



Empowering Survivors of Sexual Violence in DR Congo

PRIO Gender, Peace
and Security Update

Issue 2 (2017)

The PRIO Gender Peace and Security Update is an electronic newsletter published by the PRIO Centre on Gender, Peace and Security to share with the public information about gender, peace and security issues. The newsletter will also keep readers informed of the latest developments both internationally and in Norway in relation to UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security and subsequent resolutions.



The gate of City of Joy, a centre for healing and training for survivors of sexual violence. Photo: Gudrun Østby, PRIO.

A **research project** looking at the impact of support programmes for survivors of sexual violence in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) recently came to an end. The '**Female Empowerment in Eastern DRC**' project, led by PRIO Senior Researcher Ragnhild Nordås, is a collaborative effort by PRIO and the International Centre for Advanced Research and Training (ICART), based in Bukavu, DRC.

The research looked at the support programmes USHINDI and Dorcas Rural aimed at helping survivors of sexual violence and other vulnerable women and men to reintegrate socially and economically in their communities. These programmes train women and men to become literate and in skills that can help them earn and sustain a living.

The project also studied another programme, called **City of Joy**, which

aims to enable female survivors of sexual and domestic violence to become leaders in their communities through education on, among other things, gender issues and women's rights.

Julie Marie Hansen met with two researchers from the project – medical doctor and principal researcher at ICART Christine Amisi, and PRIO Senior Researcher Gudrun Østby – to learn more about what their research has found.

What did you want to find out from your research?

Amisi: We set out to improve our understanding of the barriers to and opportunities for female empowerment in DRC. We also wanted to be able to provide recommendations to support programmes for survivors to improve the efficiency and quality of the programmes, and in that way contribute

to improving the situation for women in eastern DRC.

Østby: We wanted to find out if the support programmes have an effect on improving women's economic situation and on improving their sense of social inclusion in society, particularly for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. For women who participated in the City of Joy programme, we wanted to see if attitudes towards gender equality and women's rights had changed over the course of the programme.

What were your main findings and recommendations?

Østby: From the studies on the social and economic reintegration programmes, we found that overall the programmes have a good effect on improving the economic situation for women. When it comes to women's sense of social inclusion, however, our results are less clear. Especially for survivors of sexual violence, it doesn't seem as if the programmes have been completely successful in terms of improving their sense of social inclusion. For the women who had been part of the City of Joy programme, their attitudes did change but maybe not as much as we had ex-

pected. They were already quite supportive of gender equality before they started the programme.

Amisi: We gave recommendations to the programmes we studied and recommended that they also include in the programmes the women's partners so that couples can grow together. We also suggested that neighbours in the community and community leaders should be included in programmes.

Østby: We highlighted to the programmes to be aware of the issue of women's social inclusion and to think about how to include other people in society into their programmes. We think that if people work together – if other community members beyond the survivors of sexual violence also receive training and are more engaged – this will serve two purposes: first, there might be less impression that only survivors of sexual violence receive all attention and benefits. Second, and related to this, we believe that if the programmes manage to include the broader community, there will also be less negative perception of survivors, which is a good thing for social inclusion.

Will you be working together on any follow-up research?

Amisi: We want to learn more about the women who were part of the City of Joy programme in particular, and to see what has happened in their communities over a longer time since they finished the programme.

Østby: We know very little about the long-term effects of the programme. We really want to find out whether the women's changes in attitudes to gender equality and women's rights will stick – if it's still there a year or two after the programme. And whether now that they're aware of their rights, are they able to exercise them? Starting July 2017, we will study the long-term impacts with a new project called 'Transforming pain into power: Assessing the long-term effects of



Gudrun Østby, Senior Researcher, PRIO. Photo: PRIO.

female empowerment training in eastern DRC'. The project will be led by Ragnhild Nordås at PRIO and is funded by the Folke Bernadotte Academy.

Recommended reading

Nordås, Ragnhild, Gudrun Østby, Siri Aas Rustad, Christine Amisi, Rosalie Biaba, John Quattrochi, Susanne Alldén & Aline Cikara (2016) [Social Inclusion of Survivors of Sexual Violence: How Do Support Programs Work?](#), PRIO Paper. Oslo: PRIO.

Nordås, Ragnhild, Gudrun Østby, Rosalie Biaba, Christine Amisi, John Quattrochi, Susanne Alldén, Esther Namegabe & Aline Cikara (2016) [From Pain to Empowerment?](#), PRIO Paper. Oslo: PRIO. ■

New Network of GPS and WPS Centres

On 5–6 June, core staff from the PRIO GPS Centre visited London School of Economics for the first meeting of a [network](#) of academic centres dedicated to gender/women, peace and security studies.



Dr. Christina Amisi, principal researcher at ICART. Photo: PRIO.

The network currently includes the PRIO Centre on Gender, Peace and Security (PRIO GPS Centre) in Norway; the Monash Gender, Peace and Security Centre (Monash GPS) at Monash University in Australia; the Women, Peace and Security Institute (WPSI) at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Ghana; the LSE Centre for Women, Peace and Security (LSE WPS) at the London School of Economics in the UK; and the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security (GIWPS) at Georgetown University in the USA.

The first meeting of these five centres included discussions on each centre's respective strengths and academic agendas in the G/WPS research field, and areas for effective collaboration between the centres. The meeting also included a separate discussion with a wider audience of representatives from government and civil society, including Baroness Joyce Anelay, the UK Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict. Here, participants talked about how academic work on gender and women, peace and security issues can be better connected to policy and practice.

An event about 'Women, Peace and Security in the Global Arena' was organised by LSE WPS on 5 June. PRIO GPS Centre Director Torunn L. Tryggestad participated in the event together with other centre leaders and representatives – Jacqui True from Monash GPS, Nana Bemma Nti from WPSI, Christine Chinkin from the LSE WPS, and Jeni Klugman from GIWPS. They discussed how scholars and researchers can hold governments to account for their local and international women, peace and security commitments. The event is [available to watch online](#).

PRIO GPS Centre is a resource hub for gender, peace and security studies at PRIO. The Centre is an implementing partner of the UN High-Level Seminars on Gender and Inclusive Mediation Processes and the Nordic Women Mediators, and gives policy advice directly to government agencies and ministries and through policy-oriented research. Gender research at PRIO covers many thematic areas, including conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence, the Women, Peace and Security agenda, and gender and peace mediation.

Monash GPS comprises a group of policy and community engaged scholars who seek to use their research to inform scholarly debate, policy development and implementation, public understanding about the gendered politics of armed conflict and the search for peace. Their work is particularly focused upon the Asia-Pacific region, with key research areas including women's participation in peace processes and post-conflict governance; women's roles in preventing conflict and political violence; the protection of women in armed conflict and the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence in conflict.

WPSI serves as a knowledge centre for expanding technical capacity, training and policy research and analysis on women, peace and security in order to better inform the broader peace and security agenda in Africa. The Institutes' work is centred on areas such as women's participation in peace negotiations and preventive diplomacy in Africa; women's leadership roles in security institutions and participation in peacekeeping activities; and African women's leadership in responding to gender-based violence in conflict.

LSE WPS is an academic space for scholars, practitioners, activists, policy-makers and students to develop strategies to promote justice, human rights and participation of women in conflict-affected situations around the world. The Centre develops research and practice mainly on issues relating to women, peace and security, sexual violence in conflict-affected settings, and gender and 'new wars'.

GIWPS examines and highlights the roles and experiences of women in peace and security worldwide through research, global convenings and strategic partnerships. The Institute's research involves mapping, sharing and producing evidence-based and practically-relevant research related to women's roles and experiences in conflict-affected settings and in peace and security efforts worldwide. The



Leaders and representatives from five GPS and WPS centres worldwide participate in the event 'Women, Peace and Security in the Global Arena', LSE, 5 May 2017. Photo: LSE.

Institute's research spans the continuum of violent conflict and focuses on a breadth of topics, including conflict prevention and peacemaking; peace support operations; mitigation of complex humanitarian crises; political transitions and statebuilding, and post-conflict reconstruction and economic recovery. ■

PRIO's Gender Research in the Spotlight

PRIO's gender research featured at the conference 'A Gender Perspective on Demography and Conflicts' which took place in Oslo on April 27. The conference was organised by the Research Council of Norway, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and was designed to inform policy-makers of research findings and what those findings mean for policy.

Under the thematic area of Women, Peace and Security, PRIO researchers presented results and policy recommendations from their research projects, all of which have been funded by the RCN's research programme NORGLOBAL. PRIO's research was strongly represented, with three of the six presentations of findings and recommendations from PRIO-led projects.

- Cindy Horst, Research Director and Professor, presented her project 'Gender in Politics in Somalia: Access and influence in a post-conflict state'. The project, which has been a collaboration between PRIO and the Heritage Institute for Policy Studies, has studied the history of women in politics in Somalia, the level of access women have to formal and informal arenas of power, and the influence that women have in Somali politics, particularly in relation to a gender agenda.
- Christine Amisi, a medical doctor at Panzi Hospital and a principal researcher at the International

Centre for Advanced Research and Training (ICART) in Bukavu, DR Congo, shared the results and recommendations from the project 'Female Empowerment in Eastern DRC: A PRIO-ICART Partnership'. Led by PRIO Senior Researcher Ragnhild Nordås, the project has been a collaboration with ICART to study the support programmes available for survivors of sexual violence in eastern DRC.

- Kristin Bergtora Sandvik, Research Professor, presented the project 'The Significance of Political Organization and International Law for Displaced Women in Colombia: A Socio-legal study of Liga De Mujeres'. The project explored the importance of political mobilization and organization for the realization of the human rights and for the long-term peaceful resettlement of internally displaced women in Colombia.

Other gender research projects at PRIO that are funded by the NORGLOBAL programme but were not featured at the conference include the 'Gender Equality, Peace and Security in Nepal and Myanmar', led by Senior Researcher Wenche Iren Hauge, and 'Making Women Count for Peace: Gender, Empowerment and Conflict in South Asia', led by Research Pro-

fessor Åshild Kolås. After the presentations, Torunn Tryggstad, Senior Researcher and Director of the PRIO Centre on Gender, Peace and Security, chaired a panel discussion on policy implications and the way forward.

Research findings and policy recommendations from NORGLOBAL-funded studies dealing with women and gender have been summarised by the RCN in [policy briefs available online](#). ■

Dr. Mukwege Visits PRIO

Since 2014, PRIO has collaborated with researchers from ICART on the project 'Female Empowerment in Eastern DRC'. The project has studied the impact of support programmes for survivors of sexual violence in eastern DR Congo. Dr. Denis Mukwege from the International Centre for Advanced Research and Training (ICART), PRIO's partner in the Democratic Republic of Congo, visited PRIO in early May to discuss joint research interests and future collaboration.

Dr. Mukwege expressed his appreci-



Dr. Mukwege from ICART and Panzi Hospital in DRC meets with PRIO researchers in Oslo. Photo: PRIO.

ation for the research collaboration with PRIO: “The research we are doing with PRIO will help us a lot to know how to conduct our work in the future.”

Dr. Mukwege is also the founder and Medical Director of Panzi Hospital and is considered one of the leading experts on repairing the physical damage from sexual violence. During his visit, he stressed the importance of scientific research for his daily work at the hospital: “Research can help us to make corrections if we are doing things in a bad way. We can change, we can get recommendations to help us perform our work in a good way.” ■

International News

Christine Chinkin, Professor and Director of the LSE Centre for Women, Peace and Security, was made a Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George (CMG) for services to advancing women’s human rights worldwide.

Fionnuala Ni Aolain, Professor of Law and Associate Director at Ulster University’s Transitional Justice Institute, was appointed UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism.

Peter Thomson, President of the UN General Assembly, became an [international gender champion](#), reaffirming his commitment to advance gender equality during the 71st Session of the UN General Assembly.

The UN Security Council held an [open debate](#) on sexual violence in conflict on 15 May 2017 to raise awareness on the issue of sexual violence in conflict as a tactic of war and terrorism.

Lund University hosted the second [Feminist Peace Research Network](#)

[Workshop](#), 23–24 May 2017.

Canada launched a [Feminist International Assistance Policy](#), aimed to “position the country as a leader on gender equality in its aid programming”.

Transitional Justice Institute at Ulster University hosted the Summer School on Transitional Justice with a focus on ‘Gender, Conflict and Preventing and Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism: International, Regional and Local Dimensions’, co-Sponsored by UN Women and the Political Settlement Research Programme, 12–16 June 2017.

WILPF launched a [toolkit on Weapons, War and Women in the Mena Region](#) to analyse the flow of arms into countries in conflict and underscore how they impact the lives of civilians and women disproportionately. ■

News from Norway

The Research Council of Norway, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) and Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs held the conference ‘[A Gender Perspective on Demography and Conflicts](#)’ in Oslo, 27 April (see separate story).

Nobel Peace Centre and Norwegian Church Aid hosted the seminar ‘[The Hidden Weapon of War](#)’ about sexual violence in war, 4 May.

Centre for Gender Research at the University of Oslo held a seminar about universal military conscription and gender equality in the military, 10 May.

Norwegian Centre for Human Rights at the University of Oslo hosted a [conversation with Victoria Sandino](#), leader of the sub-commission on gender for FARC in the Colombian peace talks, 14 June.

FORUM Norway 1325 held a screening on 19 June of the documentary ‘[The Uncondemned](#)’ which tells the story of the first prosecution of rape as a war crime. ■

News from NWM–Norway

Kristin Lund participated in the United Nations Ceasefire Mediation course in Oslo, 24–30 April.

PRIO GPS Centre and NOREF organised a [workshop](#) for members to share their first-hand experiences from peace processes in Myanmar and Colombia, 3 May.

Norwegian members participated in the Nordic-level NWM [working meeting](#) in Reykjavik, Iceland, 7-8 May, where a [mission statement](#) was formally adopted. ■

News from PRIO

PRIO GPS Centre launched a new website. Check it out here: [gps.prio.org](#)

Kaja Borchgrevink, Senior Researcher, successfully [defended her PhD thesis](#) entitled ‘With Faith in Development: Islamic Charity as Development in Practice?’

Louise Olsson will join PRIO from September 2017. Olsson’s main areas of research are conflict resolution and United Nations peace missions from a gender perspective, and peacekeeping, peacebuilding, gender and the United Nations.

Torunn L. Tryggestad gave a presentation on the [NATO Civil Society Advisory Panel on Women, Peace and](#)

[Security](#) for FORUM 1325 Norway, 5 April.

[Ingrid Vik Bakken](#), MA student, gave an internal presentation at PRIO about her thesis 'Women's post-war gains: A quantitative analysis, 1960–2012', 5 May.

[Inger Skjelsbæk](#), Research Professor, participated as a Visiting Fellow at the LSE Centre for Women, Peace and Security in the seminar 'Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism and Women, Peace and Security: Concepts, Practices and Moving Forward', 8–9 May.

[Inger Skjelsbæk](#) was interviewed on the Norwegian foreign affairs programme Urix on 16 May to comment on the debate in the UN Security Council on their report on sexual violence crimes.

PRIO hosted the seminar 'North Korea, North East Asia and Women, Peace and Security: Is There A Future?' with guest speaker Betsy Kawamura, Founder of Women4Non-Violence, 22 May.

[Inger Skjelsbæk](#) and [Torunn L. Tryggestad](#) held a seminar about Gender, Peace and Security at the Centre for Gender Research at the University of Oslo, 1 June.

[Torunn L. Tryggestad](#), [Inger Skjelsbæk](#) and [Julie Marie Hansen](#) from the PRIO GPS Centre participated in the first meeting of the network of gender and women, peace and security centres at the LSE Centre for Women, Peace and Security, 5-6 June (see separate story).

[Torunn L. Tryggestad](#), Senior Researcher and Director of PRIO GPS Centre, participated in the event 'Women, Peace and Security in the Global Arena', organised by LSE WPS, 5 June. A video of the event is [available online](#).

[Inger Skjelsbæk](#) organized and was part of the kick-off conference for the

[Nordic Branding project](#) which is part of the UiO:Norden initiative at the University of Oslo, 12 June.

[Jenny Lorentzen](#), Doctoral Researcher, participated in the course 'Gender, Conflict and Preventing and Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism: International, Regional and Local Dimensions' at the Summer School on Transitional Justice, Ulster University, 12–16 June 2017.

[Torunn L. Tryggestad](#) gave presentation on PRIO gender research for a delegation from the World Bank at a seminar organised by NORAD, 14 June.

[Katie Goldie-Ryder](#), MA student, gave an internal presentation at PRIO about her thesis 'A Qualitative Case Study of the Rwandan Diaspora in Sweden' as part of the 'Equal Peace.' project, 14 June.

[Torunn L. Tryggestad](#) participated as a member of the UN Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund Advisory Group in a meeting with UN Secretary-General António Guterres in New York, 19-20 June.

PRIO GPS Centre hosted the seminar 'The Carpetbaggers of Kabul: Gender and International Development issues in Afghanistan' with guest speakers Jennifer Fluri and Rachel Lehr, 20 June. ■

Recent PRIO Publications

Gizelis, Theodora-Ismene, Sabrina Karim, Gudrun Østby & Henrik Urdal (2017) [Maternal Health Care in the Time of Ebola: A Mixed-Method Exploration of the Impact of the Epidemic on Delivery Services in Monrovia](#). *World Development*. Available online 31 May 2017.

Kolås, Åshild (2017) [Women, Peace](#)

[and Security in Nepal: From Civil War to Post-Conflict Reconstruction](#). London and New York: Routledge.

Kolås, Åshild (2017) [Women, Peace and Security in Northeast India](#). New Delhi: Zubaan Books.

Kolås, Åshild and Torunn L. Tryggestad (2017) 'Introduction: Women, Peace and Security in review'. In Åshild Kolås (ed) [Women, Peace and Security in Nepal: From Civil War to Post-Conflict Reconstruction](#). London and New York: Routledge.

Sandvik, Kristin Bergtora & Julieta Lemaitre (2017) [Finding the Roads to Justice? Examining Trajectories of Transition for Internally Displaced Women in Colombia](#). *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development* 6(1): 1–18.

Strømmen, Ester E.J. (2017) [Jihadi Brides or Female Foreign Fighters? Women in Da'esh – from Recruitment to Sentencing](#), *GPS Policy Brief*, 1. Oslo: PRIO. ■

Other Recent Publications

Aiko Holvikivi and Audrey Reeves (2017) [The WPS agenda and the 'Refugee Crisis': Missing connections and missed opportunities in Europe](#). LSE WPS Working Paper 6/2017.

Davies, Sara E., Nicole George & Jacqui True (2017) [The difference that gender makes to international peace and security](#). *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 19(1): 1–3.

de Almagro, Maria Martin (2017) [Transitional Justice and Women, Peace and Security: A critical reading of the EU Framework](#). LSE WPS Working Paper 5/2017.

Giscard d'Estaing, Sophie (2017) [Engaging women in countering violent](#)

extremism: avoiding instrumentalisation and furthering agency. *Gender & Development* 25(1): 103–118.

Hedström, Jenny (2017) [The political economy of the Kachin revolutionary household](#). *The Pacific Review* 30(4): 581–595.

Michielsen, Dido (2017) [Women on the frontline: can a network provide a platform for activists in the volatile MENA region?](#) *Gender & Development*. Published online 22 March 2017.

Muehlenhoff, Hanna L. (2017) [Victims, soldiers, peacemakers and caretakers: the neoliberal constitution of women in the EU's security policy](#). *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 19(2): 153–167.

NGOWG (2017) [Mapping Women, Peace and Security in the UN Security Council: 2016](#). NGOWG policy brief.

Pistor, Nora (2017) [Life on Hold: Experiences of women displaced by conflict in Kachin State, Myanmar](#). Trócaire & Oxfam, June 2017.

Ryan, Caitlin & Helen Basini (2017) [UNSC Resolution 1325 national action plans in Liberia and Sierra Leone: An analysis of gendered power relations in hybrid peacebuilding](#). *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*. Published online 19 June 2017.

Salamanca, Rosa Emilia, Lucia Ramirez, Magda Cárdenas, Zahbia Yousuf & Sophia Close (2017) [Indigenous women and Colombia's peace process: Pathways to participation](#). Conciliation Resources.

Strand, Arne, Astri Suhrke, Torunn Wimpelmann & Samira Hamidi

(2017) [A Question of Implementation. Strategies for supporting the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Afghanistan](#). Report in External Series, April 2017.

UN Women & International Gender Champions Geneva (2017) [Shaping the International Agenda: Raising Women's Voices in Intergovernmental Forums](#). March 2017.

Warren, Roslyn, Anna Applebaum, Briana Mawby, Holly Fuhrman, Rebecca Turkington & Mayesha Alam (2017) [Inclusive Justice: How Women Shape Transitional Justice in Tunisia and Colombia](#). GIWPS.

Yadav, Punam (2017) [1325 – is that a taxi number? Implementation of the National Action Plan on 1325 and 1820 in Nepal](#). LSE WPS Working Paper 4/2017. ■

[PRIO Annual Peace Address 2017](#) with Oby Ezekwesili of the #Bring-BackOurGirls campaign, PRIO, 14 September. By invitation only.

[Eighth High-Level Seminar on Gender and Inclusive Peace Processes](#), co-organised by Crisis Management Institute, UN DPA and PRIO GPS Centre, Helsinki, 10–12 October 2017. By invitation only. ■

Upcoming Events

[Fifth Annual Missing Peace Young Scholars Network Workshop](#) on 'Bridging the Research and Policy Divides in Conflict-Related Sexual Violence and Sexual Exploitation & Abuse', San Francisco, 10–12 July. By invitation only.

[Call for Members](#) to the Research School on Peace and Conflict. Deadline: 7 August 2017.

[Research Network on Gender, Peace and Security meeting](#), PRIO GPS Centre, 8 September. By invitation only.



PRIO Centre on
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The PRIO Gender, Peace and Security Update is published by the PRIO Centre on Gender, Peace and Security with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway. If you wish to find out more about our current research projects, please visit our website www.prio.org/gender. If you have any comments or inquiries regarding the newsletter, please contact the editors: jenlor@prio.org