Gender, violence and peace: a post-2015 development agenda

Conflict and violence have been the most important factors obstructing progress on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to date. Countries that have recently experienced major violence have higher poverty rates than other countries,[1] and UN Member States have recognised that "conflict and post-conflict countries are the most challenged in achieving any of the Goals by 2015."[2]

Gender has increasingly become a part of the international peace and security agenda, particularly since the passage of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 and subsequent resolutions[3] on women, peace and security. Yet little attention has been given to examining how the resources and political will generated by the post-2015 framework could help move this agenda forward.

In this paper, Saferworld and Conciliation Resources set out a vision for including gender, peace and security in the post-2015 framework.[4] A gender, peace and security approach to post-2015 includes, but also goes beyond a focus on women's empowerment. Inter alia, it means paying attention to the relationships between gender, violence and inclusive decision-making. Building on our previous recommendations for including peacebuilding commitments in the post-2015 development agenda, we suggest targets and indicators that illustrate how gender, peace and security can best be integrated into the framework.

1 *The World Development Report 2011: conflict, security and development* warned that a country that experienced major violence over the period from 1981 to 2005 has a poverty rate 21 percentage points higher than a country that did not experience such levels of violence.
2 UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda (2012), Peace and security thematic think piece, p. 3.
3 At the time of writing, UNSCRs on women, peace and security include 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106 and 2122.
4 This paper complements work done by our organisations on post-2015, individually and in cooperation with others. It is not meant to set out a comprehensive peacebuilding / conflict prevention agenda for post-2015, but rather looks at the intersections of gender, peace and security and explains its relevance to post-2015. We also include what we think are useful suggestions from other organisations.

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Recommendations

Things the post-2015 development framework should do:

- be universal, aimed at advancing sustainable peace for all. People, not states, should be at its core.
- integrate peacebuilding and violence prevention by including goals and targets, which address the most common drivers of conflict and violence.
- include a standalone gender equality goal, which balances targets on ending abuses of women's rights, targets supporting women's agency and leadership and targets to tackle the underlying causes of gender inequality, including discriminatory attitudes and social norms.
- include among these commitments targets and indicators to address gender issues which drive conflict, violence and exclusion. Inclusive decision-making should also be a key feature of the new framework.
- utilise disaggregated data to help eliminate gender inequality and a range of other inequalities in every element of the new framework, and invest in data-gathering capacities to enable this.

Targets the post-2015 framework should include:

- All social groups can express political opinion without fear and participate in the decisions that affect society.
- Increase women's political participation and influence on decision-making at all levels.
- All social groups are free from violence and insecurity.
- Violence against women and girls is eliminated.
- Broader targets to address key drivers of conflict and violence (see Saferworld: Addressing conflict and violence from 2015: A vision of goals, targets and indicators).

Cover image: *A woman in Sunsari, Nepal, expresses her security concerns to district and national level government stakeholders during an event in her village as part of a project that brings together community members and authorities to address local security issues.*
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Gender matters for sustainable peace

A number of studies have found a strong correlation between levels of conflict and gender inequality.[5] The nature of this relationship is not always clear – that is, it is unclear whether violence fuels gender inequality, gender inequality fuels violence, or both. While in some cases women make gains in advancing their strategic interests during times of conflict, this is often – though not always – followed by a post-conflict backlash in which more unequal gender roles are restored.

There is strong evidence that the gender norms which underpin gender inequality can drive conflict and violence, particularly where militarised notions of masculinity are prevalent.[6] This is most obvious when discriminatory attitudes fuel gender-based violence; however, it can also be observed in armed conflict within and between communities.

"Conflict and violence have been important barriers to achieving the MDGs for women and girls"

There are many examples of how gender dynamics can fuel conflict. Research by Saferworld and others in South Sudan reveals that participation in violent cattle raids, which perpetuate conflict between communities, is seen as a prerequisite to manhood and a rite of passage for young men. The bride price system, in which cattle are exchanged for girls and women, exacerbates violent cycles of abduction and revenge.[7] As a result, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) argues that addressing gender norms in South Sudan is crucial to addressing the underlying causes of conflict.[8] Similarly, in parts of Yemen, owning a gun is considered an integral part of being a man. This close association between masculinity and gun ownership has no doubt contributed to Yemenis becoming the second most heavily armed population in the world. The widespread availability of weapons among the young male population has meant that small disputes can rapidly escalate into violent conflicts.

Peace matters for gender equality

As well as causing death, injury, and displacement, armed conflict destroys infrastructure, disrupts markets, disturbs social ties, diminishes the capacity of states, and diverts vital resources away from development.[9] It is therefore no surprise that conflict can exacerbate gender inequality. Conflict and militarisation tend to reinforce men's traditional roles as decision-makers and fighters, which may explain why the available evidence suggests that men are more likely to suffer violent deaths during armed conflict.

At the same time, conflict and violence exacerbate many of the causes of women's exclusion. For example, they typically increase:

- violence against women
- women's double burden of productive and reproductive labour
- the number of women's dependents (including the injured and orphaned)
- disease and malnutrition among women and girls[10]

Conflict and violence have been important barriers to achieving the MDGs for women and girls:[11] for example, in 2008 all eight of the countries with the highest maternal mortality ratios were in or emerging from violent conflict.[12]

5 In *Pillars of Peace: Understanding the Key Attitudes and Institutions that Underpin Peaceful Societies* (2013), the Institute for Economics & Peace stresses a strong association for higher levels of gender equality and peace (p. 31). Other examples include: Institute for Economics & Peace (2011), Structures of peace, pp. 17-18; Caprioli, M. (2000), 'Gendered conflict'. Journal of Peace Research, 37(1), 51-68; Caprioli, M. (2005), 'Primed for violence: the role of gender inequality in predicting internal conflict'. International Studies Quarterly, 49(2), 161-178; Melander, E. (2005), 'Gender equality and intrastate armed conflict'. International Studies Quarterly, 49(4), 695-714.

6 A range of evidence and analysis is set out in Breines, I., Connell, R. and Eide, I. (2000), *Male roles, masculinities and violence: a culture of peace perspective*.

7 Saferworld (2012), *People's peacemaking perspectives in South Sudan*. For further analysis of gender norms and cattle raiding in South Sudan see Small Arms Survey (2010), *Symptoms and causes: insecurity and underdevelopment in Eastern Equatoria*; United States Institute of Peace (2011), *Dowry and division: youth and state building in South Sudan;* Oxfam (2013), *Challenges to security, livelihoods and gender justice in South Sudan;* Richmond, M. and Krause-Jackson, F. 'Cows-for-bride inflation spurs cattle theft in South Sudan', Bloomberg News, 26 July 2011.

8 OECD INCAF (2013), *Gender and statebuilding in fragile and conflict-affected fragile states*

9 For a summary of evidence on the relationship between conflict, violence and the MDGs, see Saferworld (2012), *The impact of conflict and violence on achieving development*.

10 Ormhaug, C., Meier, P. and Hernes, H. (2009), Armed conflict deaths disaggregated by gender; Rehn, E. and Sirleaf, E. J. (2002), *Women, war and peace: the independent expert's assessment on the impact of armed conflict on women and women's role in peacebuilding.*

11 UN Women and ECLAC (2013), *Report of the Expert Group Meeting on structural and policy constraints in achieving the MDGs for women and girls*, http://www.unwomen.org/~/media/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/58/CSW58-2013-EGM-Report-en.pdf

12 UNECA, 'Assessing Progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals' (2012), p 68, http://www1.uneca.org/Portals/mdgreports/2012/Goal05.pdf.

Kuajok, Warrap State, South Sudan. Community security focus group. © Saferworld/Thomas Martin

Defining goals, targets and indicators

The post-2015 framework is not going to be and should not be regarded as the solution for all problems. The six UNSCRs on women, peace and security and the UN's accompanying global indicators set out a wide range of international commitments, and the post-2015 framework ought to complement – not duplicate – these. While the UNSCRs focus on responding to conflict and violence, the post-2015 agenda can and should take a longer term approach, addressing structural, developmental barriers to peace, development and gender equality. Issues which are relevant only for countries currently affected by conflict, such as women's participation in peace negotiations, may be less relevant to a global development framework. However, key elements of the gender, peace and security agenda – including some of the UN's global indicators – *are* universally relevant and *could* make important contributions to promoting peace and gender equality post-2015. The following sections set out our recommendations for goals, targets and indicators to be included in the framework.

"Only when all feel they have a stake in the future, and societies are able to manage competing interests constructively, will sustainable peace come within reach"

A standalone goal on gender equality

Gender equality is an important end in itself, deserving its own goal. A range of research from the World Bank, UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), OECD and others also demonstrates that achievement of MDG3 on gender equality is vital to the achievement of the other MDGs, and the OECD has declared that "it is evident that continuing discrimination against girls and women will make it difficult to fully achieve any of the MDGs."[13]

A post-2015 gender equality goal should be transformative: it should address structural causes of gender inequality at all levels – national, local and household. This should include addressing concrete barriers to access to resources and participation in

13 UN Development Group (2010), *Thematic paper on MDG3: promote gender equality and empower women*, p 11; World Bank (2003), *Gender equality and the Millennium Development* Goals, Gender and Development Group; UNDP (2010), *Helen Clark's speech at the 'Women Deliver' conference*, available at http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/presscenter/speeches/2010/06/08/helen-clarks-speech-at-the-women-deliver-conference-/ ; UNESCO (2010), *Gender equality: the missing link? Rethinking the internationally agreed development goals beyond 2015*, proceedings of the UNESCO Future Forum, 9-11 September 2010; OECD Development Centre (2010), *Gender inequality and the MDGs: what are the missing dimensions?*

decision-making processes, as well as social norms and attitudes which uphold gender inequality (both elaborated on in the section below).

Gender inequality results in women being disadvantaged around the world, and hence the post-2015 framework should have targets that focus specifically on women's rights. But gender inequality should not be treated only as a women's issue. Even as we focus on women's rights, progress is impossible unless behaviour and attitudes towards gender change. Transforming gender relations requires both women and men to change the way they think about their roles and identities, and indicators focused on men's and women's attitudes are vital to challenging social norms and values.

In addition, the framework needs to address other axes of inequality and therefore disaggregate data according to age, disability, ethnicity and other factors.

While a standalone gender equality goal is important, in itself it will not be enough. Gender equality will also need to be mainstreamed throughout the framework, including through gender-sensitive targets and gender-disaggregated data.[14] Mainstreaming gender inequality will also help address other inequalities and problems. For example there is evidence that increasing women's paid employment in post-conflict countries can improve community welfare and may lead to significant peace dividends.[15]

Inclusive governance and women's participation

Sustainable peace requires inclusive decision-making processes. As evidenced in the *World Development Report 2011: conflict, security and development*, peace and development can only be upheld by states that are inclusive, responsive, fair, and accountable to all of their people. Exclusion of some social groups from participation in governance structures can be a key driver of conflict.[16] Only when all feel they have a stake in the future, and societies are able to manage competing interests constructively, will sustainable peace come within reach. A target on inclusive governance, ensuring that all social groups can participate in the decisions that affect society, should therefore be a key component of the post-2015 framework.

In addition to ensuring that individuals from all social groups - including the most marginalised - take up decision-making positions, such a target should aim to open up decision-making processes to enable people to voice concerns.

In addition to a target on inclusive governance, the post-2015 framework should include a target on increasing women's participation and influence in decision-making under a gender equality goal. While women make up half the world's population, they continue to be excluded from leadership positions around the world – in developing and developed countries alike. Women very rarely get to take part in decision-making on matters of peace and security, and this reflects their exclusion from senior decision-making positions in most societies. Support for women's leadership can also help to break down gender stereotypes: in current peace and security efforts, women are often depicted merely as victims in need of protection. This ignores the active role that women can and do play in peace and conflict, whether as agents of change or within fighting forces.[17] Including this gender-specific target would enhance broader efforts toward inclusive governance by addressing gendered barriers to participation.

As with other targets, a target promoting women's participation should be based on an analysis of the specific barriers to their participation in each context. In some cases, it may be that women require further education, organisational and advocacy skills. In other cases, addressing structural barriers such as resistance to women's participation, the burden of unpaid care, and lack of access to resources is just as important.

Furthermore, participation in decision-making does not guarantee influence on it. Efforts to further participation should not just be focused on numbers of representatives; participation must be meaningful too. For example, during negotiations for the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Sudan, while female delegates were included, they were expected to toe the party line and their perspectives and experiences were overlooked in the negotiations.[18]Recognising the tendency for representation in public institutions to be limited to those from more privileged backgrounds, all indicators should be disaggregated where possible by factors such as ethnicity, region and income group.

An indicator measuring women's perceptions as to whether decision-makers are addressing their concerns would help to assess whether women and their concerns are adequately represented.

Moreover, grassroots initiatives – often involving or even led by women - should be more greatly valued and financially and politically supported. These initiatives

14 Policymakers should consider ways of ensuring that this does not assume binary gender identities of 'male' and 'female' but takes into account those who self-identify outside of this binary.

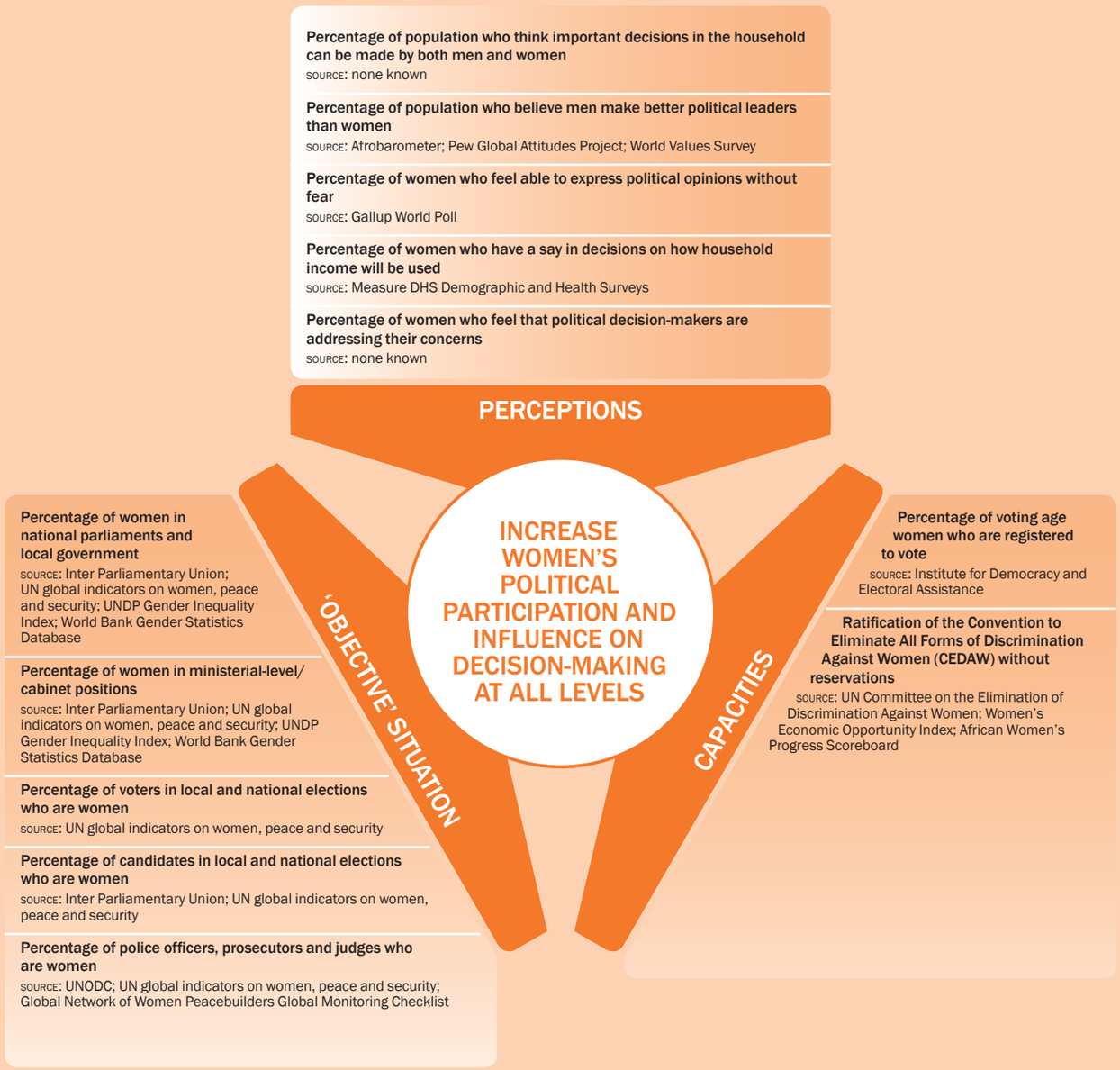
15 UN Women (2012), *Women working for recovery: the impact of female employment on family and community welfare after conflict*.

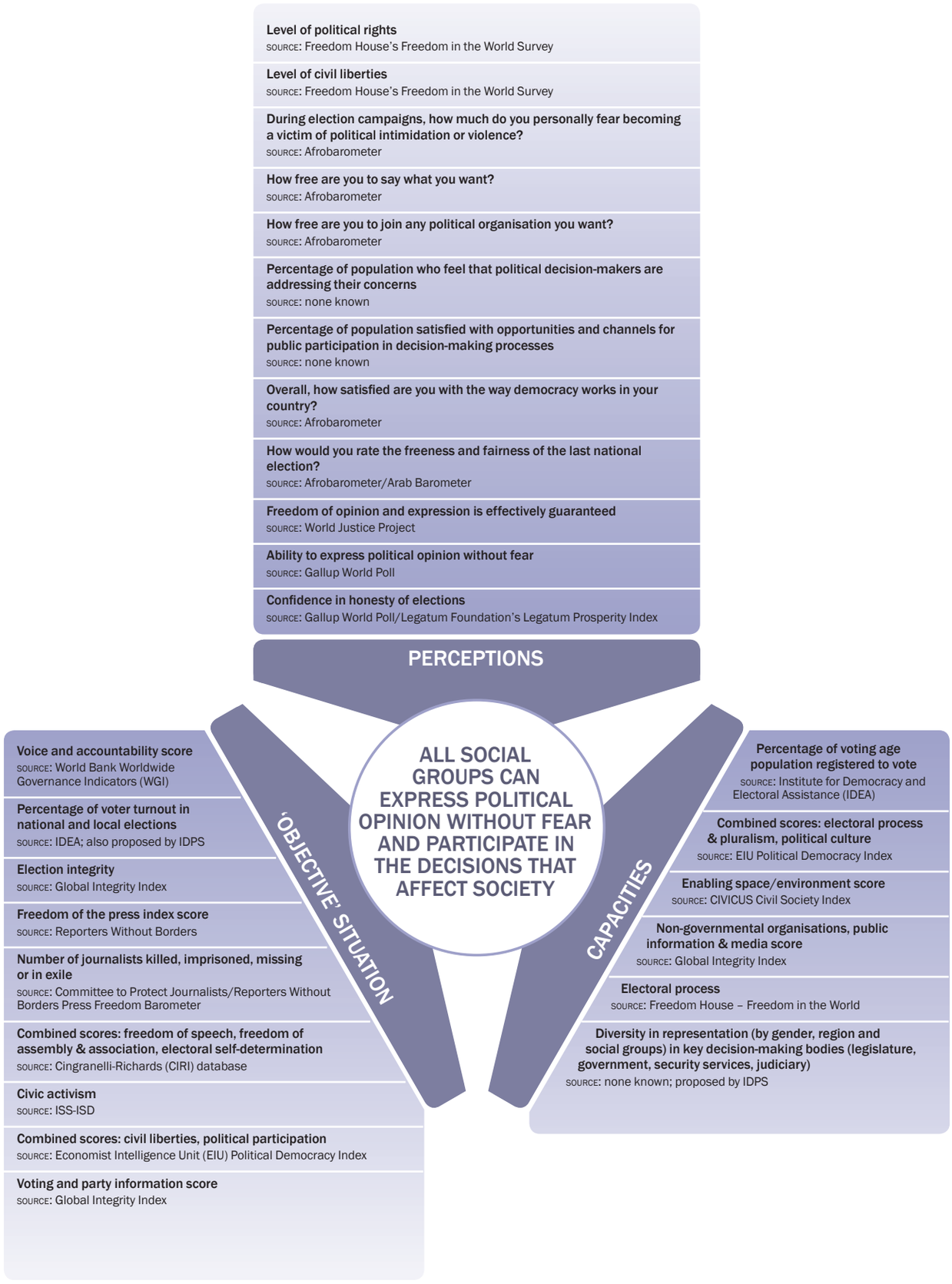
16 For a summary of evidence see Brinkman, H., Attree, L. and Hezir, S. (2013), *Addressing horizontal inequalities as drivers of conflict in the post-2015 development agenda*, pp. 7-8.

17 Conciliation Resources, *Accord Insight: Women building peace*, March 2013. See also UNIFEM, Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations: Connections between Presence and Influence, August 2010.

18 *Accord Insight: Women building peace*, case study Sudan.

Each illustrative target contains a range of indicator options which could be further developed. In each case, the indicators we consider more promising are placed closer to the target. The 'source' identified for each indicator illustrates that there is a recent multinational metric available attempting to monitor the variable in question, but this is not a claim that this data source is adequate.




Level of political rights
SOURCE: Freedom House's Freedom in the World Survey
Level of civil liberties
SOURCE: Freedom House's Freedom in the World Survey
During election campaigns, how much do you personally fear becoming a victim of political intimidation or violence?
SOURCE: Afrobarometer
How free are you to say what you want?
SOURCE: Afrobarometer
How free are you to join any political organisation you want?
SOURCE: Afrobarometer
Percentage of population who feel that political decision-makers are addressing their concerns
SOURCE: none known
Percentage of population satisfied with opportunities and channels for public participation in decision-making processes
SOURCE: none known
Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in your country?
SOURCE: Afrobarometer
How would you rate the freeness and fairness of the last national election?
SOURCE: Afrobarometer/Arab Barometer
Freedom of opinion and expression is effectively guaranteed
SOURCE: World Justice Project
Ability to express political opinion without fear
SOURCE: Gallup World Poll
Confidence in honesty of elections
SOURCE: Gallup World Poll/Legatum Foundation's Legatum Prosperity Index
PERCEPTIONS
ALL SOCIAL GROUPS CAN EXPRESS POLITICAL OPINION WITHOUT FEAR AND PARTICIPATE IN THE DECISIONS THAT AFFECT SOCIETY
'OBJECTIVE' SITUATION
Voice and accountability score
SOURCE: World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI)
Percentage of voter turnout in national and local elections
SOURCE: IDEA; also proposed by IDPS
Election integrity
SOURCE: Global Integrity Index
Freedom of the press index score
SOURCE: Reporters Without Borders
Number of journalists killed, imprisoned, missing or in exile
SOURCE: Committee to Protect Journalists/Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Barometer
Combined scores: freedom of speech, freedom of assembly & association, electoral self-determination
SOURCE: Cingranelli-Richards (CIRI) database
Civic activism
SOURCE: ISS-ISD
Combined scores: civil liberties, political participation
SOURCE: Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) Political Democracy Index
Voting and party information score
SOURCE: Global Integrity Index
CAPACITIES
Percentage of voting age population registered to vote
SOURCE: Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)
Combined scores: electoral process & pluralism, political culture
SOURCE: EIU Political Democracy Index
Enabling space/environment score
SOURCE: CIVICUS Civil Society Index
Non-governmental organisations, public information & media score
SOURCE: Global Integrity Index
Electoral process
SOURCE: Freedom House – Freedom in the World
Diversity in representation (by gender, region and social groups) in key decision-making bodies (legislature, government, security services, judiciary)
SOURCE: none known; proposed by IDPS

play an integral role in building and sustaining peace, and more should be done to focus not only on formal processes and governance but also on informal. In various contexts, supporting grassroots initiatives can be just as vital as increasing the participation of women in official decision-making.[19]

Addressing violence and insecurity

Lack of basic security is both a driver and a consequence of armed conflict,[20] and preventing direct violence and insecurity is one – though by no means the only – element of building sustainable peace. People experience violence and insecurity differently according to their gender and a range of other factors. For example, the available data suggests that while men are more likely than women to suffer violent deaths both in conflict and in peacetime, certain forms of violence are more likely to affect women, such as abuse by an intimate partner.[21] Research by Conciliation Resources revealed that women make up the overriding majority of small-scale traders in cross-border communities, making them more likely to experience security threats relating to corruption and sexual harassment from officers as they cross the border.[22] Such examples illustrate why the post-2015 framework needs to be designed to address the diverse security needs of all social groups, including women.

"People experience violence and insecurity differently according to their gender"

One means of measuring people's security without being prescriptive about what makes people feel insecure would be to measure levels of security through a 'basket' of indicators. Thus indicators on security would include perception indicators asking people how safe they feel, using disaggregated data to capture responses from all social groups. From a gender perspective, it is important to consider that discriminatory treatment by security and justice providers on the basis of not only gender but also ethnicity, class and other factors can be a key barrier to accessing security and justice services. So a disaggregated measure of men's and women's trust in security and justice providers is particularly vital.

In addition to a general measure of perceptions of security, targets and indicators measuring specific forms of violence can help to ensure that important issues are not missed. For example, the issue of violence against women has been referred to as the "missing MDG target".[23] A target on this is needed under a gender equality goal in the new framework. Many forms of violence against women, such as harassment, domestic violence and marital rape, are often not thought of as security issues even by women themselves, and so would not necessarily be accurately accounted for under a general target to improve people's security. This is particularly true of mental and emotional abuse, which is not always thought of as a form of violence. Including indicators measuring a variety of forms of violence is therefore crucial from a human rights perspective.

Measuring levels of violence – particularly gender-based violence - is notoriously difficult due to the contestation of the concept, taboos around speaking out about it and risks of retraumatising survivors or putting them at further risk. Resources will need to be invested to find ways of measuring it which are rigorous, ethical, conflict-sensitive and minimise the risk of manipulation.

From a peacebuilding perspective it is also vital to address violence – including gender-based violence – against men. Whereas men are commonly depicted as perpetrators of violence, gender-based violence against men, including in the form of sexual violence, forced recruitment into armed groups, and gender-based killings, is a common feature of armed conflict.[24] A recent study by Oxford Research Group in Syria, for example, found that deaths among boys outnumbered those among girls by two to one, and that older boys were "consistently the most frequent victims of targeting killings such as those involving sniper fire, execution or torture."[25]

Measuring the prevalence of gender-based violence for the purposes of the post-2015 framework would be exceptionally difficult, as efforts to identify in practice which instances of violence are gender-based and what can be classified as violence would be open to contestation. However, it is feasible to include these forms of violence in the post-2015 framework in other ways, for example through a target on violence and insecurity (which could include a measure of sexual violence) that relies on perceptions and utilises gender-disaggregated data (see illustrative target on page 9).

19 Conciliation Resources, *Muslim women in peace processes: Reflections for dialogue in Mindanao*, July 2011.
20 Centre on International Cooperation (2011), 'Development in the shadow of violence: a knowledge agenda for policy'; World Bank (2011), *World Development Report 2011: conflict, security and development.*
21 Ormhaug, C., Meier, P. and Hernes, H. (2009), *Armed conflict deaths disaggregated by gender*.
22 Conciliation Resources, *Talking Borders* documentary-drama; Conciliation Resources, *Border community security – Mano River Union region*, Maureen Poole and Janet Adama Mohammed (2013).
23 UNIFEM, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRb1PPlblfQ.
24 Carpenter, R. C. (2006), 'Recognising gender-based violence against civilian men and boys in conflict situations', *Security Dialogue*, 37(1).
25 Oxford Research Group (2013), *Stolen futures: the hidden toll of child casualties in Syria*, p 5.

Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family had something stolen from your house?
SOURCE: Afrobarometer
Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family been physically attacked?
SOURCE: Afrobarometer
Perception that the national security forces operate in accordance with the law/in the best interest of the people
SOURCE: none known; suggested in UN Monitoring Peace Consolidation
Reliability of police services score
SOURCE: World Economic Forum – Global Competitiveness Report (WEF-GCR)
Victimisation (sexual assault) in the past year
SOURCE: International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS)
Victimisation (attack, threat or stealing by force) in the past year
SOURCE: ICVS
Do the police treat people equally?
SOURCE: piloted by Vera Institute of Justice
How easy or difficult is it to get help from the police?
SOURCE: Afrobarometer
Alternative: Difficulty in getting help from the police?
SOURCE: Arab Barometer
Percentage of population who believe that they could contact the police to report a crime within 24 hours
SOURCE: piloted by Vera Institute of Justice
Acceptance of others' use of violence as a means to an end
SOURCE: Gallup World Poll
Alternative: Agreement with the statement 'The use of violence is never justified in politics'
SOURCE: Afrobarometer
Do you have confidence in the military?
SOURCE: Gallup World Poll
Alternative: How much do you trust the army?
SOURCE: Afrobarometer
How much do you trust the police?
SOURCE: Arab, Asian, East Asia and Afro barometers
Do you feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where you live?
SOURCE: Gallup World Poll
In the last 12 months, were you assaulted, mugged, or was property or money stolen from you or another household member?
SOURCE: Gallup World Poll
PERCEPTIONS
ALL SOCIAL GROUPS ARE FREE FROM VIOLENCE AND INSECURITY
'OBJECTIVE' SITUATION
Deaths due to violence, war, civil conflict and other intentional injuries per 100,000 population
SOURCE: WHO Global Burden of Disease
Alternative: Homicides per 100,000 population
SOURCE: UNODC
Rate of population displacement due to violence
SOURCE: International Displacement Monitoring Centre/ UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
Number of deaths from armed conflict
SOURCE: Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP)/IISS
Number of children recruited by armed groups and violent gangs per 100,000 population
SOURCE: none known
Political stability and absence of violence score
SOURCE: World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators
Total recorded crimes per 100,000 people
SOURCE: UNODC
CAPACITIES
Rule of law score
SOURCE: World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators
Number of convictions over number of police
SOURCE: UNODC
Number of security officers and police per violent death
SOURCE: UNODC, EIU
Extent to which soldiers/police receive pay and compensation to which they are entitled
SOURCE: none known; suggested in UN Monitoring Peace Consolidation

It is also necessary to address the attitudes underlying gender-based violence, as this is key to prevention. As above, qualitative evidence suggests a strong link between conflict and militarised notions of masculinity which normalise relations of domination and control and valorise violence. One means of addressing this as a cause of conflict and violence could be through an indicator measuring acceptance of others' use of violence as a means to an end, which is included in the illustrative target on page 9. This is also particularly important in relation to gender-based violence: the evidence tells us that discriminatory attitudes towards women, including a belief in a man's right to beat or force sexual contact on his partner, are among the factors most consistently associated with male violence against women.[26] Given the importance of social norms and attitudes as an underlying cause of gender inequality more broadly, these are included as indicators in each of our illustrative targets, but alternatively could be separated out into a target on discriminatory attitudes under a gender equality goal.

26 See, for example, Heise, L. (2012), *What works to prevent partner violence: an evidence overview*; Barker, G., Contreras, J.M., Heilman, B., Singh, A.K., Verma, R.K, and Nascimento, M. (2011), *Evolving men: initial results from the international men and gender equality survey (IMAGES)*; Partners for Prevention. (2013). *Why do some men use violence and how can we prevent it? Quantitative findings from the UN multi-country study on men and violence.*

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