

- **Supporting coping strategies.** Development work does not necessarily come to a halt during conflict and relief operations should be carried out with an eye to long-term development considerations. Here it is important to have an appreciation of the coping strategies which people adopt in times of crisis and to support them. It is also crucial to be aware of the options that are available to different social groups and genders, and the way in which the adopting of coping strategies can undermine long-term security. Thus, forms of assistance other than the provision of basic needs might be important, for instance inputs that support production or income-generating programmes. It is particularly important that the capabilities and vulnerabilities of women are addressed as they are largely responsible for meeting the consumption needs of households.

- **skills training.** In refugee situations, there is the potential for skills training and developing new mechanisms of income generation. Given the high percentages of adult women in many refugee populations, there is an opportunity to increase both their organisational and income-generating capacities, as was successfully done in Guatemalan refugee camps in Mexico. However, it is vital that gender-specific issues of protection and domestic workloads are addressed in order to enable women to participate in such programmes. If these programmes are to be successful, women need to be included at all stages of planning and programming.

- **Staff recruitment.** There is a tendency for local institutions to be undermined, not only by the direct impact of conflict but also by the way in which humanitarian assistance is delivered, often through expatriate staff and organisations. It is important that the capacity of local institutions is developed so that they will be able to participate in the rehabilitation and recovery. The dependence on expatriate staff is likely to inhibit the participation of women in programmes and planning, and local women, due to their lower levels of education are less likely than men to be employed by international agencies. If relief programmes are to be gender sensitive, they need to re-evaluate their criteria for the employment of staff and for the selection of partner organisations they work with so that women are not excluded.

The peace process

Key issue:

- **Representation.** As with the run-up to conflict and the conflict period, the effect of militarisation is often to further marginalise women. Thus, peace negotiations take place between authorities controlling different areas who do not necessarily have any accountability to the populations they control. However, peace, if it is to be sustainable, must be developed at a more grassroots level and, at this level, the participation of women has been significant. Women have been active in Latin America, for instance in insisting that peace should not be won at the cost of providing an amnesty to human rights abusers. Women, due to their cross-clan or

ethnic divisions, such as in Somalia, may be able to provide avenues for communication between disputing groups. There should be interventions that both support women's organisation and strengthen the leverage of women within households and communities.

The end of the conflict

Many conflicts have shown in recent years that long-lasting peace is difficult to achieve and is unlikely to be sustained if the underlying causes of the conflict are not addressed. Feminist theory and gender analysis has also questioned how relevant notions of peace and security are if women remain socially, economically and politically marginalised in times of peace and still vulnerable to violence. Whilst it is not within the mandate of development agencies to become arbiters of the distribution of political power and economic resources, there should be an awareness of the winners and losers in conflict situations and an attempt to redress some of these inequalities. This is vital if future conflict is to be averted. For example, ACORD has identified two vulnerable groups to work with in post-conflict Rwanda: single or widowed women who have no formal property rights and young people who lack land and who due to their lack of prospects were fertile recruiting grounds for the militias. (Adams and Bradbury, 1995: 58-9)

Post conflict interventions include dealing with practical problems of the return of refugees and the demilitarisation of armies, the rebuilding of infrastructure and re-establishment of services and restoring productive capacities. However, there is also a need to address the underlying factors which led to the conflict and to establish trust in the society and means of communication and negotiation which do not revolve around violence.

Reconstruction can be a key time for women, determining whether organisational, economic and productive skills they have developed during the conflict will be built on or whether the outcome of the conflict situation will be an increase in their workloads and an undermining of their status.

Key issues include:

- **security.** While full-scale conflict may have ended, there may be considerable tension and violence, with women, and particularly those without male protection, vulnerable to attack. This may be particularly the case with returning refugees.
- **access to resources.** With continuing scarcity of resources, care should be taken that women are not marginalised from rehabilitation projects and that they retain control those resources. There may also be opportunities to increase women's legal control over resources such as land
- **capacity building**. Rehabilitation should be a time of building skills and organisational capacity to ensure an ongoing peace, women are frequently excluded from these processes. Women who have had more prominent public roles during times of conflict, for instance fighting as soldiers, may find that there is an attempt, in times of peace an attempt to push them back into traditional roles. The women in Latin America who had filled a vacuum during the dictatorships, campaigning publicly for human rights, found it very difficult to negotiate the

process of democratisation and maintain their profile and influence. One factor which contributed to this was a shift in donor funding away from human rights and community groups towards officially registered political parties.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The increase in conflict and violence in the last twenty years, and the fact that the end
of the Cold War has prompted an escalation in violence, rather than its reduction,
provides a real challenge to development thinking and practice. It is becoming clear
that the assumption of a universal, linear global progress to economic development,
social justice and peace is not occurring and possibly will never be achieved. The
post-colonial heritage is one of discord and fragmentation whilst economic
development is only won at a cost. The causes of conflict have been traced to
constitutional crises, unequal development and the progressive economic and political
marginalisation of certain parts of the world. Feminists and those involved in gender
and development have been well aware for some time that the modernist model of
linear development does not match the experience of women across the world and that
frequently social and economic progress has been achieved at the cost of increasing
women's workloads and their marginalisation. Thus at a time of increasing concern
over conflict in the Third World and increasing recognition of the importance of
gender analysis in development, it is an opportune moment to examine conflict from a
gender and development perspective.

Both women and men are affected by conflicts which impinge on - or destroy - the
economic and social systems on which they depend, their human rights and their
emotional and psychological well-being. The ways in which conflict affects men and
women differently is dependant on their relative positions prior to conflict. Women as
a group are structurally disadvantaged in that they generally have less access to
resources than men, and have to carry the burden of reproductive work. Women's
human rights are often given less weight than those of men and women are often
excluded from or marginalised within national, local and household processes of
decision-making. Women are often economically and socially dependant on men and
therefore those women who lose the support and protection of men will be particularly
vulnerable.

The structurally disadvantaged position of women is underpinned by a system of
gender ideologies which define the appropriate behaviour of men and women and
their appropriate relative positions. Often conflict and the process of militarisation
leads to the increasing polarisation of definitions of masculinity and femininity, which
give both men and women specific vulnerabilities. The dominance of armies and the
military by men and the notion of masculinity which frames men as fighters and
protectors means that men generally suffer the highest casualties in war time. Civilian
men are targeted for attack because any man of combat age is regarded as a potential
fighter. Whilst women are not killed as often as men in conflict situations, they are
targeted for gender specific attacks, particularly sexual abuse. The human rights of
women may also be violated by their 'own side'. Women are often required to play a
symbolic role for their society, which subjects their behaviour to scrutiny, restricts
their rights to mobility and freedom and puts them at risk of attack.

In addition, those women who are not killed are faced with coping with the disruption
of conflict, often without men. Women, because of their culturally-assigned roles in
reproduction, frequently have to carry the largest burden of coping with the
deterioration in welfare services as a result of conflict. The division of labour between

men and women is unbalanced in many countries, with women responsible not only for domestic work, but also for a large proportion of agricultural production. If conflict leads to the death or flight of male adults, then women have to undertake that work which was formerly considered men's domain. This not only means increased work for women, but may also entail social disapproval for women who are perceived to be stepping beyond their proscribed roles. One product of war is often the centralisation of power, frequently in the hands of the military, at the same time as social organisation networks are disrupted and broken up. As a result, women and many men are excluded from decision-making processes, this may be particularly the case during the process of making peace between the warring parties - gender considerations are rarely on the agenda.

However, there may be ways in which the shifts in the division of labour and the changing gender roles and identities benefit some women. Women may gain status and new skills, or recognition of their skills through the coping strategies that they adopt. In some cases, liberating ideologies include attempts to reduce gender inequalities, through the inclusion of women in the political, military and economic arena.

Once the conflict is over, there is an opportunity for women to build on their experiences and develop new roles for themselves. However, there is also the risk that women may retain increased responsibilities without gaining increased access to resources and decision-making power. In addition, men may find themselves in a situation where they are unable to fulfil the role of provider and protector which is culturally ascribed to them and thus be unable to re-integrate into society, leading to increased violence. This may be particularly true of young men without land or other resources.

For NGOs and donor agencies who find that the development work that they have been undertaking is undermined by conflict, there are a series of issues that should be addressed in order that interventions both promote peace and promote the status of women.

These would include:
* **re-assessment of development aims** - questioning to what extent they could be understood as increasing instability.
* **gender analysis** of the situation

Translating a gender analysis of a conflict situation into policy and practice, taking account of the economic, political and historical complexities, is not a simple process. Within organisations, there may be many institutional barriers, related to staffing, funding procedures and organisational culture, which inhibit the implementation of gender policies - in both development and relief programmes. (Byrne with Baden, 1995) The best means for the introduction of gender analysis into responses to conflict is likely to differ by organisation. As yet there is limited research on gender and conflict and few attempts to analyse conflict from a gender perspective, which must be the first step.

Whilst this report is only the beginning of such a process, it suggests that some issues which are particularly significant for a gender analysis of conflict include:

In the run-up to conflict:
- human rights, including women's human rights;
- displacement of populations and other demographic factors which affect gender relations and the population sex-ratio

During conflict:
- support of coping strategies and awareness of gender differences in coping strategies
- protection and security, particularly for women and including human rights;
- support of women's organisations
- gender-sensitive mechanisms for the distribution of aid, and training;

During the peace process
- representation of women at peace negotiations
- development of wider civil society and social organisations

After the conflict
- enhancing general levels of security, particularly for women;
- building awareness of human rights, especially women's human rights;
- ensuring women's access to and control of resources during rehabilitation;
- supporting women's property rights

The linking of peace and the status of women should not be done in a simplistic manner. It is not as simple to say that the more power and influence women have the more peace there will be. Women should not be considered as inherently peaceful. However, an analysis of the processes of militarisation shows that it is dependant on particular notions of femininity and masculinity and on the oppression of women. Women cannot be equated with peace, but there cannot be meaningful peace in a society which oppresses and excludes women.

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APPENDIX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR AN IDS BRIEFING ON GENDER, CONFLICT AND DEVELOPMENT

'Making the powerless voiceless evokes conflicts'

Introduction

Vrouwenberaad Ontwikkelingssamenwerking is a network of gender experts in international cooperation in the Netherlands. About 35 organisations in the field of development cooperation, and research, lobby and education on international issues are among our members. Within our network there is a growing need for an analysis of conflict and development from a gender perspective. For this purpose Vrouwenberaad has started a project group which consists of members and external experts.

The goal of the analysis is:
- To use it as an input for a working conference on gender, conflict and development, to be held in November 1995
- Lobbying and education
- The formulation of recommendations for our member organisations, policy makers and the national government.

The issue

The world finds itself in an era of increasing political and social instability. Growing economic and social contrasts - caused by military expenditures, the low legitimacy of the state, (incited) ethnic tensions, ideological changes, the intervention of international financial institutions, and as a result of trade barriers - are breeding grounds for conflict and evoke an increase of violence within many societies. The neglect of the needs of population groups within society creates unrest, evokes protest and (armed) resistance, which the groups who are in power try to stifle.

Conflicts have an impact at all levels of society, at the macro and micro level, the political, economical, and social-cultural level. There are strong indications that e.g. an increase of violence in society has a repercussion at the domestic level. Today, we are faced with over 160 armed conflicts worldwide. Most of the wars are internal conflicts which are destructive and deadly for men, women and children. Moreover, these conflicts evoke refugee flows of mainly women and children. In a number of conflicts interventions are made by foreign military forces which have their own political and economic interests (US and NATO in Kuwait), or as peace keepers (India in Sri Lanka, the UN in Somalia), with violent effects on the population.

Many (mis)conceptions on conflicts exist, which determine the discourse on war and peace.

Conflicts are not necessarily decided by the use of weapons. The ending of an armed conflict does not automatically imply the existence of peace. Conflicts are not necessarily negative: they indicate that one cannot continue any further along the old

lines, and that changes are called for. Gender relations and activities change in times of conflict. Women's and men's roles at different stages of a conflict, which influence their position in society at all levels.

Guidelines for this briefing
In this briefing we focus on the changing role and position of women in a society which faces an armed conflict, taking into account:

1. The political-historical process of four different phases of a conflict;
The phases in a conflict we distinguish for this briefing comprehend a) the process leading up to the conflict, b) during the conflict, c) during the peace process and d) in the rehabilitation and reconstruction phase.

It is acknowledged that this framework of the four phases of a conflict is an analytical one, whereas in reality these phases overlap and co-exist.

Using a process oriented approach for the briefing requests a thorough insight in the political-history of a conflict and the need to reveal women's role and contribution in this history. The required insight in the recent history has to take into account the anthrophological and traditional background of a nation and its ethnic groups.

2. The economic, social-cultural/ideological, legal/human rights and
    personal/psychic dimensions;
The changing roles with regard to these dimensions can result in the impairment/victimisation as well as the empowerment of women.

3. The role of self-organisation and outside interventions;
The change in women's roles is affected by active self-organisation of women themselves and by outside interventions.

Examples of - foreign - interventions are military intervention, economic or development assistance, humanitarian aid, political pressure, inter-religious dialogue, etc.

4. The international, regional, national, local and domestic level;
Women's self-organisation and the outside interventions can be analysed at an international, regional, local and domestic level.

Main Questions and Case Studies

The aim of this briefing is to develop a vision on the relation between gender, conflict and development on the basis of the described guidelines. We request to make a general analysis first, and subsequently, to focus on several cases. On the basis of this analysis we expect you to draw some general conclusions.

Main questions:
1. How gender relations affected in the four phases of an armed conflict?
2. Which strategies could be pursued to enhance women's bargaining power in decision-making processes in conflicts and peace negotiations?

Case studies
The case studies are selected on the basis of the analytical framework of four different phases of a conflict, a regional division and the available expertise in the working group 'Gender, Conflict and Development'.

Pre-conflict	KOSOVA
Conflict	SOMALIA
	ALGERIA
Peace process	GUATEMALA/SOUTH MEXICO
Post conflict	ERITREA/ETHIOPIA
All phases	CAMBODIA
	RWANDA

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