



Gender Audit of the Peace,
Security and Cooperation
Framework for the
Democratic Republic of Congo
and the Region

Mireia Cano Vinas
October 2015

International Alert.



Kvinna till Kvinna

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This report was made possible by the generous support of the Government of Sweden through the Tushiriki Wote project, the European Union through the Pamoja kwa Amani project and The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The contents are the responsibility of International Alert and The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Swedish Government, the European Union or the Government of the Netherlands.

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Design: Dahlbäck/Söderberg
Cover photo and all except on page 39, taken by Cato Lein.



Acknowledgements

As the external consultant for this gender audit, I wish to express my appreciation for the constructive and open nature of the dialogue with all the people whom I met in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). I would also like to thank the staff from International Alert and Kvinna till Kvinna who facilitated the evaluation process at every stage by allocating time, organising transport, accommodation, administrative support and office space, and contacting key informants to schedule interviews and follow up.

Mireia Cano Vinas

Executive Summary

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

The UN-sponsored Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework (PSCF) was signed in the context of the 23 March Movement (M23) crisis. Emerging from a failed peace agreement between the National Congress for the Defence of the People (Conseil National de Défense du Peuple, CNDP) and the government in 2009, the M23 seized Goma in November 2012 despite the presence of the UN peacekeeping mission troops in the city; this put pressure on the national government in Kinshasa to negotiate at the so-called Kampala talks. On 24 February 2013, while the Kampala talks were at an impasse, 11 African states signed the peace framework (with two joining later). The PSCF requires the Congolese government to carry out key governance reforms, commits states in the region to stop backing rebellions in DRC, and encourages the international community to renew commitments to DRC.

About the research

The Terms of Reference for this gender audit called for an analysis from a gender perspective of the development, implementation and monitoring of the PSCF. The evidence collected should be used as a basis for advocacy actions, particularly in connection with the 15th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in October 2015.

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

An analysis of the PSCF reveals a lack of a gender perspective in the content of the framework itself. It should be noted also that the process that led to the signing of the PSCF lacked any formal representation of women. The six engagements for DRC comprise the suite of activities that the Congolese state should already be implementing to achieve an accountable, effective and responsible state and to address the root causes of persistent high levels of insecurity (namely in the eastern parts of the country). However, without participation of civil society and women's organisations, analysis

of the root causes will fail to take into account the link between gender inequality and conflict.

Analysis of the PSCF

The PSCF was called the 'Framework of Hope' because it provided "what we hadn't had for many years: the semblance of a peace process, with outside monitors and clear benchmarks and goals". Interviewees rated the current level of implementation of the PSCF in DRC at between two and seven (on a scale from one to ten), with most agreeing that it was under an average of five. In terms of progress, interviewees recognised the defeat of M23, the establishment of the national demobilisation programme (on paper), the progress on supply chain due diligence in the mining sector, a slew of laws passed on elections and security sector reform, and the nomination of a special adviser to the president on combating sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and the recruitment of children, among other actions. Sceptics argue that these measures would have been accomplished with or without the PSCF and contend that there has been little progress on key PSCF objectives, mainly due to a lack of real dialogue and disagreement among Congolese political forces over key aspects of the reform agenda.

At the national level, the PSCF put in place a National Monitoring Mechanism (Mécanisme Nationale de Suivi et de Supervision, MNS) in charge of monitoring the indicators developed for the national commitments. Despite formal representation of the official representative of civil society in the redaction committee, civil society has been involved in a consultative role rather than a participatory one, and

the poor communication on these benchmarks with civil society and the population more broadly is one factor that explains the little progress shown by the PSCF so far. Without further involvement, local actors in DRC continue their peacebuilding work but lack the information needed to hold their government to account on progress regarding the PSCF national commitments that can translate into real security.

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

In conclusion, while the PSCF correctly identifies two key drivers of the conflict – foreign interference in DRC and the dysfunction of Congolese state institutions – it has not yet achieved its goals. The PSCF has helped to focus attention on a core set of issues and to create a set of common benchmarks for progress at the national and regional levels. At a time when pre-electoral dynamics risk generating instability and more insecurity in DRC and beyond, the PSCF should be prioritised and used as the international community's most powerful tool to help DRC's state and society to address

the identified core domestic drivers of continued instability, while recognising that doing so will require the increased will of the DRC government to address these issues.

This gender audit describes a set of opportunities for engagement based on an analysis of gender integration in the process and content of the PSCF.

Key recommendations

The main recommendations based on the research findings are as follows.

Redefining gender in peacebuilding

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

Concrete steps would involve the following:

- ensuring in every text that women and men are conceptualised as productive contributors to peace;
- using gender-sensitive language and avoiding reference to the terms 'women and children', 'women and youth' or the association of women with marginalised categories;
- providing for training on gender awareness and sensitivity to all members of key bodies.

These measures would allow for a more nuanced and better analysis of the dynamics in eastern DRC, enabling more targeted activities – for example, not just using a blanket 'women and youth' approach, but looking in a more detailed way at particular vulnerabilities as well as capacities. Such an approach would also help to change expectations on masculinities and femininities that perpetuate inequality and exclusion.

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

Congolese women and men participating in women's groups and civil society organisations have worked to broker peace and to enhance the resilience of communities during continuing armed conflict; however, this involvement did not result in an invitation to the PSCF signing in Addis Ababa in 2013. As one informant to this report bluntly put it: "It doesn't matter if there are women or men or dogs around the table, it's about heads of state dealing with state relations." However, evidence shows that men and women bring different issues to the table – therefore, it does matter.

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

Concrete steps would involve the following:

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

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

Ensuring continued technical assistance for gender responsiveness

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

Concrete steps at the national level point to the need for a detailed mapping and understanding of local conditions involving the active participation of women and men before programmes are designed, formulated or implemented. At the same time, it is crucial to reinforce the Ministry of Gender so it can effectively lead the process of monitoring and implementing the PSCF. At the regional level, in the same way that the World Bank and the OESG have established a facility for technical assistance to ensure that projects to be implemented in the region are conflict sensitive, technical assistance should be provided to ensure that projects related to the regional integration objectives of the PSCF are gender responsive.

Identifying concerted efforts needed for sustained change

Despite many efforts to promote UNSCR 1325 and to draft national and regional action plans, the content has not had any concrete impact on the current peace framework. To achieve any sustained change, a number of factors causing violence need to be addressed to avoid escalation and prevent re-occurrence. These factors include youth unemployment, bad

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governance, resource-based conflicts, environmental degradation, economic hardship and the proliferation of small arms. For each of these factors, gender considerations need to be analysed, understood and taken into account for an appropriate response.

Civil society groups, especially women peacebuilders at the local level, are the main drivers of the UNSCR 1325 agenda. This factor must be recognised in all policy and programming by the Congolese government and by all signatories to the PSCF, as well as by international organisations and

donors. The review of indicators for the International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy (ISSSS) should ensure that sex and age disaggregated data allow for measurement of the impact on women and men. In addition, donors should make funding conditional on a gender-responsive implementation of the PSCF national and regional benchmarks in line with internationally agreed commitments under SCR 1325 and related resolutions on women, peace and security.



Left

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

Right

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



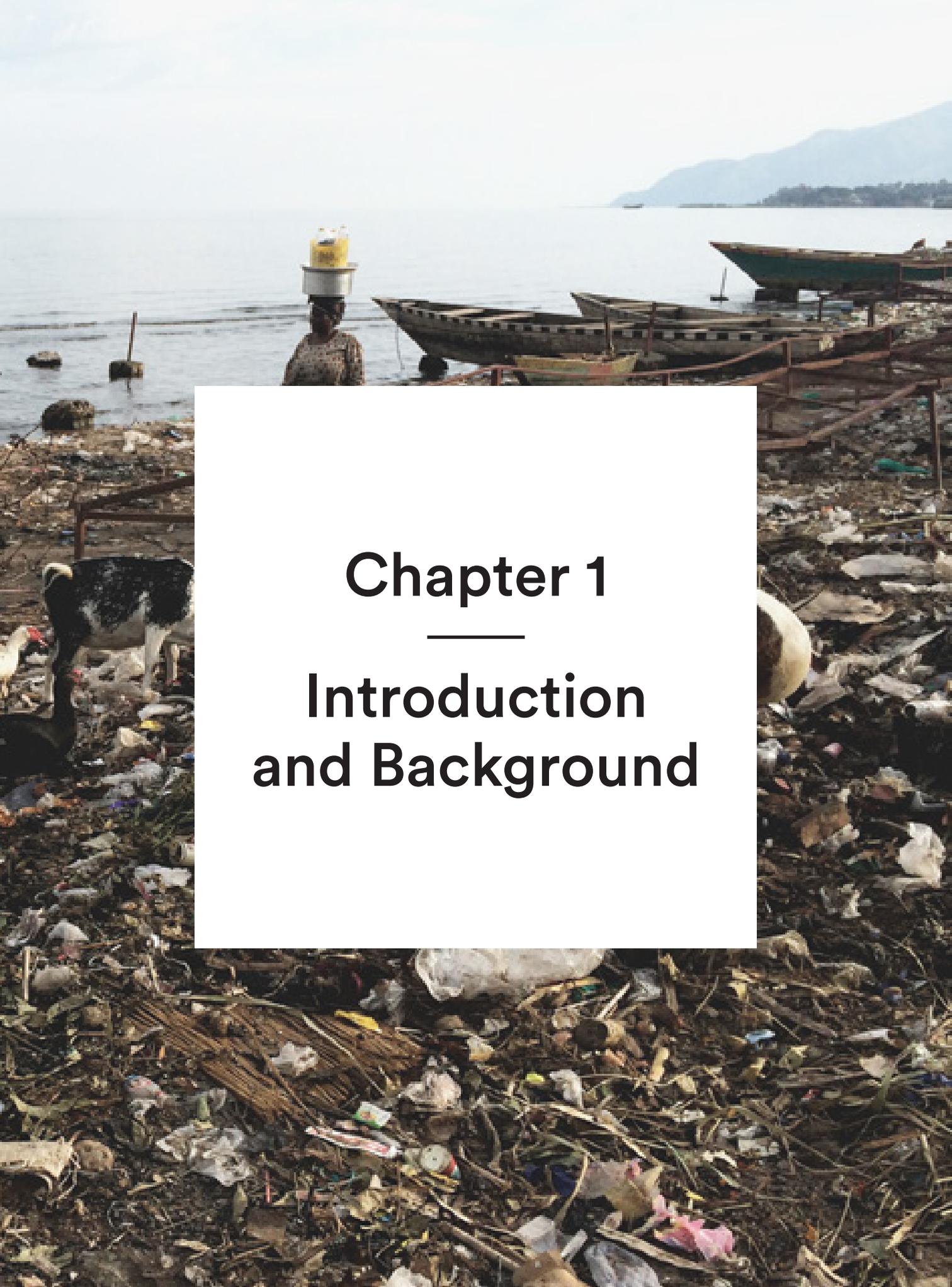
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List of Abbreviations

AFEM	South Kivu Women's Media Association	PSCF	Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework
AU	African Union	ROM	Regional Oversight Mechanism
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	RRSSJ	Réseau pour la Réforme du Secteur de Sécurité et de Justice
CEPGL	Communauté Economique des Pays des Grands Lacs	SADC	Southern African Development Community
CNDP	Conseil National de Défense du Peuple	SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa	SOFAD	Solidarité des Femmes Activistes pour la Défense des Droits Humains
CORDAID	Catholic Organisation for Relief and Development Aid	SOFEPADI	Solidarité Féminine pour la Paix et le Développement Intégrale
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration	SRSR	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
DDR/RR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration/Repatriation and Resettlement	SSR	Security Sector Reform
DFID	Department for International Development	STAREC	Stabilization and Reconstruction Plan for Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo	UN	United Nations
EU	European Union	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
FARDC	Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo	UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
FAS	Femmes Africa Solidarité	WILPF	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
FIB	Force Intervention Brigade		
GII	Gender Inequality Index		
ICGLR/CIRGL	International Conference on the Great Lakes Region/Conférence Internationale sur la Région des Grands Lacs		
IDP	Internally Displaced Person		
(I)NGO	(International) Non-Governmental Organisation		
ISSSS	International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy		
KII	Key Informant Interview		
LGTBI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Transgender and/or Intersex		
M23	23 March Movement		
MNS	Mécanisme Nationale de Suivi et de Supervision		
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo		
OSESG	Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region		





Chapter 1

Introduction and Background

I. Introduction and Background

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

On 24 February 2013, 11 African states signed the UN-sponsored Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework (PSCF)² for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)³ and the region (with two additional signatories afterwards).⁴ This framework agreement requires the Congolese government to carry out key governance reforms, committing states in the region to stop backing rebellions in DRC and encouraging the international community to renew its commitments to DRC.

The Terms of Reference for this gender audit called for an analysis from a gender perspective of the development, implementation and monitoring of the PSCF. The evidence collected should be used as a basis for advocacy actions, particularly in connection with the 15th anniversary of the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325⁵ on Women, Peace and Security in October 2015.

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

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

insecurity in North Kivu, South Kivu and Oriental and northern parts of Katanga Province. Army operations supported by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in DRC (MONUSCO) struggle to dismantle these groups, even after a Force Intervention Brigade increased the UN's military strength. This continued insecurity has its roots in the country's political history and is fuelled by a particularly unstable regional context.⁶ In DRC as a whole, democratic reforms struggle to take hold and national institutions continue to function in a way that shows scant regard for the needs of Congolese citizens.

The PSCF was signed in the context of the 23 March Movement (M23) crisis: emerging from a failed peace agreement between the National Congress for the Defence of the People (Conseil National de Défense du Peuple, CNDP) and the government in 2009, the M23 seized Goma in November 2012, despite the presence of the UN peacekeeping mission troops in the city; this put pressure on the national government in Kinshasa to negotiate. In the Kampala Peace Talks that followed, it became clear that a broader and more inclusive regional peace process was vital to address core drivers of conflict in DRC, particularly along its eastern borders. When the M23 was finally defeated at the end of 2013,⁷ with the conditions underlined in the Nairobi Declaration, it was perceived as a positive step towards regional peace and stability.

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

The PSCF established a Regional Oversight Mechanism (ROM), known as the ‘11+4 mechanism’, which involves

Figure 1
Summary of the PSCF
by the Office of the
Special Envoy of the
Secretary-General
for the Great Lakes
Region of Africa⁸

the country leaders and the leaders of four regional and international organisations.⁹ On 23 September 2013, the ROM adopted a series of regional benchmarks and follow-up measures that were translated into an action plan for 2014 with specific activities, timelines, lead implementers and funding arrangements. The DRC government also put in place a National Monitoring Mechanism (Mécanisme National de Suivi et de Supervision, MNS) tasked with monitoring the indicators developed for the national commitments. To coordinate and assess the implementation of national and regional commitments, the UN Security Council appointed Mary Robinson as the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes,¹⁰ with a focus on women’s empowerment and regional economic integration as two key areas linking security with wider development efforts. Robinson’s current successor is Said Djinnit.

The main stabilization/peace architecture in DRC has different levels and focuses (see page 36). In order to implement the PSCF, MONUSCO – present in DRC since 2002 and operating with a \$1.4 billion budget – received a wider mandate through UNSCR 2098.¹¹ This mandate included the deployment of the first-ever UN offensive force, the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB). MONUSCO was also requested to support the government in developing a comprehensive disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration/repatriation and resettlement (DDR/RR) programme; in giving a new impetus to security sector reform (SSR); and in supporting the government Stabilization and Reconstruction Plan for Eastern DRC (STAREC) and its provincial plans through the revised International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy (ISSSS) 2013–2017.¹²

Figure 1

For DRC

- To deepen security sector reform.
- To consolidate state authority, particularly in eastern DRC.
- To make progress on decentralisation.
- To further economic development.
- To further structural reform of public institutions.
- To further reconciliation.

For the region

- To respect the sovereignty of neighbouring countries in terms of international affairs and territorial integrity.
- To neither tolerate nor provide assistance to armed groups.
- To strengthen regional cooperation, including economic integration and judicial cooperation.
- To neither harbour nor provide protection to any person accused of war crimes or crimes against humanity.

For the international community

- For the UN Security Council to remain engaged in seeking long-term stability for DRC.
- For bilateral partners to renew their commitment to remain engaged with the region.
- To support economic integration and to revitalise the economic community of the Great Lakes countries.
- To review the United Nations Organization Mission in DRC (MONUSCO).
- To appoint a UN Special Envoy to foster durable solutions.



When the rainy season comes, it does so with a vengeance. Streets and roads transform into small rivers, and it becomes essential to take off one's shoes and wade to school. It is not a certainty that girls are permitted to attend school. Many have to stay home and tend to the household.



1.2 Gender, Peace and Security

For the purposes of this gender audit and in line with United Nation's definition¹³, gender refers to the socially given attributes, roles, activities, responsibilities and needs connected to being men (masculine) and women (feminine) in a given society at a given time, and as a member of a specific community within that society. This gender audit also adopts a 'gender-relational' approach, which is, on the one hand, broader in the sense that it moves away from equating gender with women (and girls) and, on the other hand, deeper in that it examines the interplay between gender and other identity markers such as age, social class, sexuality, disability, ethnic or religious background, marital status and urban or rural setting. Peacebuilding can be more effective if built on an understanding of how gendered identities are constructed through the societal power relations between and among women, men, girls, boys and members of sexual and gender minorities.

In terms of defining peace, it is clear that all PSCF stakeholders interviewed give priority to the reform of the security sector and the consolidation of state authority. However, this report, in line with Kvinna till Kvinna's work on integrated security,¹⁴ highlights also the inextricable links between personal, economic and social security. As noted by the former US Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues, Melanne Verwee:¹⁵ "The assessments (by women) are often based on their personal experiences and the reality of their lives, while the DRC government places aspects of social and economic development of the PSCF at the bottom of the priority list."

There is strong evidence that the gender norms that underpin gender inequality can drive conflict and violence, particularly where militarised notions of masculinity are prevalent.¹⁶ Women's organisations from around the world bear witness to how militarisation is generating a climate that strengthens traditional gender stereotypes regarding what is perceived as masculine and feminine, making efforts to increase gender equality more difficult. The masculine stereotype maintains a view of men as warriors and women as victims to be protected. The protective man's task is to fight and sacrifice himself for his family to protect them from external threats.¹⁷

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

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

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

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

Nevertheless, in a study of 585 peace agreements signed between 1990 (before UNSCR 1325) and 2010, only 16% of peace agreements contained references to women. However, references to women have increased significantly since the passing of UNSCR 1325, from 11% to 27% of agreements. References to women are qualitatively often poor, constituting scattered references to women, sometimes contravening provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and only on rare occasions illustrating good practice.¹⁸

An emerging shift¹⁹ from a Women, Peace and Security framework to a Gender, Peace and Security framework at the policy level is reflected in UNSCR 2106²⁰ and in the G8 Declaration on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict.²¹ Both mention male survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and call for an engagement of men and boys, along with women and girls, in the prevention of SGBV. As much as continued support is needed to prevent, mitigate and respond to the massive scale of sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence (GBV) against women and girls in DRC,²² further attention is required to recognise the militarisation of men as an egregious form of GBV, or as Chris Dolan²³ recently questioned: “How are we to qualify what happens to the men and boys who, in addition to purposive emasculation and attacks on sexual identity through the use

of sexual violence, are, to borrow a phrase, ‘disproportionately affected’ by landmines, abduction/military conscription and forcible recruitment, gender-specific massacres, and being forced to commit atrocities against others (with all the resultant psychological damage to themselves)?”

Peace agreements document consensus between warring parties in an attempt to resolve the conflict and establish politics as an alternative to violence. Therefore, inclusion in peace agreement texts is an important starting point for achieving other political, legal and social gains for women²⁴ and men, including members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or intersex (LGBTI) community. Nevertheless, in DRC, women (particularly those outside the elite in Kinshasa and even more so those living in rural areas) remain marginalised from decision-making and political participation, including from peacebuilding efforts due to the range of factors summarised below. Moreover, certain forms of masculinities as drivers of violence and inequality in society are not seriously addressed, while the majority of men are also marginalised from processes of political participation. In addition, LGBTI persons tend to conform to the norm or remain ‘invisible’ to avoid discrimination and possible violence.

A brief context analysis

Context of insecurity and instability
The DRC context previously described contributes to perpetuating gender inequalities and limits the opportunities for all, but particularly for women and girls. The Gender Inequality Index²⁵ ranks the country 147 out of 152. The World Bank reports²⁶ that 63.6% of the total population in DRC and 61.2% of

all women are below the poverty line, facing limited access to basic needs, resources and social services.

Poor governance and weak state presence

The prevailing form of governance in DRC is extremely patriarchal, personalised and centralised, as well as centred on networks of patronage. This is a form of rule that preys on public funds, siphoning them off to the various clients of those in power and undermining state institutions by favouring the creation of shadowy private systems of governance where decisions are not taken by the relevant ministries but behind the scenes. Ethnic belonging is of great importance in this context, as it is the first level at which relationships are formed. The way in which the political system operates often pits communities directly against one another, at the risk of increasing tensions and causing violence.²⁷ This form of governance reinforces those already in power. Exclusion from power also pertains to women, as the majority of those in power are men.²⁸ Poverty and corruption are massive obstacles to women's participation at any level of power, as are the lack of financial means and the prevailing corruption.²⁹

Persistence of socio-cultural norms that perpetuate gender inequality

Available data suggest the widespread persistence of beliefs and attitudes that view women and girls as inferior and that perpetuate traditional ideas of gender roles. These norms place the man in a position of authority in the household, giving him control over decisions and assets, and women are seen as inferior and as responsible for domestic and care duties in the household. Such norms are transmitted to boys and girls at an early age, and

both men and women should have a role to play in challenging them.

Existence of discriminatory legislation and lack of application of more gender-equitable laws and policies³⁰

The national legislative framework to support gender equality has been strengthened in DRC over the last decade, but there are still some laws in need of reform and others in need of harmonisation (i.e. with the Constitution)³¹ as well as a huge implementation gap. The 2006 Constitution affirms the equal rights of men and women and the 2006 law against sexual violence provides a formal definition of rape, which includes both sexes and all forms of penetration.³² DRC has also ratified the CEDAW (1986) and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2009). Regarding UNSCR 1325, DRC adopted a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security in 2010, and reviewed it in 2013.³³ One of the biggest challenges in DRC is the weak implementation of these laws and instruments due to severe political, capacity and resource constraints, including in the Ministry of Gender, Family and Children.

Discrimination against LGBTI people

Although there is no law against homosexuality in DRC, people behave as if it was illegal. Moreover, LGBTI Congolese are extremely vulnerable to abuse, which is fuelled by a history of discrimination, disempowerment and stigma.³⁴ They are often rejected by their family, assaulted, arrested, raped or threatened, with few organisations in place to support them. Therefore, LGBTI people keep a low profile, often outwardly conforming to the norm (by being married and having

children, for example). A draft bill has also been prepared that would criminalise homosexuality and, should it be discussed and passed, it would increase discrimination against this community.³⁵

Hegemonic view of masculinity

A recent study on masculinities by UN Women DRC and the Swedish Embassy in Kinshasa³⁶ revealed that, in the collective imagination of the people interviewed, men are imbued with the characteristics that are associated with a hegemonic view of masculinity. These characteristics are exerted by men not only on women, but also on other men who are in 'subordinate' or less powerful positions.

1.3 Methodology

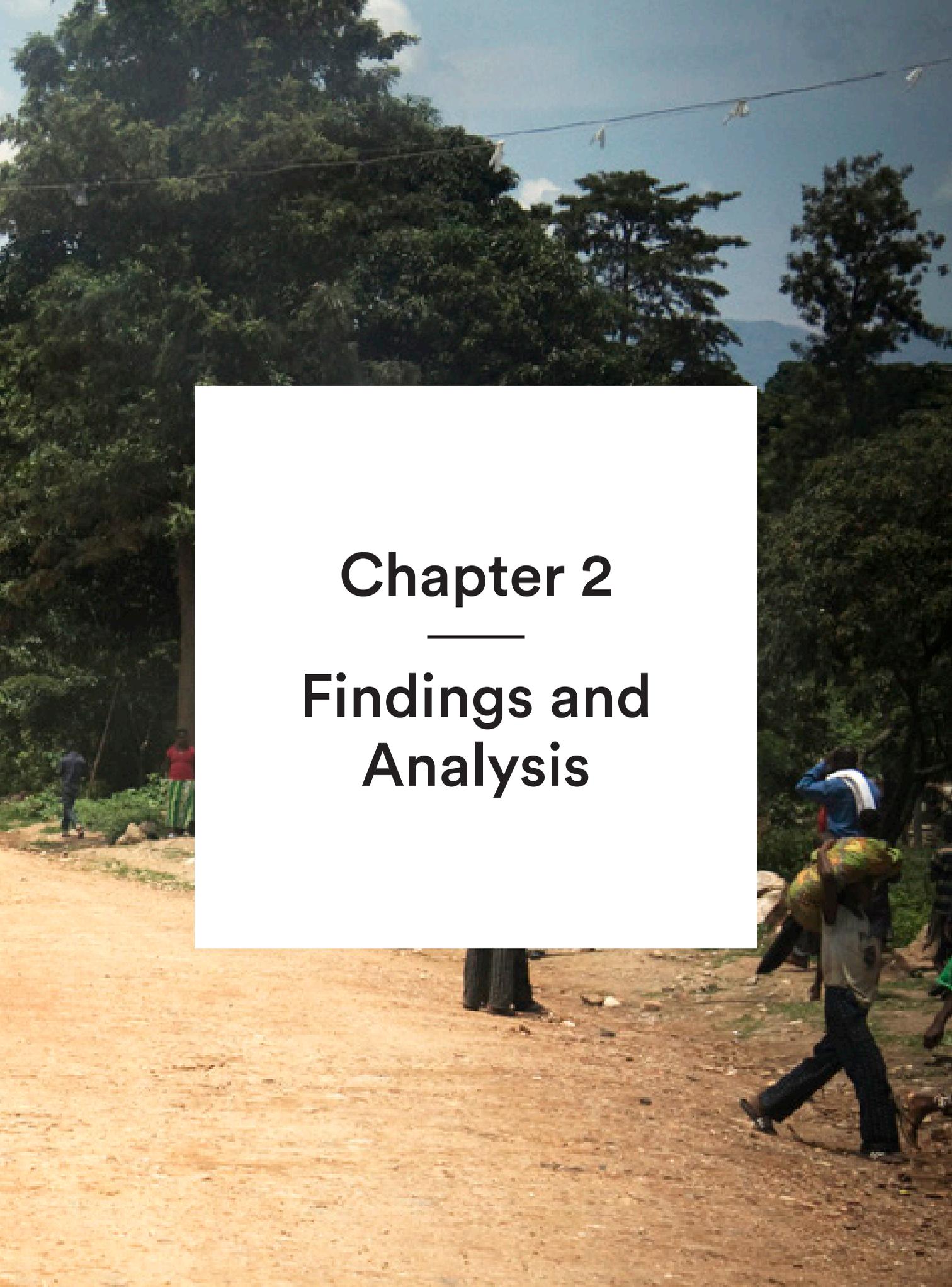
The gender audit outlined in this report builds on earlier work by Kvinna till Kvinna³⁷ and International Alert.³⁸ This audit was conducted over a period of 30 days between August and October 2015. A two-week visit to Gisenyi (Rwanda) and Bukavu, Goma and Kinshasa (DRC) complemented the literature review with key informant interviews (KIIs). There were a total of 55 informants (23 men and 32 women) from government, civil society, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), the UN and donors in DRC (see list of contacts in Annex I – note that the role of regional organisations was not assessed for this report). Some stakeholders who reside in other countries or were absent during the field visit were contacted via Skype or telephone. Many other people, groups and institutions were not contacted due to a lack of time or access: for example, the millions of displaced women and men who bear the brunt of cyclical conflicts, the demobilised combatants

and their dependants, the survivors of GBV (including sexual violence), the customary chiefs and the religious leaders – many of whom could play a much greater role in promoting gender equality than they currently do. Despite the relatively limited time spent in DRC and the region, the consultant feels that sufficient data were gathered to undertake an informed and credible analysis.

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

The consultant incorporated all responses recorded during the interviews into an Excel evidence matrix tool to collate and analyse data from various sources. The report was structured by identifying emerging themes that were largely grouped under the original question-based structure: context, implementation and monitoring, and coordination, with cross-cutting issues in each of the sections.





Chapter 2

Findings and Analysis

2. Findings and Analysis

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

“It’s not the government who’s pushing women to take part in peacebuilding efforts; it’s the suffering that pushes them”.³⁹

Gender is not a new concept in development and peacebuilding in DRC and the region.⁴⁰ However, in terms of the way in which institutions and organisations implement ‘gender’ programmes and policies, gender equates to women only. Women in DRC continue to be defined as mothers or in relation to male family members rather than being represented as essential beings.⁴¹ They are often portrayed as poor, rural and vulnerable (i.e. passive) victims, particularly victims of sexual violence. As victims, they are in need of assistance and unable to do anything for themselves due to lack of education, socio-cultural patterns that oppress them, patriarchal institutions that exclude them and national laws that do not favour them – or else, when they do, they are not fully implemented.

This description of women as objects of charity does not include their active role in either peace or conflict. Women can be frontline defenders.⁴² For example, in the case of the Congolese women who were a small minority in the Sun City talks in 2002, they came from opposing political parties and from civil society, forming a women’s caucus to work together and influence the debates and content of the agreement. They did this by forming a human chain blocking the exits of the committee room until a deal was signed. Women can also be

perpetrators of violence, instigators and enablers. For example, one interviewee mentioned “the wives of armed men who do not want them to demobilise, as it might be the only source of livelihood”.⁴³

An analysis of the PSCF text reveals a lack of gender perspective: the language is not gender-sensitive; references to displaced persons do not take into account the fact that the majority of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) are women and children; the differential impact of the conflict on women and men is not reflected; and the contributions of civil society and women’s organisations to peacebuilding are not portrayed either. The PSCF does not mention the problem of militarised masculinities, and, although sexual violence is mentioned once in paragraph three of the agreement, it is described as an act rather than a crime.

The process that led to the signing of the framework agreement also lacked any formal representation of women: all 11 signatories of the PSCF were men, and there was only one woman out of four witnesses.⁴⁴ The few women from civil society had observer status with no decision-making power, despite the fact that many women and men have been working and continue to work for peace in their communities.

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

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

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

Some of these groups also act as conflict mediators. They conduct participatory action research to find out who is causing insecurity and how they can be approached. After the first contact is made, the researchers ask for a private appointment. This usually occurs at a place agreed by the people involved, where they do not fear any safety risk: “We need to ensure that the person invited is safe, even if he’s the enemy – our goal is to dialogue about how they can lay down their weapons and contribute to peace.”

SOFAD also organises ‘Tribunes d’Expression Populaire’. It usually invites everyone in the village to a cultural event with SOFAD All Stars, a music and theatre group that relays messages about women, peace and security. During the event, members of local groups are invited to the stage, giving them the opportunity to exchange experiences with their community leaders.

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

The lack of gender integration in the PSCF can only be identified through an analysis of the context in which it

was signed. As outlined earlier, on 20 November 2012, Goma was seized by the M23, as MONUSCO proved unable to defend the city and the national army (Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo, FARDC) fled. On their way, some of these army troops reportedly raped more than 200 women and girls⁴⁵ in Minova and neighbouring villages. Therefore, the date 20 November 2012 has come to symbolise the weak capacity of the Congolese state: six years after the first free elections and nine years after the Sun City peace agreement, the Congolese state showed its incapacity to restore its authority and to build a solid and cohesive army. Beyond the escalation of violence in the east, the PSCF (by not mentioning the M23 or any other armed groups) “has grander ambitions than just dealing with this recent outbreak. It wants to tackle the unfinished business of the Lusaka-Sun City peace process (1999–2006) and address the root causes of violence in the region. It sees these as the failure to build strong, accountable institutions in the Congo; and the persistent meddling of the region in the east of the country”.⁴⁶ The six engagements for DRC summarise everything that, after 40 years of independence, the Congolese state should do to end the root causes of insecurity. However, without the participation of civil society and women’s organisations, the analysis of the root causes misses the link between gender inequality and conflict.



Left

The electric mains in Uvira has a life of its own. It often switches off during daylight hours, but power outages during the evening and night are also common. Many families have no electricity at home. The women are responsible for fetching and transporting the water from communal taps in the city.

Right

The women's movement in Congo has grown significantly and become more visible during the early 2000s. The focal point is the question of peace in order to combat violence against women and ensure that more women participate in political decision-making. Consolatrice Bukuru is one of many young women who have chosen to engage in this fight.



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

At the national level

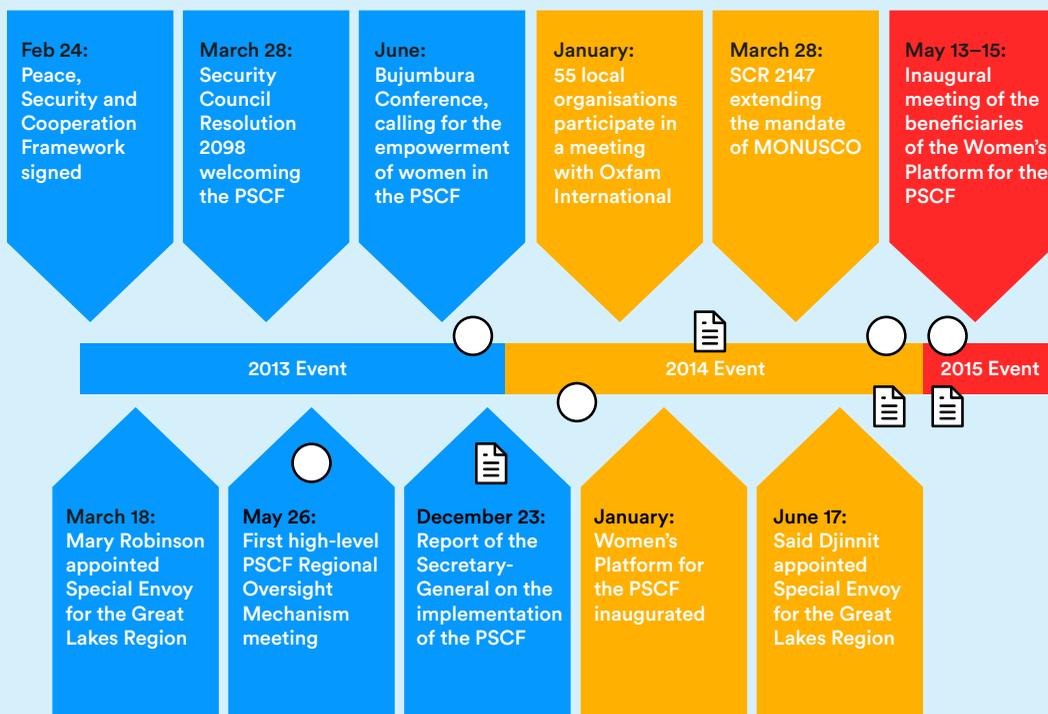
“The PSCF created a very cumbersome bureaucracy that appeared more preoccupied with establishing long lists of metrics and objectives than with getting the job done”.⁴⁷

The PSCF was called the ‘Framework of Hope’ because it provided “what

we hadn’t had for many years: the semblance of a peace process, with outside monitors and clear benchmarks and goals”.⁴⁸ Interviewees rated the current level of implementation of the PSCF by the government in DRC at between two and seven (on a scale from one to ten), mostly agreeing that it was under an average of five. In terms of progress, interviewees recognised the defeat of the M23, the establishment of the national demobilisation programme (on paper), the progress on supply chain due diligence in the mining sector, a slew of laws passed on elections and security sector reform, and the

Figure 2
Summary of events that have taken place since the signing of the PSCF and that are analysed in this section, 2013–2015

Figure 2



○ Indicates an ROM meeting

📄 Indicates a report by the Secretary-General on the PSCF

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

The MNS (national monitoring mechanism) and benchmarking process is controlled from Kinshasa. The MNS has two organisms: a steering committee chaired by the president and comprising the prime minister and the ministers of foreign affairs, national defence, interior and security, justice, budget and finance; and an executive committee led by the National Coordinator Francois Mwamba and two deputy coordinators (one of whom is the only female member of the MNS). However, the foreseen group of experts was not established. The planned conseil consultative was not established, which would have allowed representatives of women's organisations and the youth to be included, with the objective of "formulating observations on the functioning of the MNS and making useful recommendations on the implementation of reforms".⁴⁹ Therefore, despite the formal representation of one official representative of civil society in the redaction committee for the benchmarks, civil society has had a very limited consultative role rather than a participatory one, and the poor communication on these benchmarks with civil society and the population more broadly is one factor that explains the little progress shown by the PSCF so far.⁵⁰ Without further involvement, local actors in DRC continue their peacebuilding work

but lack the information needed to hold their government to account on progress regarding the PSCF national commitments, which could translate into real security.

The matrix for the DRC national PSCF engagements was established during a long and complex process of over two years. It has 46 benchmarks with 247 indicators for the monitoring and implementation of necessary reforms. These comprise no more than 10 indicators tracking gender-related issues – although these are not strictly gender-sensitive indicators because they do not require sex and age disaggregation of data or do not measure changes in male and female populations over time (see Figure 3). While the matrix can be considered poor in terms of gender inclusion, the scattered references to women, youth and civil society can be read as an official recognition so that these actors can advance their priorities. None of the PSCF-related documents reviewed for this gender audit dealt with the (gendered) category of 'youth' in any depth beyond its use in the phrase 'women and youth'.

In May 2015, a three-day seminar was attended by members of government, the diplomatic corps, development partners, civil society representatives, members of the private sector, confessional organisations, representatives of the UN system in DRC and the sectoral thematic groups in order to narrow the existing benchmarks down to 81 priorities and assign a corresponding budget for 2016. Despite a good start on the first page of the associated document, which mentions the army's (FARDC) policy action plan for combating sexual violence and prioritising capacity strengthening to provide security around the elections and ensure that

the police take gender into account, the rest of the document mentions gender very little. Worryingly, one indicator puts girls and people living with disabilities in the same sentence, encouraging them to enroll in schools as if the strategy needed would be the same for the two groups. In the last engagement (number six), gender has a section of its own, promoting women's autonomy and supporting the implementation of National Action Plan 1325, the Strategy on Fighting Sexual Violence and the Strategy for Women's Political Participation. At the time of writing this report, the benchmarks and budget are pending approval.

Civil society undertakes monitoring in parallel with the official MNS monitoring: the Network for the Reform of the Security and Justice Sector (Réseau pour la Réforme du Secteur de Sécurité et de Justice, RRSSJ) issues biannual reports (the third report issued in June 2015). Among many coordination efforts in DRC was a workshop by the Catholic Organisation for Relief and Development Aid (CORDAID) in Bukavu in March 2015, a workshop by the Solidarity Movement of Women Human Rights Activists (Solidarité des Femmes Activistes pour la Défense des Droits Humains, SOFAD) in Uvira in August 2015, and International Alert's workshops with the Network of Congolese Peace Actors (Réseau Congolais des Artisans de Paix) in Bukavu and Goma in September 2015. Obstacles are identified and recommendations are issued for further progress under each engagement.⁵¹ A formal channel for civil society and women's organisations to monitor and implement the PSCF is required beyond mere consultation (in the form of the consultative committee that should have been in place in the MNS, or other mechanism).

In conclusion, the mainstreaming of gender within the PSCF and its benchmarks is very limited. Therefore, a different starting point is needed, one where both women and men are considered as key actors for an inclusive and durable peace. Without going as far as to redraft the whole exercise, the mere inclusion of gender-sensitive indicators requiring sex and age disaggregated data and avoiding putting women in the 'marginalised' category would allow for the progress achieved to be assessed in terms of its impact on women, men, girls and boys.

At regional and international levels

At the regional level, the perception of stakeholders interviewed in DRC is that there is even less progress regarding the PSCF. A Monitoring Mechanism and an Action Plan are in place for the implementation of the regional engagements in the PSCF. Since Reilly and Warren (2014) analysed the inclusion of gender in 2014,⁵² there has not been another plan as the 15 priorities chosen continue to be relevant. The reports from meetings by the Regional Monitoring Mechanism explicitly mention women in various instances – that is, recognising “the importance of women and youth in economic development”, asking development partners to put in place “rapid impact projects at regional and local level, targeting in particular women and youth”, and promoting “multi-sectorial approaches focusing on developmental initiatives, specifically for women and youth”.

Gender-related requirements in the regional action plan are listed further down in Figure 3.⁵³

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

At international level, when interviewees are asked about gender, they mention "the platform of Mary Robinson", that is, the Great Lakes Women's Platform for the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework (hereafter 'the Platform'), launched in January 2014.⁵⁴ The Platform was created to support the active involvement of women in the framework and to ensure that their voices and aspirations are effectively communicated across the region in line with UNSCR 1325. A gender adviser was recruited under the OESG. In May 2015, a first meeting in DRC took place in Goma with the beneficiaries of the Platform. This was followed by a monitoring exercise on what is happening at the grassroots level. The UN Secretary-General referred to the Platform as "an unparalleled vehicle to ensure that Great Lakes women's voices are heard and that they actively participate in decision-making, as well as in social and economic development, in the region".⁵⁵

Nevertheless, despite the momentum created around the key importance of women's political leadership and empowerment, in DRC many interviewees had little information

about the status of the Platform.⁵⁶ Moreover, some argued that beneficiaries were "handpicked by the government" and that "the lack of a transparent process and criteria for beneficiaries became a bottleneck for other organisations to join".⁵⁷ Apart from the functionality or lack thereof of the Platform, it seems to have remained a mechanism for the sporadic funding of women's organisations rather than one that promotes women's political participation at higher levels. Within the next steps planned for the Platform, however, there is an external evaluation of the Platform and a robust resource mobilisation aimed at scaling it up.

The regular reports from the UN Security Council on the progress of the PSCF and the mandate of MONUSCO (see Chronology with bibliography in Annex III) highlight SGBV issues and the impact of conflict on women and children; call for UN Women Protection Advisers to engage with parties to conflict; demand that special attention be paid to women and children among demobilised combatants; and refer to UNSCR 1325.⁵⁸ The key elements under the four pillars of UNSCR 1325 (prevention, participation, protection, and relief and recovery) are included in both the regional and national benchmarks to different degrees (see Figure 3). Nevertheless, the links between the PSCF and UNSCR 1325 are not made explicit, creating two parallel processes that do not feed into each other. There are regional and national action plans on 1325. The DRC National Plan was developed in 2010 and reviewed in 2013. However, the only change in this revision was the new budget and the establishment of steering committees (comité de pilotage) at different levels (national, provincial and territorial) that do not work. The national steering committee recently established an

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

Executive Secretariat, which, with only one month before the anniversary of UNSCR 1325 in New York, seeks to assess what has been done – one interviewee described these as “structures with little content”.

Despite all the awareness-raising efforts and the translation of UNSCR 1325 into local languages, the reality is that the PSCF demonstrates little inclusion of gender or the genuine participation of women. This relates to the earlier point regarding the discriminatory practices and policies evident in DRC, which ranks among the bottom 10 countries in the Gender Equality Index. UNSCR 1325 relies on changes in the enabling environment that require concerted efforts at all levels. The scarce national budget in DRC, the huge geography, the country’s complex decentralisation, and a plethora of structures and frameworks have led to many ratified conventions

with zero implementation – especially in a country where the majority of the people live in remote rural areas, where these legal and policy instruments are unknown. Therefore, progress is slow.

The economic integration and reinforcement of the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (Communauté Économique des Pays des Grands Lacs, CEPGL) is part of the national action plan discussed above, so there would be proper conditions for women to play a key role in economic governance, protection of rights, and commercial and economic development. If peace were also understood as social and economic development, this engagement would be a priority for the signatory governments. Nevertheless, their weak commitment to progress on this is reflected in the uneven payment of membership contributions to the CEPGL.

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

Figure 3
The four pillars of UNSCR 1325



Figure 3

Participation

SCR 1325

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

PSCF National benchmarks

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

PSCF Regional benchmarks

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

Protection

SCR 1325

The resolution calls for the protection of women and girls against SGBV, including in emergency and humanitarian situations, such as in refugee camps.

PSCF National benchmarks

Sexual violence is mentioned regarding measurement of the police's operational capacity and the number of 'aggressions' committed. Sexual harassment in schools is also addressed.

PSCF Regional benchmarks

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

Prevention

SCR 1325

The resolution calls for the improvement of interventions to prevent violence against women, including prosecuting those responsible for violations of international law; strengthening women's rights under national law; and supporting local women's peace initiatives and conflict resolution processes.

PSCF National benchmarks

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

PSCF Regional benchmarks

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

Relief and Recovery

SCR 1325

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

PSCF National benchmarks

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

PSCF Regional benchmarks

Points 2.1 a and 2.3 a relate to the DDR/RR national plan and the particular attention required for youth, women and vulnerable children associated with armed groups, with a call for sex-specific programmes for combatants and their dependants.

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

**“The role of Congolese women
in peacebuilding must not be
consultative but participatory.”⁵⁹**

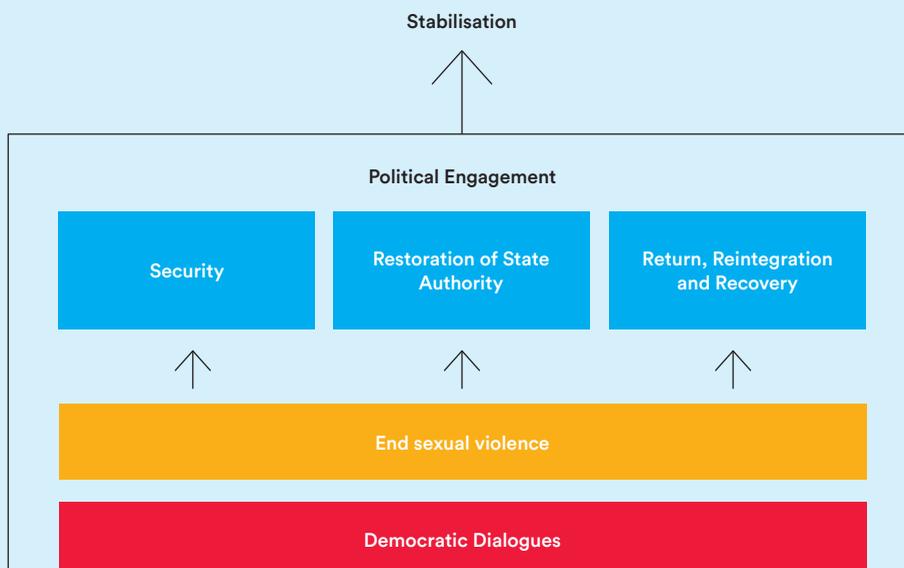
The Ministry of Gender, Family and Children (Ministère du Genre, de la Famille et de l’Enfant) is the focal point for national and international NGOs and donors working on gender issues. The title of the Ministry reveals once more the association of women as mothers or related to a family member. The Ministry could and should act as the watchdog for a gender-sensitive benchmarking process for the PSCF. Nevertheless, an organisational and institutional analysis of the Ministry in 2013⁶⁰ found that it lacked the capacity to implement its mandate.

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

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

Figure 4
Five pillars of ISSSS
Strategy 1

Figure 4



Regarding the ISSSS, even prior to the signing of the PSCF, a process of revision of the strategy had started, based on a critical review of the inadequate results of the first phase of stabilisation. The new ISSSS focuses on the root causes of the conflict, to which programmes should respond through the five pillars outlined below (Figure 4). Gender is a cross-cutting theme, with the ISSSS highlighting that “interventions will be designed, planned, implemented and evaluated to avoid a negative impact on conflict dynamics and enhance a positive one, and to have a positive impact on men, women, boys and girls, and the relations between them”.⁶¹ Nevertheless, it will be important that gender does not remain as one component within the sexual violence pillar but that it is truly mainstreamed across the pillars – even as government officials state the contrary (“Gender, women ... all that we’ll treat through the fight against sexual violence”⁶²), reinforcing the stigma of women as victims of sexual violence only.

In the ISSSS and the needs assessments that were conducted for the elaboration of provincial action plans, four conflict dynamics were identified: security dilemmas, mobilisation around land and identity, regional dynamics, and the exploitation of natural resources. Nevertheless, rather than looking at how gender plays out in each conflict dynamic, the analysis tended to be reduced to a separate paragraph focused on women. This constitutes a missed opportunity for the resulting provincial-level strategies and action plans validated by the Ministry of Planning at the national level in April 2015, to be funded by a trust fund through a call for proposals. However, in order to ensure that monitoring and evaluation is integrated into the implementation of the ISSSS,

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

With regard to MONUSCO, after a process of reconfiguring the mission from the west to the east of the country, MONUSCO, in collaboration with the OSESG, is recognised for having established a link between monitoring and implementation of the PSCF by the MNS and civil society through its Civil Affairs Section. Nevertheless, the focus is on supporting the FARDC and combating armed groups in the east, whereas political dialogue on women’s participation that should happen at the highest levels in Kinshasa is seen as a lesser priority. As a political tool, the PSCF can help MONUSCO to engage at the higher levels and to ask the right questions – not only on the number of women in politics, but also on the place and space that the government and other political actors are ready to give them. For MONUSCO, this means that, in order to promote women candidates in the elections, the classical and more technical work with women’s organisations should continue, but other interventions will also be needed – for instance, highlighting to political parties how including women in their lists will actually help to increase their

chances of winning as they represent over half of the population. This is particularly relevant within the context of the revised Electoral Law from January 2015, as it removed the quota system (30%) that was in the previous version of the law; as a result, there is no real obligation on political parties to include women in their candidate lists.

Resources have been pledged to the region by various development partners: for example, the World Bank pledged US\$1 billion to support activities in the region that will further the PSCF's implementation and at least €3.2 billion has been allocated to Burundi, DRC, Rwanda, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia under the Eleventh European Development Fund (2014–2020). In addition, DFID has a large Peace and Stabilisation programme in eastern DRC that was not in place before the PSCF. Therefore, although the PSCF is not a donor coordination framework, it has acted as a catalyst for putting peace and stability at the forefront of the development agenda. A closer link between the PSCF and the ISSSS should be developed, although other donors do not see the added value of the PSCF and continue 'business as usual' sector programmes on health, education, etc., while allocating donor funds from INGO channels to local organisations and providing different capacity-building support. In terms of civil society, it influences policymaking more through advocacy than through consultation, as national authorities and international actors rarely consult civil society. The specific role of women's organisations within civil society involves lobbying and advocacy action by Congolese women from different alliances with the Congolese government and parliament, the UN and the regional communities (Southern African

Development Community (SADC), Conférence Internationale sur la Région des Grands Lacs (CIRGL), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)). Inside and outside the remit of the Platform, women's organisations have met at the local, national and regional levels on various occasions to discuss the implementation and monitoring of the PSCF. So-called women's issues are seen as the exclusive preserve of women, whether in civil society or in public life. As recommended in the DRC Gender Country Profile 2014, "donors should engage both women and men on so-called 'women's issues' and encourage national and other international stakeholders to do the same" and "perhaps time has come to insist on the need for meaningfully integrating the women's movement as well as women's participation into civil society and broader decision-making spheres".⁶³

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

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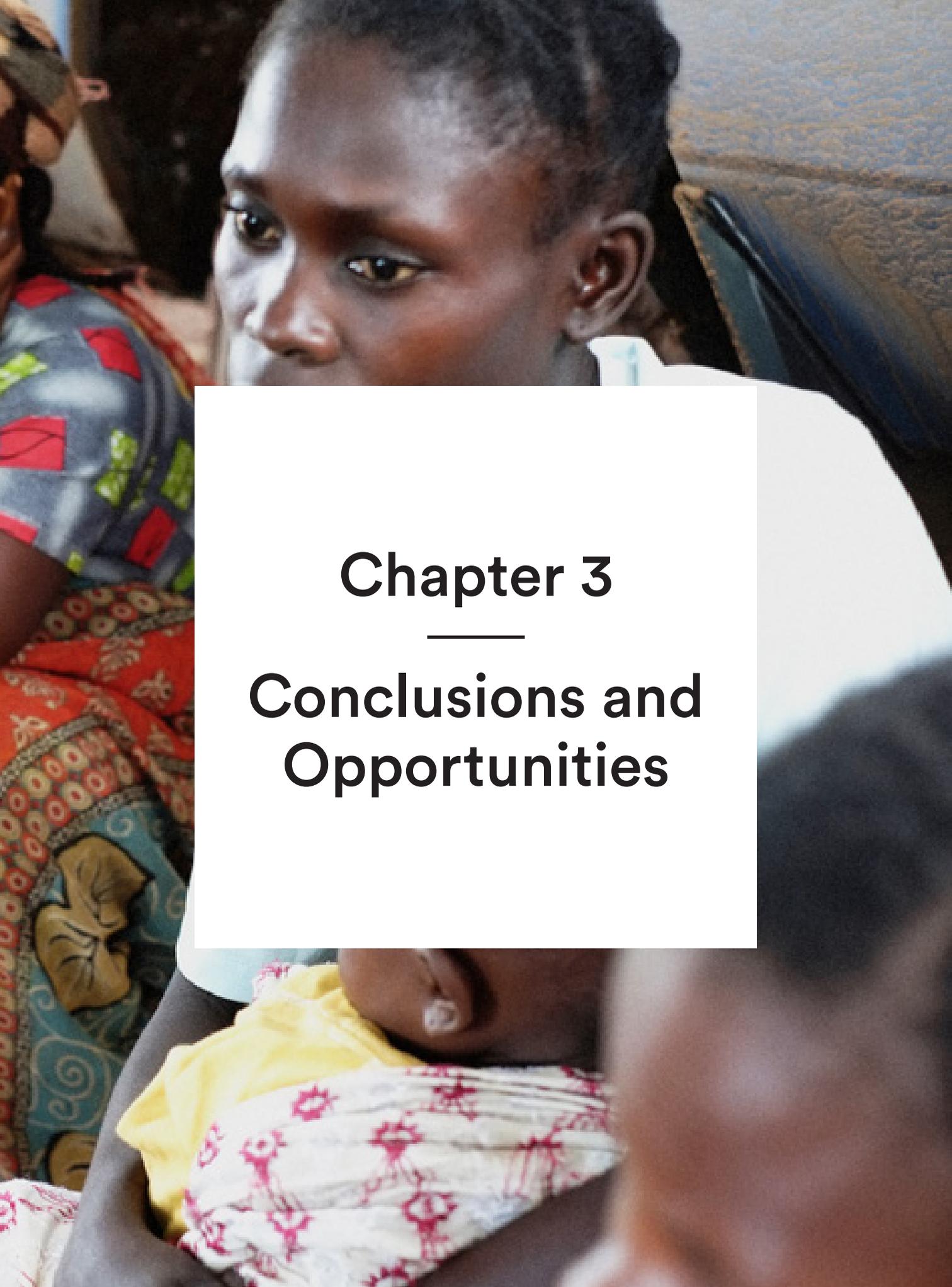
The campaign *Rien sans les femmes* (Nothing without women) has gathered more than 50 women's rights organisations in DRC to demand the equal representation of women and men at all levels of decision-making. Pictures from peaceful marches in Bukavu, South Kivu, May 2015.
Photo: International Alert.



Findings and Analysis







Chapter 3

Conclusions and Opportunities

3. Conclusions and Opportunities

“The scope of the commitments is the largest in decades, and covers all aspects of human security and democratic expression. In this sense, it is potentially a very useful tool for any serious implementation of a reform process in the country.”⁶⁴

The PSCF correctly identified two key drivers of the conflict: foreign interference in DRC and the dysfunction of Congolese state institutions. The strategy seeks, particularly with the six national engagements, to create a decisive momentum to address the root causes of recurring conflict in DRC and the Great Lakes region. However, after two years, it has not yet achieved its goals. At the national level, the six engagements are not fully owned by state structures or civil society in general, outside of a small number of organisations participating in writing follow-up reports and holding sessions on the degree of implementation of the national engagements. Several interviewees argued that after the defeat of the M23, there seems to have been a shift in position by the DRC government, which may consider the PSCF a burden rather than a framework to which they are committed and which is a useful tool to address the causes of conflict.

However, the PSCF has helped to focus attention on a core set of issues and to create a set of common benchmarks for tracking progress at national and regional level. In a pre-electoral context where there is a risk of increasing instability, the PSCF should be considered as the international community’s most powerful tool to accompany any attempts by the DRC government (and civil society) to seek to address the core issues outlined in the

PSCF – “for there will not be any new occasion in the foreseeable future to catch the attention of the UNSC and the AU on the DRC case, after two decades of failed attempts to convince the DRC leadership that its country’s greatest challenge was itself”.⁶⁵

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

3.1 Redefining gender in peacebuilding

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

Concrete steps would involve the following:

- ensuring in every text that women

and men are conceptualised as productive contributors to peace;

- using gender-sensitive language and avoiding reference to ‘women and children’, ‘women and youth’ or the association of women with ‘marginalised’ categories;
- providing for training on gender awareness and sensitivity for all members of key bodies.

This approach would allow for a more nuanced and better analysis of the dynamics in eastern DRC, enabling more targeted activities – for example, not just use of the blanket ‘women and youth’ approach but looking in a more detailed way at particular vulnerabilities as well as capacities. At the same time, such an approach would change expectations regarding masculinities and femininities that perpetuate inequality and exclusion.

3.2 Encouraging the key participation versus mere consultation of women’s organisations in particular and civil society in general

Congolese women and men participating in women’s groups and civil society organisations have worked to broker peace and to enhance the resilience of communities during continuing armed conflict; however, this involvement did not result in an invitation to the PSCF signing in Addis Ababa in 2013. As one informant to this report bluntly put it: “It doesn’t matter if there are women or men or dogs around the table, it’s about heads of state dealing with state relations.” Evidence shows that men and women bring different issues to the table – therefore, it does matter.⁶⁶

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

Concrete steps would involve the following:

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

At regional level, reinforcing regional initiatives to allow for meaningful participation of a wide cross-section of civil society and women’s organisations is all the more important while inter-state relations are poor.⁶⁷ This could be facilitated through a coherent mechanism⁶⁸ that is inclusive, open, transparent and accountable.

3.3 Ensuring continued technical assistance for gender responsiveness

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

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

3.4 Identifying concerted efforts needed for sustained change

Despite many efforts to promote UNSCR 1325 and draft national and regional action plans, the content has not produced any concrete impact on the current peace framework. To achieve any sustained change, a number of factors causing violence need to be addressed to avoid escalation and prevent re-occurrence. These

factors include youth unemployment, bad governance, resource-based conflicts, environmental degradation, economic hardships and proliferation of small arms. For each of these factors, gender considerations need to be analysed, understood and taken into account for an appropriate response.

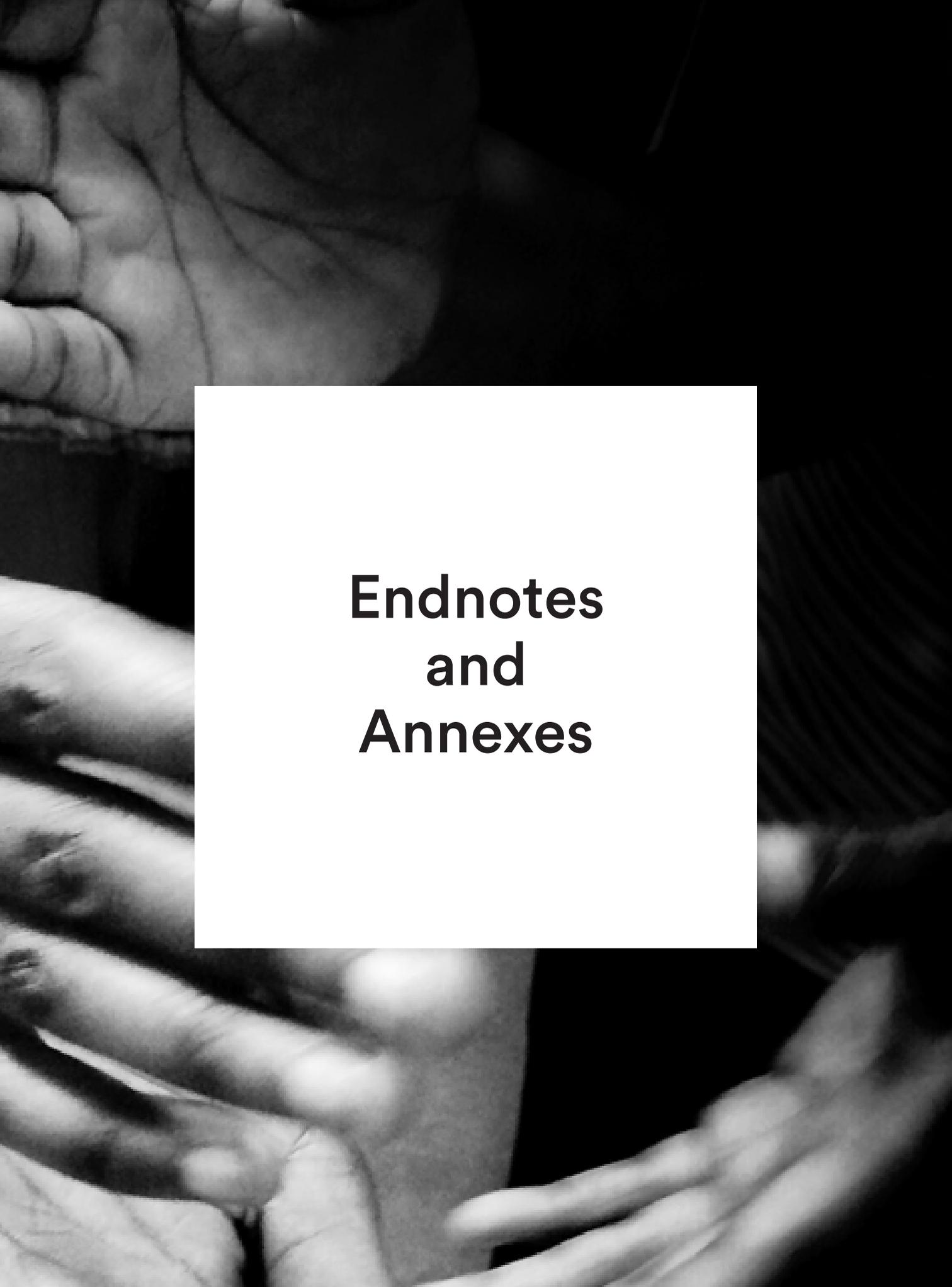
Civil society groups, especially women peacebuilders at the local level, are the main drivers of the 1325 agenda. This factor must be recognised in all policy and programming by the Congolese government and by all signatories of the PSCF, as well as by international organisations and donors. The review of indicators for the ISSSS should ensure that sex and age disaggregated data allow for measurement of the impact on women and men. In addition, donors should make funding conditional to a gender-responsive implementation of the PSCF national and regional benchmarks in line with internationally agreed commitments under SCR 1325 and related resolutions on women, peace and security.

Right

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







Endnotes and Annexes

Endnotes

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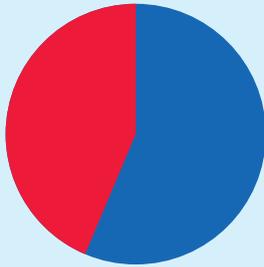
- Development implemented by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) had gender as a cross-cutting issue. Also, over the past 10 years, various declarations focusing on gender issues were made by heads of state in the region, even though their main focus was on sexual violence (Goma Declaration on Eradicating Sexual Violence and Ending Impunity in the Great Lakes Region in 2008, Kampala Declaration on SGBV in 2011). The 5th pillar of STAREC also focuses on SGBV.
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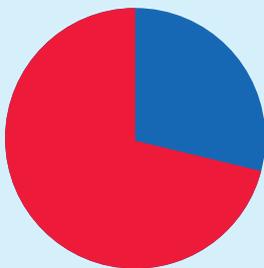
**Annex I: List of contacts met,
September 2015**



Government:
3 women and 4 men

**Men and Women
Interviewed (Government)**

- Mécanisme National de Suivi de l'Accord Cadre
- Communauté Economique des Pays des Grands Lacs (CEPGL)
- Stabilization and Reconstruction Plan for Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (STAREC)



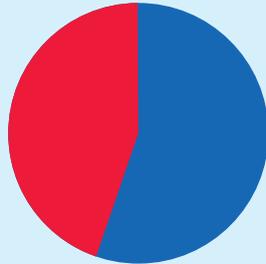
Civil Society:
13 women and 5 men

**Men and Women
Interviewed (Civil Society)**

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

- Women
- Men

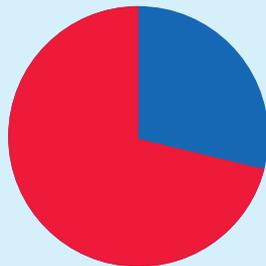
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UN:
7 women and 8 men

Men and Women
Interviewed (UN)

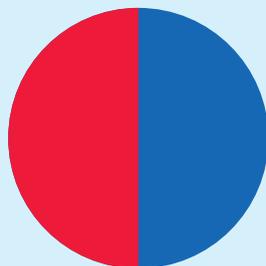
- United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)
- UN Women
- UN Special Envoy



Donors:
5 women and 2 men

Men and Women
Interviewed (Donors)

- Department for International Development (DFID)
- Swedish Embassy
- European Union
- American Embassy



INGO:
4 women and 4 men

Men and Women
Interviewed (INGO)

- InterPeace
- Oxfam
- Initiative for a Cohesive Leadership in DRC (ILC)
- Kvinna/International Alert (interviews apart)

Annex II: Interview guide

Context	Questions	Sub-Questions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you consider that the political dynamics in DRC and the broader Great Lakes region influenced the signing (and have continued to influence the implementation of) the PSCF? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the agreement drafted and by whom? • How many women and men participated in the negotiations of the framework and in its signature? Were women and men able to contribute to the process and, if yes, how? On what issues? Which women and men were able to participate, who was not? • Were the priority needs of women and men identified and reflected in the final text of the PSCF? Specify here how age, class, location, ethnic background and (dis)ability might intersect with gender both for women and men.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the critical reflections on the success/failure of integrating gender into peacebuilding in DRC among different actors? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What role does gender play and how is it understood by various peacebuilding actors? (Is it women-focused? SGBV-focused?) How is it understood by international versus regional/domestic actors?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can the gender considerations in the PSCF be improved in the future? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What actions would, in your opinion, be required, by whom/ which stakeholders, in order to advance gender-sensitive implementation of the PSCF?

Implementation and monitoring

Questions	Sub-Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the PSCF achieve its objectives as stated in the national, regional and international commitments? ('Big picture' question) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On a scale from 1 to 10, how would you evaluate the current state of implementation of the PSCF? What do you consider to be the key strengths of and principal blockages to the implementation of the accord, and what opportunities do you see to advance its implementation?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is responsible for implementation and monitoring, and what is their level of gender awareness? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is the representation of women and men different in the implementation and monitoring bodies? What are the national and international norms and regulations in relation to gender considered in the PSCF?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are PSCF benchmarks and implementation plans gender sensitive? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the level and extent of gender considerations within the PSCF, the regional benchmarks, the DRC national benchmarks and the DRC National Action Plan to implement the PSCF? To what extent do these documents take into consideration the principles and clauses of UNSCR 1325 and CEDAW?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What evidence is there of the PSCF contributing to the advancement of gender equality? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is being done in relation to gender advancements? How does the implementation impact men and women differently? Have there been any unforeseen impacts on gender equality? How, if at all, do PSCF interventions affect the longer-term vulnerabilities of men and women and the gendered power dynamics in target communities?

Actors/
Coordination

Questions	Sub-Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the level and scope of involvement of men and women from different backgrounds? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What percentage and in what capacity have men and women been involved in consultations, drafting, implementation and monitoring of the PSCF? How are women compared with men in urban/rural/remote communities aware of the PSCF? Specify here how age, class, location, ethnic background, (dis)ability might intersect with gender both for women and men.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the added value of INGOs accompanying the PSCF? • What is the added value of national actors in the construction of the PSCF? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the role of the Great Lakes Women's Platform, launched by the Office of the UN Special Envoy to the Great Lakes, in the implementation of the PSCF? What has been done so far? • What is the involvement of partners? Who does what on gender issues and how? Are there any particular differences between inland national/local approaches? • How can complementarity be increased?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the PSCF link with longer-term interventions towards gender equality? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the PSCF reinforce and/or complement provisions on gender equality contained in various national policies? • How does the PSCF support or undermine local peacebuilding mechanisms and capacity and the promotion of gender equality?

Cross-cutting
issues

Questions	Sub-Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do other identity markers apart from gender figure in the PSCF? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are different needs taken into account by the PSCF? Are there certain groups who are inappropriately included or excluded? How are these issues factored in across the PSCF implementation?

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Annex III: Chronology of PSCF with bibliography

Date	Event	Participants	Documents
24 February 2013	Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework (PSCF) signed	11 countries signed: Angola, Burundi, Central Africa Republic, DRC, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, South Sudan, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia; two additional countries later signed Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Chairperson of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, Chairperson of the South African Development Community, and the UN Secretary-General	A Framework of Hope: The Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of Congo and region
18 March 2013	Mary Robinson appointed Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region	UN Secretary-General, Mary Robinson	Secretary-General appoints Mary Robinson of Ireland Special Envoy for Great Lakes Region of Africa
28 March 2013	Security Council Resolution 2098 welcoming the PSCF	Security Council	UN Security Council Resolution 2098 (2013)
26 May 2013	First high-level PSCF Regional Oversight Mechanism (ROM) meeting	Heads of state of Angola, Burundi, DRC, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia; SADC; ICGLR	Communiqué of the first meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the PSCF Agreement for DRC and the region, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
June 2013	Bujumbura Conference/ Declaration, calling for the empowerment of women in the PSCF	Mary Robinson; women's organisations	Le Leadership et la participation des femmes dans l'Accord-cadre pour la paix, la sécurité et la coopération pour la République démocratique du Congo et la région des Grands Lacs: Résultats, obstacles et opportunités, p. 24
23 September 2013	Second high-level PSCF Regional Oversight Mechanism meeting	UN Secretary-General; heads of state of Angola, Burundi, DRC, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia; SADC; ICGLR	Communiqué of second meeting of Regional Oversight Mechanism of the PSCF for DRC and the region
23 December 2013	Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the PSCF	Secretary-General; Security Council	Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the PSCF for DRC and the region
31 January 2014	Third high-level PSCF Regional Oversight Mechanism meeting; Kenya and Sudan added as signatories	Heads of state of Angola, Burundi, DRC, Kenya, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia; SADC; ICGLR	Communiqué of the third high-level meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of PSCF for DRC and the Region

Annexes

Date	Event	Participants	Documents
January 2014	55 local organisations participate in a meeting with Oxfam International	Oxfam International, civil society	Le Leadership et la participation des femmes dans l'Accord-cadre pour la paix, la sécurité et la coopération pour la République démocratique du Congo et la région des Grands Lacs: Résultats, obstacles et opportunités, p. 24
January 2014	Women's Platform for the PSCF inaugurated	Women's organisations	As per previous, p. 24
5 March 2014	Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the PSCF	UN Security Council, UN Secretary-General	Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the PSCF in DRC and the region
28 March 2014	Security Council Resolution 2147 extending mandate of MONUSCO	UN Security Council	Resolution 2147 (2014) adopted by the Security Council
17 July 2014	Said Djinnit appointed Special Envoy for Great Lakes Region	UN Secretary-General, Said Djinnit, Mary Robinson	Secretary-General appoints Said Djinnit of Algeria Special Envoy for Great Lakes Region
22 September 2014	Fourth high-level PSCF Regional Oversight Mechanism meeting; presented by Said Djinnit; first progress report of PSCF implementation	Robert Mugabe, President of Zimbabwe; Manuel Dmonigos Vincent, Vice President of Angola; UN Secretary-General; Deputy-Chairperson of the AUC	Fourth meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the PSCF for DRC and the region, Remarks by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region
24 September 2014	Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the PSCF	UN Secretary-General, UN Security Council	Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the PSCF in DRC and the region
31 January 2015	Fifth high-level PSCF Regional Oversight Mechanism meeting, presented during the 24th AU Summit	Heads of state of Angola, Burundi, DRC, Kenya, Republic of Congo, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia; UN Secretary-General; SADC; ICGLR; AUC chairperson	Communiqué of the Fifth High-Level Meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the PSCF for DRC and the region, Addis Ababa, 31 January 2015
13 March 2015	Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the PSCF	UN Secretary-General, UN Security Council	Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the PSCF for DRC and the region
13–15 May 2015	Inaugural convening of the beneficiaries of the Women's Platform for the PSCF	Beneficiaries of the platform	PDF
22 September 2015	Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the PSCF	UN Security Council, UN Secretary-General	Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the PSCF for DRC and the region
28 September 2015	Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo	UN Security Council, UN Secretary-General	Report of the Secretary-General on the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in DRC

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