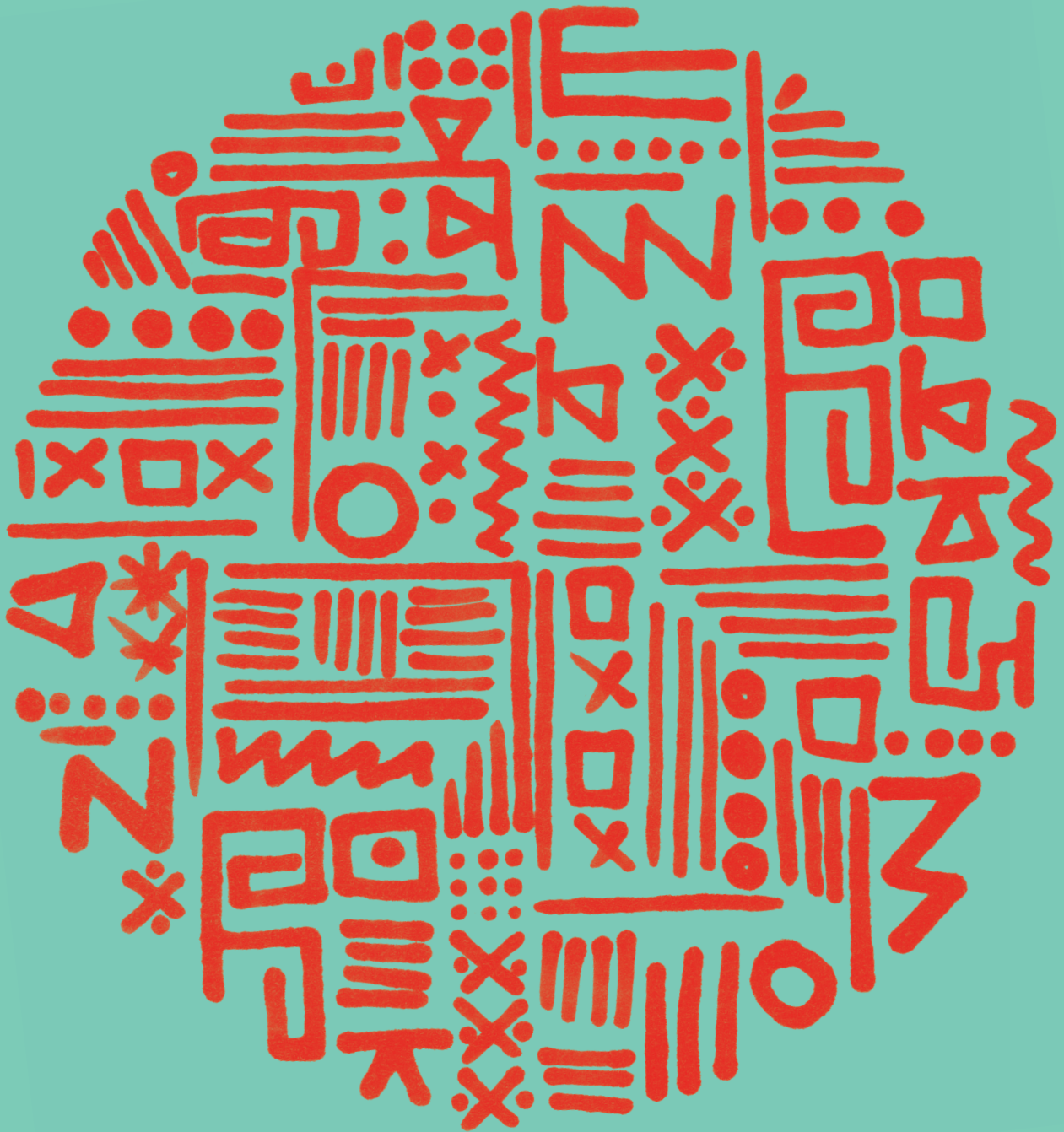




**Women's Leadership and Participation in the
Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework
for the Democratic Republic of the Congo
and the Great Lakes Region: Achievements,
Challenges, and Opportunities**
By Niamh Reilly and Roslyn Warren
Foreword by Ambassador Melanne Vermeer



A report of a joint study by the Centre for Global Women's Studies, NUI Galway, and the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security, Washington, DC. July 2014

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Niamh Reilly and Roslyn Warren

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FOREWORD

During my tenure as the first U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues, ending the horrific conflict in the DRC and the Great Lakes region was an all-consuming priority for many of my colleagues and me. I will never forget my visits to the region where I learned firsthand how women, caught in the middle of violent conflict, want to move from pain to power, but lacked the mechanisms and opportunities to do so. Despite displacement, unspeakable suffering, deprivation, and the unrealized desire to improve their lives, women caught in the conflict continue to care for their families and work to keep their communities functioning. Moreover, many of them continue to be on the frontlines of peacemaking efforts in the region.

The appointment of Mary Robinson, the former President of Ireland, to serve as the UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region of Africa in March 2013 marks an important turning point in the history of one of the deadliest and most complicated conflicts of our time. To this position, SE Robinson brings commitment, credibility, and authority. She also has extensive experience in establishing democratic governance and rule of law, facilitating political transition, and championing human rights.

SE Robinson also recognized an important fact that many of us in the field of women, peace and security have long acknowledged: women's participation is critical to building sustainable peace because no society can progress – economically, politically, or socially – if half its population is marginalized. As is the case in other contexts, this is most assuredly true in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region, where, for far too long, women have been merely viewed as victims, not as agents of change. It is true that women have been subjected to extreme brutality – including sexual violence – during this ongoing conflict, but women have also mobilized and organized for peace at the grassroots level. SE Robinson recognized that both Track I (high-level formal peace negotiations) and Track II (informal, grassroots peace-building efforts) must include women if there is any chance for the peace process to achieve sustainable peace.

To realize this vision, SE Robinson and her team developed a new approach to integrate the perspectives and needs of some of the most underrepresented segments of society, particularly women, into the high-level negotiations and outcome peace documents. In the context of protracted conflict, opportunities to create genuine positive change are limited. This is especially true when one's vision for peace elevates those who have been systematically victimized by the conflict and who have also been perennially barred from previous efforts to end conflict. SE Robinson's leadership has been instrumental to widening this window of opportunity in the Great Lakes region for women and larger civil society.

Now, eighteen months since the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Great Lakes region was signed, in February 2013, it is critical to review the progress that has been made to bring an end to one of the most protracted and deadliest conflicts of the modern era. With the implementation of the regional plan of action for the PSC Framework currently underway, it is also timely to identify, examine, and map the achievements, obstacles, and opportunities for merging these Track I and Track II processes and, in doing so, cementing peace.

Research and analysis is essential to informed policymaking and practice but, all too often, occurs in hindsight. Time-sensitive and context-specific research enhances our collective understanding of the opportunities and challenges that exist for women who aim to design and implement peace agreements as these processes unfold.

Recognizing the benefits, the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security joined forces with the National University of Ireland in Galway to focus on the implementation of SE Robinson's 'Framework of Hope.' Over the course of the last year, Reilly and Warren engaged in academically rigorous, practically relevant, and evidence-based research to produce this report, which was deliberately conducted in real-time with the goal of influencing the ongoing peace process and providing stakeholders with information that can help improve their approach to match realities on the ground.

It is our hope that this report serves as a resource for all who are engaged in creating sustainable peace in the Great Lakes region – civil society activists, government and international officials, humanitarian professionals, and military personnel alike. The scope of this report spans the areas of protection, prevention, and participation. At the same time, the report elevates the perspectives of those most affected by the armed conflict and demonstrates that women are not just victims of war but architects of peace.

Based on a review of key policy documents at the international, regional, and state level in the DRC, as well as first-hand interviews with international officials and women civil society leaders in the DRC, Reilly and Warren provide a useful update of and practical insights into ongoing efforts to implement the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework. In addition to identifying major achievements to date, this report highlights opportunities for women's leadership and participation in the unfolding process. It also showcases women's analyses and solutions relating to implementation of the PSC Framework and flags some of the major obstacles that must be surmounted before these solutions can be put into practice. In doing so, Reilly and Warren significantly contribute to monitoring and evaluating SE Robinson's efforts, which is essential to measuring effectiveness and achieving lasting peace. The lessons here are specific to peacemaking, political transition, reconstruction, and post-conflict justice in the Great Lakes region, which are all part and parcel of the realization of the 'Framework of Hope.'

At the international level, the report notes there is continued and cautious approval for the UN's support of the DRC Government in its military operations against armed groups. Reilly and Warren have found that SE Robinson's multidimensional approach, including close liaison with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the DRC and Head of MONUSCO, is clearly advancing a recognition that crucial political, social, and economic investments must follow military operations if the security gains made thus far are to be converted into sustainable peace.

At the national level in the DRC, this report reveals much about prevailing and complex obstacles to the implementation of the PSC Framework and to the inclusion of women and gender considerations, in particular. UN reports by the Special Envoy and Secretary-General indicate that progress on national level implementation of the PSC Framework continues to be extremely slow. The responses of women civil society leaders, who were interviewed for this report, demonstrate grounds for concern as well as optimism.

A significant gap exists between the Government and its most politically active female citizens. This gap manifests itself in two forms – 1) in the order of priority given to the different commitments contained in the PSC Framework and 2) in the approach ostensibly taken to implement these commitments. While women interviewed agree with the Government, for example, that security sector reform and the consolidation of state authority are top priorities and vital to achieving peace, the analysis and solutions the women put forward are different. Women repeatedly point to inextricable links between social, economic, and personal security, backed by the rule of law. These assessments are oftentimes based on their personal experiences and the reality of their lives. In contrast, the DRC Government relegates the social and economic development aspects of the PSC Framework to the bottom of its list of priorities.

On an optimistic note, this disconnect offers a glimpse of what women would potentially contribute to peace building in the DRC, if given the opportunity. The women's views presented in this report show a deep commitment to a vision of the DRC that is peaceful, democratic, and progressive; a place where the entire population, women and men alike, enjoy equal benefits of peace and sustainable development.

The model of cooperation between GIWPS and NUI Galway sets an important example for others in the field of women, peace and security who seek to connect research with practice. Reilly and Warren's well-researched report will contribute to the ongoing efforts to end the violent conflict. Those who are engaged in the peace process should make note of the key findings and lessons learned which are articulated here. Reilly and Warren also show that engagement with women's civil society groups must go beyond brief consultations. If integration of women's civil society concerns and interests are to be pursued in earnest, engagement must be an iterative, interactive, and trust-based process. Only by doing so can we support those who fervently seek avenues to move from pain to power and transform the realities on the ground in a way that empowers men and women alike.

Advocating for women to participate in peace processes, while necessary, is not sufficient. Those of us who work in this field must strive to create enabling environments for women's participation at the grassroots, national, and international levels. It is not only the right and moral thing to do but also the smart and strategic thing to do. As SE Robinson's leadership and this report demonstrate, we need to change the way we build peace. We need to ensure that the voices of those who are most affected by armed conflicts are integrated into the peace building during the peace processes, not as an afterthought. This is a critical juncture for the DRC and the Great Lakes. We must take the political goodwill that has resulted from SE Robinson's leadership and translate it into meaningful action. Now is the time.

Ambassador Melanne Vermeer

Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security

June 2014

INTRODUCTION

Much of what has been written about women and gender in the DRC conflict over the past decade has focused on the issue of sexual and gender-based violence as a weapon or tactic of war. While this continues to be a major concern affecting many thousands of mostly women and girls in the DRC, this study understands such violence as an expression of profound social inequalities, as well a symptom of conflict. From this perspective, tackling such inequalities is part of what is meant by tackling the root causes of conflict, including through greater participation by women at every level in peace processes and peace building.

This report takes as its point of departure, the adoption of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and region and the appointment of Mary Robinson as UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region of Africa. It is often observed that periods of transition from conflict to peace offer opportunities for women to participate in the rebuilding and reshaping of societies in transitions, especially through women's extensive engagement in civil society. Such windows of opportunity can close quickly however. Once 'peace' is formally concluded, traditional patterns of social organization are often reasserted, closing off women's access to decision-making roles and positions of influence in public life.

The overall objective of this project, therefore, is to provide timely, well-documented information on the ongoing implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework, with a focus on women and gender. We aimed to review the first year of operation of the PSC Framework as it unfolded. In particular, we wanted to identify key gains made, as well as challenges and opportunities that exist for women's leadership and participation, and for bottom-up civil society engagement more generally, therein. As such, the resulting report is also intended to support the efforts of women and other civil society actors to engage with and monitor progress in the implementation of the PSC Framework.

This report is based on a review of relevant policy documentation at international, regional and DRC levels (listed in the reference list) and on several semi-structured interviews by email with key informants, including 11 women civil society leaders in the DRC with the assistance of a translator (respondents are listed in Appendix C). 10 respondents provided responses in French, which have been translated into English for the purposes of this report. One person responded in English.

Part I provides a brief account of the recent history of conflict in the DRC and region, including the prominence of sexual and gender-based violence therein. It also includes a summary of the provisions of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework and its operation, an introduction to the role and mandate of the UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region of Africa, and a brief discussion of the particular approach taken by SE Robinson. Part II reviews highlights to date of progress in the implementation of the PSC Framework on each of its three levels: Regional, International and in the DRC.

Part III explores the views of women civil society leaders in the DRC regarding implementation efforts of the DRC Government to date in three key PSC Framework commitment areas: Security Sector Reform, Consolidation of State Authority, and Economic and Social Development. Appendix B includes a summary of the recommendations made to the DRC Government regarding each of these areas. Finally, in the conclusion we highlight some of the main achievements discussed in the report, with a focus on those aspects that present particular challenges, as well as opportunities for increasing women's participation and leadership in the implementation process.

BACKGROUND: CONFLICT IN THE DRC AND REGION

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), especially its eastern region, has faced recurring violent conflict since the 1994 Rwandan genocide, when Hutu ‘genocidaires’ massacred 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus over 100 days (Lezhnev and Prendergast 2013). After Paul Kagame’s Rwandan Patriotic Front defeated the anti-Tutsi forces and took control of Rwanda, remaining perpetrators hid among refugees fleeing into eastern DRC, where they regrouped into various militias. The Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) is the most recent formation of what remains of the forces defeated by Kagame in 1994. Most observers believe that Rwandan authorities have directly or indirectly supported various cross-border armed actions in eastern DRC since 1994, ostensibly to pursue justice for the genocide or to otherwise safeguard Rwanda’s interests.

The First and Second Congo Wars ensued in this unstable environment. In 1996, Rwanda and Uganda invaded the DRC (then named Zaire), supporting Laurent-Désiré Kabila’s Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (AFDL) and unseating dictator Mobutu Sese Seko (UN n.d.b). When Laurent Kabila sought to remove Rwandan and Ugandan forces in 1998, the Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD), supported by Rwanda and Uganda, rose up against Kabila. Angola, Namibia, Chad, and Zimbabwe backed Kabila (UN n.d.b). Ultimately, Joseph Kabila assumed control after his father’s assassination and helped end the Second Congo War. However, a fresh conflict erupted, this time with the National Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP) playing a central part but still nominally focused on eliminating the FDLR. Emerging from a failed peace agreement, the March 23 Movement (M23) succeeded the CNDP as the most recent armed group in eastern DRC linked to Rwanda (UN Security Council 2014a).

The defeat of the M23 in late 2013, the terms of which are outlined in the Nairobi declarations, has been widely viewed as a positive step toward stability and regional peace (International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and Southern African Development Community 2013). The Nairobi declarations and amnesty agreement exclude from amnesty ‘those responsible for crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and gross violations of human rights’ (UN Security Council 2014b, 1-2). However, the issue of the demobilization of the M23 remains open. The UN Secretary-General, in his most recent report on MONUSCO to the Security Council, noted concerns, from the perspective of the DRC, about the ongoing presence of former M23 fighters in Uganda and Rwanda (UN Security Council 2014c, 8). On the other hand, Rwanda regularly expresses frustration over what it alleges to be the inadequate action of MONUSCO to address the threats of other armed groups in the Great Lakes region (UN Security Council 2014f, 10).

Other armed groups, too numerous to list, are also active across eastern DRC. In addition to the FDLR, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), an Islamist group originating in Uganda, is currently considered to be a particular threat to peace and security in the region (UN MONUSCO n.d.). Within the DRC, various ‘Mai Mai’ militias also operate with different agendas, including some that target Rwandophone communities who are blamed for causing the chronic violence that has afflicted the region (Raise Hope for Congo 2014). As of mid-2013, UNHCR estimates that the conflicts in the DRC have generated about 450,000 refugees and 2.6 million internally displaced people (UNHCR 2014). Between August 1998 and April 2007 alone, one estimate puts the death toll at about 5.4 million people due to recurring violence, which would make the conflict the longest and deadliest since World War II (International Rescue Committee 2007, ii).

Importantly, eastern DRC holds immense natural resources, including tin, tantalum, tungsten, manganese, uranium, gold, and timber, along with the world's largest supply of copper, 80% of its coltan, and 60% of its cobalt (Enough Project n.d.; UN Economic Commission for Africa 2013). The UN Group of Experts notes that many of the armed groups operating in eastern DRC obtain 'funding from the production of and trade in natural resources' (UN Security Council 2014a, 3).

Congo also hosts the largest and most costly UN peacekeeping force (UN n.d.a). After the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement (signed by the DRC, Angola, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zimbabwe) formally ended the Second Congo War in July 1999 (although fighting continued) (UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 2010, 10), the Security Council established the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) (UN Security Council 1999). MONUC reformulated a decade later into the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) (UN Security Council 2010, 3). MONUSCO's mandate includes protecting civilians, humanitarian personnel, and human rights activists, and supporting the government's efforts to stabilize and consolidate peace across the country (UN Security Council 2010). In March 2013, the Security Council authorized the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) to 'neutralize' armed groups through 'targeted offensive operations' (UN Security Council 2013c, 7). MONUSCO and the FIB have authorization until March 2015 (UN Security Council 2014d). As of April 2014, MONUSCO's operational strength lay at 21,176 total uniformed and 4,467 civilian and volunteer personnel (UN n.d.a), with a \$1,456,378,300 budget for July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014 (UN General Assembly 2014).

The issue of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is prominent in narratives about the conflict in the DRC. The extent, modes and brutality of the use of sexual violence in this particular conflict are, by now, well documented (UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 2010, 318-325). For example, between January and July 2013, UNHCR's protection monitoring team registered 705 sexual violence cases in North Kivu; 434 indicated armed men were perpetrators (UNHCR 2013). In his most recent report to the Security Council, Martin Kobler, head of MONUSCO, confirms that 'sexual violence against young girls and women has continued to be a problem' in the DRC (UN Security Council 2014f, 3). The United Nations Mapping Exercise (March 1993 – June 2003) found the use of rape and sexual assault by all combatant forces to be 'recurrent, widespread and systematic' and attributes the prevalence of sexual violence to the 'near-total impunity' that perpetrators enjoy (UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 2010, 15, 16). In tandem with this 'culture of impunity,' Thomas Turner also points to the confluence of a wider 'culture of violence' that has emerged in the DRC through decades of structural violence linked to armed conflict, as well as a 'culture of rape,' which exists in all societies and is an expression of the unequal status of women (Turner 2013, 146).

Advocacy campaigns for action against SGBV have begun to have an impact, at least on the level of law and policy, in the DRC. Article 15 of the 2006 Constitution, for example, classifies sexual violence as a crime against humanity¹ and the Government adopted a National Strategy to Combat Gender Based Violence in 2009 (République Démocratique du Congo Ministère du Genre, de la Famille et de L'Enfant 2009). Most recently, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Zainab Bangura issued a joint communiqué with the Government of the DRC (Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict 2013). It contains several specific actions that the Government has committed to act on in relation to a range of areas where SGBV is a concern, from security and justice sectors reforms to proper management of natural resources.

Yet, the challenges involved in moving to end impunity for crimes of sexual violence remain enormous. According to the Mapping Report, 'very few cases of sexual violence ever reach the justice system' and when convictions do occur, 'defendants almost invariably escape prison' (UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 2010, 289-290). A recent DRC military court judgment in May 2014 on the Minova mass rape case (where 39 soldiers in the DRC army stood accused of raping 130 women and girls in 2012) acquitted one-third of the accused and found just two guilty of rape (UN News Centre 2014). And, at the international level, the International Criminal Court (ICC) recently found Germain Katanga guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity, but acquitted him on counts of rape, sexual slavery, and using child soldiers (ICC 2014).

The need to continue to press for accountability for all forms of SGBV is unquestioned; as well as being a symptom of armed conflict such violence reflects profound social inequality, which, in turn, is also a root cause of conflict. This study starts with the premise that ensuring women's participation in decision-making at every level is a matter of fairness and democracy, and is essential to generating solutions for challenges faced by any society. This is equally – if not more – true in societies undergoing transition from conflict. Since her appointment as UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region in March 2013 (UN News Centre 2013), Mary Robinson has championed the role of women as essential players in bringing lasting peace to the DRC and region. This report considers the first 18 months of the implementation of the PSC Framework, and explores the gains made, obstacles encountered and opportunities that exist for women's leadership and participation therein.

1 Article 15 of the Constitution of the DRC reads: 'The public authorities shall ensure the elimination of sexual violence. Without prejudice to international treaties and agreements, any sexual violence against any person, aimed at destabilizing or breaking up a family or decimating an entire population, is categorized as a crime against humanity, punishable by law' (République Démocratique du Congo Assemblée Nationale 2006, 9).

THE PEACE, SECURITY AND COOPERATION FRAMEWORK: AN OVERVIEW

On February 24, 2013, 11 African countries² and four international organizations³ signed the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region (hereafter: PSC Framework). In January 2014, Kenya and Sudan also became members (UN Security Council 2014b, 1). The PSC Framework outlines national, regional, and international commitments (Table 1) for ending the systemic violence that has afflicted the DRC, especially in the east of the country.

Table 1. OSESG summary of PSC Framework commitments:

FOR THE DRC	FOR THE REGION	FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY
To deepen security sector reform	To respect the sovereignty of neighbouring countries in terms of international affairs and territorial integrity	For Security Council to remain engaged in seeking long-term stability for the DRC
To consolidate State Authority, particularly in eastern DRC		A renewed commitment of bilateral partners to remain engaged with the region
To make progress in decentralisation	To neither tolerate nor provide assistance to armed groups	
To further economic development	To strengthen regional cooperation, including economic integration and judicial cooperation	To support economic integration and revitalise the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries
To further structural reform of public institutions		To review the United Nations Organization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO)
To further reconciliation	To neither harbour nor provide protection to any person accused of war crimes or crimes against humanity	To appoint a UN Special Envoy to foster durable solutions

Source: OSESG, A Framework of Hope: The Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Region (n.d.), 1.

The PSC Framework calls for the establishment of regional and national implementation bodies. The Regional Oversight Mechanism (ROM)⁴ has responsibility for developing the PSC Framework's implementation plan. The National Oversight Mechanism (NOM) oversees PSC national commitments in the DRC. A Technical Support Committee (TSC) comprised of signatory presidents' representatives is charged with developing benchmarks for the ROM implementation plan.

2 Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, DRC, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia

3 The African Union (AU), the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the United Nations (UN)

4 The ROM includes leaders of the signatory countries and representatives from the four signatory international organizations.

THE UN SPECIAL ENVOY FOR THE GREAT LAKES REGION OF AFRICA

In March 2013, Mary Robinson was appointed UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region of Africa. The Special Envoy (SE) must:

[Lead], coordinate and assess the implementation of national and regional commitments under the PSC Framework ... [and] lead a comprehensive political process that includes all relevant stakeholders to address the [conflict's] underlying root causes. (UN Security Council 2013c, 5)

A team of envoys works in conjunction with SE Robinson—Martin Kobler (Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the DRC and Head of MONUSCO), Russ Feingold (US Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region of Africa and the DRC), Boubacar Diarra (AU Special Representative for the Great Lakes region), Koen Vervaeke (EU Special Representative to the African Union), and recently appointed Bineta Diop (AU Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security).

Advocating for the interdependence of top-down and bottom-up ownership of the PSC Framework, SE Robinson's approach involves 'not just political leaders, but all of civil society, including women' (Robinson 2013a). Ultimately, she hopes people will hold signatory states accountable from below, explaining:

It is they [the countries' populations] who will benefit if this Framework is implemented fully, so they should be active in encouraging each of their governments to make special efforts to ensure its full implementation. (OSESF n.d., 1)

SE Robinson believes it is 'valid to prioritize women' (Robinson 2013b). Her Senior Gender Advisor and Senior Human Rights Officer note that her office meets with women's organizations on nearly every regional visit (Tabifor and Schwarz 2014). SE Robinson maintains:

[Women] are agents of change and have a great capacity to organise their communities. Progress would be limited if the vast potential and value of women was not incorporated into the search for durable peace-building solutions. (Robinson 2014c)

While a priority, confronting sexual and gender-based violence cannot define women's engagement on the PSC Framework (Robinson 2013b). Mary Robinson wants to 'broaden the whole landscape' of women's engagement in peace building to encompass 'monitoring and accountability' and 'support for survivors,' as well as progress on 'livelihoods, agriculture, and access to energy' (Robinson 2013b).

SE Robinson purposely seeks to inject women and gender perspectives into formal processes. In June 2013, she named as a 'key challenge' the creation of a platform 'for women's voices in the region to be heard and influence the regional and national mechanisms' (UN 2013c, 2). Because all of the members of the Regional Oversight Mechanism (ROM) and the co-chairs of the Technical Support Committee (TSC) are men, SE Robinson personally ensured that 'benchmarks for women and children were included' in the Plan of Action for the Implementation of Regional Benchmarks under the Commitments of the PSC Framework (hereinafter: Action Plan) (Robinson 2014a). Moreover, in an effort to remedy the poor 'gender profile' of the benchmark development process, SE Robinson is committed to ensuring that Bineta Diop, in her capacity as African Union Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security, can attend future meetings of the TSC (Robinson 2014a).

PART II: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PEACE, SECURITY AND COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

14

INTRODUCTION

As Special Envoy, Mary Robinson identified a six-point plan to guide the first year of activity toward fulfillment of her mandate (UN Security Council 2013b, 7). The plan covers a range of priorities cutting across the three implementation levels of the PSC Framework – international, regional and DRC. These are to:

- i. Support the Kampala Dialogue and its outcomes
- ii. Build trust among countries in the region
- iii. Support the Regional Oversight Mechanism, with the Technical Support Committee, to develop a PSC Framework implementation plan
- iv. Reduce the prevalence of armed groups in eastern DRC, through the Government and MONUSCO's efforts and by developing regional disarmament, demobilization and reintegration initiatives
- v. Lead and coordinate the international community's support for PSC Framework implementation
- vi. Support alleviation efforts for refugees and internally displaced persons, including voluntary return to areas of origin (UN Security Council 2013b, 7)

At the end of one year, SE Robinson believes there has been 'undeniable' progress on advancing key elements of the PSC Framework (Robinson 2014b). In relation to (i) and (iv) above, she highlights as a particular achievement the widely welcomed defeat of the M23, along with progress in halting cross-border support for other armed groups. As discussed further below, progress is also evident on item (iii) with the establishment of the Regional Oversight Mechanism, Technical Support Committee and regional Action Plan for implementation of the PSC Framework.

SE Robinson also points to the significance of the new ICGLR chair, Angola's President Dos Santos, championing PSC Framework objectives (UN Security Council 2014f, 14); Kenya and Sudan joining the PSC Framework; and the first joint summit between the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and Southern African Development Community (SADC), as key indicators of progress in (ii) above (Robinson 2014b). Regarding item (v), earlier in the year, SE Robinson welcomed the World Bank's pledge of over a billion US dollars to support economic development in the region as a 'fresh chance to do more than just attend to the consequences of conflict [and to] resolve its underlying causes' (World Bank 2013). Finally, the launch of the Women's Platform for the PSC Framework (see below) and a new Regional Training Centre on SGBV can also be highlighted as key achievements that are specific to women (Robinson 2014b). Both fulfill stipulated activity commitments included in the regional Action Plan (see Appendix A – Activities 1.5 (a) and 7.3 (a)).

The following sections present highlights of key developments relating to the implementation of the PSC Framework on each of its levels, with a major focus on women and gender. The regional dimension is addressed first, reflecting the central importance of the Regional Oversight Mechanism in the overall implementation of the accord. This is followed by discussion of the international dimension of implementation. A review of measures taken to date at the national level by the DRC Government to fulfill its commitments under the PSC Framework concludes the section.

REGIONAL DIMENSION

As noted, the Regional Oversight Mechanism (ROM) is intended to play a pivotal role in driving implementation of the PSC Framework. At the time of this report's publication, three meetings of the ROM have taken place to date. In May 2013, the first meeting welcomed the efforts of the Technical Support Committee (TSC) in defining regional benchmarks (UN 2013a). By September 2013, the ROM adopted the TSC's 'regional benchmarks and indicators of progress with clearly identified responsibilities and time lines' for PSC implementation and further requested the TSC to 'develop a detailed plan' for implementation (UN 2013b). In January 2014, the ROM endorsed this plan, calling for its 'immediate implementation' (UN 2014).

Reports of ROM meetings explicitly mention women in a number of instances. The first meeting of the ROM recognized the importance of 'women and youth in revitalizing economic development and accountability of government authority' (UN 2013a). At the second meeting in September, the ROM called on development partners to provide 'quick impact projects at local and regional levels, targeting, in particular, women and youth' (UN 2013b). Most recently, at its third meeting in January 2014, the ROM committed to support 'multi-track approaches,' including a promise 'to focus on development initiatives, particularly for women and youth' (UN 2014, 2). It also welcomed SE Robinson's launch of the Women's Platform for the PSC Framework and its aims to 'combat violence against women and **promote women's livelihoods and development**' (UN 2014, 2, emphasis added). These statements signal a growing focus at the ROM level on promoting inclusive social and economic development as an essential part of implementation of the PSC Framework.

Yet, in the same report, the statement of the ROM specifically addressing the obligations of the DRC under the PSC Framework does not mention the social and economic dimensions of peace building. Rather, it commends ongoing efforts of the DRC army (FARDC) to tackle armed groups in partnership with MONUSCO. The report also underlines the Government's commitments in the PSC Framework to 'swiftly extend state authority to all areas and to further strengthen security and judicial institutions' (UN 2014, 2). Similarly, when addressing other country signatories of the PSC Framework, the focus of the ROM's message remains on security and rule of law issues, with all countries encouraged to cooperate and to:

[Take] necessary measures to neutralize illegal armed groups, combat impunity for war crimes, crimes against humanity, **conflict-related sexual violence** and other gross violations of human rights, and take appropriate actions against persons falling under UN sanctions regime (UN 2014, 2, emphasis added)

Arguably, this omission of any reference to the economic and social development aspects of the implementation of the PSC Framework in the ROM's targeted calls to the DRC and other state signatories partly contributes to the notable neglect of these issues in DRC-level implementation efforts, as reported by women civil society leaders in the DRC (Part III below).

The Action Plan

The Plan of Action for the Implementation of Regional Benchmarks under the Commitments of the PSC Framework (hereinafter: Action Plan) is the core PSC implementation document. Designating activities, timeframes, lead implementers, collaborating partners and priority levels for PSC commitments, the Action Plan comprises 30 benchmarks and 77 specific activities. Appendix A presents Action Plan provisions that refer to ‘women,’ ‘gender,’ or ‘civil society’ (under the headings of benchmark, activity, lead implementers, and collaborating partners) as well as related benchmark indicators, targets, and priority levels.⁵ There are 22 references to women, gender or women’s organizations in the Action Plan. These primarily pertain to: measures for addressing sexual and gender-based violence; the role of women’s organizations and women’s civic participation; and women’s inclusion in DDR programmes or access to new economic opportunities. One item relates to women serving in ‘local and cross-border conflict management ... that emphasize early warning and early response’ (Regional Oversight Mechanism 2014).⁶ Four items call for inclusion of women in ‘addressing sources of instability’ and promoting ‘cross-border reconciliation dialogues’ as well as in efforts to ‘support, advocate for, and monitor progress’ on the PSC Framework’s implementation (Regional Oversight Mechanism 2014).⁷ Nine invoke ending impunity for, responding to, and preventing future sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV),⁸ while three call for gender-sensitive DDR/DDRRR.⁹ One supports economic integration and capacity building for cross-border trade.¹⁰

The role of women’s and civil society organizations

Two women’s organizations are named in the regional Action Plan as lead implementers in relation to three activities (Regional Oversight Mechanism 2014).¹¹ Each of these relate to one benchmark, to ‘strengthen the involvement of civil society organizations and women’s groups in regional efforts aimed at addressing sources of instability in line with UNSCR 1325 (2000)’ (Action Plan, Benchmark 1.5). The regional NGO Femme Africa Solidarité (FAS) is named as having particular responsibility in this regard. The Action Plan also recognizes ‘civil society’ more broadly 20 times, mostly in the support role of ‘collaborating partner’ in implementation of the Action Plan activities.¹² ‘Civil society’ is named a lead implementer on three occasions.

5 Appendix A incorporates indicators and target dates taken from the chart: ‘Regional Commitments under the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework Agreement for the DRC and the Region: Benchmarks and Indicators of Progress September 2013 – September 2014.’

6 See Activity 1.2 (b).

7 See Benchmark 1.5 and Activities 1.5 (a), 1.5 (b), and 1.5 (c).

8 See Benchmarks 2.1, 6.1, and 7.3 and Activities 6.1 (a), 6.1 (b), 6.1 (c), 7.3 (a), 7.3 (b), and 7.3 (c).

9 See Benchmark 2.3 and Activities 2.1 (a) and 2.3 (a).

10 See Activity 4.1 (d).

11 See Activities 1.5 (a), 1.5 (b), and 1.5 (c).

12 See Benchmark 1.5 and Activities 1.2 (b), 1.2 (c), 1.2 (d), 1.5 (a), 1.5 (b), 1.5 (c), 2.3 (a), 2.3 (b), 4.5 (c), 4.6 (b), 4.8 (a), 4.8 (b), 5.3 (c), 6.1 (a), 6.1 (b), 6.2 (a), 6.2 (b), 7.1 (a), and 7.3 (c).

These references are principally in relation to: cross-border community recovery and reconciliation initiatives (e.g., cross-border trade), alternative dispute resolution and traditional justice mechanisms, transitional justice, and dialogue and social cohesion.¹³ While women's civil society organizations are expressly mentioned as implementers only in relation to the gender-specific Benchmark 1.5, each of these provisions can be viewed as an opportunity for women civil society actors to play leadership roles in shaping pivotal peace-building programmes.

SE Robinson regularly champions the necessity of creating space for women to participate 'in real time' (Robinson 2013b). With Bineta Diop, SE Robinson co-organized the Bujumbura Conference in July 2013 to stimulate 'bottom-up' participation in discussions about implementation and monitoring progress vis-à-vis the PSC Framework. More than 100 women civil society leaders from PSC Framework signatory countries attended, as well as gender ministers from the DRC, Rwanda, Burundi, and Uganda. The resulting Bujumbura Declaration calls for the prioritization of women's empowerment in the PSC Framework, including in the:

- Design and oversight of PSC Framework implementation and development of gender-sensitive indicators
- Political and economic dimensions of the PSC Framework
- Acceleration of processes to adopt and implement national and regional action plans on UNSCR 1325 (Robinson 2013b)

The Bujumbura Declaration also calls on the international community to support:

- Measures to prevent SGBV and end impunity
- Programmes to assist SGBV survivors
- Economic initiatives that support women's economic empowerment (OESG and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region 2013)

The OESG has met with civil society in various locations across the DRC since the conference in Bujumbura. Information provided by the OESG indicates that 41 civil society stakeholders participated in a meeting in South Kivu in February 2014, 35 members of Congolese civil society attended a meeting in Kinshasa in February 2014, and 20 participants were invited to join a meeting in Goma in March 2014. A separate meeting, to which SE Robinson referred in her last report to the Security Council, was hosted by Oxfam International in January 2014 and had 55 international, regional, national, and local organizations in attendance (UN Security Council 2014b, 9).

13 See Activities 1.2 (c), 1.5 (c) and 2.3 (b).

Women's Platform for the PSC Framework

Launched in January 2014, the Women's Platform is an expression of SE Robinson's commitment to encourage 'top-down and bottom-up ownership' of the PSC Framework objectives (Robinson 2013b). Responding to the Bujumbura Declaration, the Women's Platform aims to provide support to women's groups that are active in:

- PSC Framework monitoring and advocacy and UNSCR 1325 regional and national action plan implementation
- Combating violence against women and supporting survivors
- Supporting women's livelihoods and participation in development
- Promoting local access to clean energy (OESG and the Global Fund for Women 2014, 5)

Funding for groups in signatory countries is contingent upon connecting 'with at least one women's group from a different country' and working to support PSC Framework implementation (Robinson 2014a). Using these guidelines, the Women's Platform:

- Provides grant support to women's organizations
- Convenes organizations for capacity-building and shared learning
- Advocates with the donor community and philanthropic bodies to increase resources for women's organizations (OESG and the Global Fund for Women 2014, 5)

The application process is scheduled to open in June 2014, with initial disbursement of funds expected by September 2014 (*ibid.*, 8). Further, SE Robinson was instrumental in achieving a World Bank pledge of a dedicated US\$150 million for gender projects (Robinson 2014a). SE Robinson has also noted her commitment to promoting 'gender sensitive investing,' including at a private investment conference scheduled to take place in 2014 (Robinson 2014a). At the same time, when asked to comment on the Women's Platform as a means through which women can influence implementation of the PSC Framework, SE Robinson sounds a note of caution 'We are not there yet' (Robinson 2014a).

Next steps: Monitoring progress

In his most recent report to the Security Council on implementation of the PSC Framework, the Secretary-General notes:

While the [Action Plan] is a living document that will be updated as necessary, its initial implementation time frame is one year from its adoption. The members of the [Technical Support] Committee also agreed to monitor the implementation of the Plan of Action, with technical support from the Office of my Special Envoy. (UN Security Council 2014b, 5-6)

In the meantime, a progress report on the implementation of the Action Plan is currently in preparation under the auspices of the offices of special envoys Mary Robinson and Boubacar Diarra.¹⁴ This report will be presented at the next scheduled meeting of the ROM in September 2014. Both the interim progress report and the end of year report flagged by the UN Secretary-General for January 2015 offer opportunities for those committed to the successful implementation of the PSC Framework, including women's and civil society organizations, to deepen their participation. For example, mechanisms can be sought to enable civil society actors to feed into the monitoring and evaluation process and, in doing so, to shape the measures that are put in place by governments and other lead implementers to meet their PSC Framework commitments.

In terms of substantive focus at the regional level, SE Robinson continues to stress that the 'social and economic aspects' of the PSC Framework must 'be fast tracked' (Robinson 2014b). The increasing recognition of this imperative, evidenced by the World Bank's pledge of over one billion US dollars to underpin the strategic link between peace and development, offers opportunities for engagement by civil society, especially for women civil society leaders, to seek involvement in decision-making on how this billion is allocated in the coming months and years.

INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

The principal international commitments in the PSC Framework are summarized by the OSESG as follows:

- For the Security Council to remain engaged in seeking long-term stability for the DRC
- A renewed commitment of bilateral partners to remain engaged with the region
- To support economic integration and revitalise the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries [CEPGL]
- To review the United Nations Organization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO)
- To appoint a UN Special Envoy to foster durable solutions (OSESG n.d., 1)

The first item listed above is fulfilled with the appointment of the Special Envoy and the renewal of SE Robinson's mandate for an additional year. The continuing engagement of the Security Council to date is also evident in: regular reports of the UN Secretary-General on implementation of the PSC Framework submitted to the Security Council (UN Security Council 2014b, 2013a, 2013b); the convening of regular sessions of the Security Council dedicated to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (UN Security Council 2014f, 2014e, 2013d); and successive Security Council resolutions dealing with the mandate of MONUSCO.¹⁵

Regarding the commitment to economic integration and the CEPGL, this is the subject of a key benchmark in the regional Action Plan (4.1), including a Priority I action (Appendix A) in relation to women's economic empowerment to 'create **economic opportunities for women** and youth (microfinance facilities, creation of markets, cooperatives) and build their capacity (trainings on trade policies, market management and custom regulations) for cross border legal trade and commercial exchanges including promotion and protection of rights' (Action Plan, Activity 4.1 (d), emphasis added). The inclusion of this commitment in the Action Plan represents a major opportunity in the coming year to advance women's participation and leadership in economic and business development, economic governance and rights protection.

In relation to MONUSCO, notwithstanding the broad consensus that the military support role of the Force Intervention Brigade in its cooperation with the DRC continues to be effective, SE Robinson cautions 'The situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region remains quite precarious and will require actions **at several levels** to sustain the current momentum and to achieve meaningful results' (UN Security Council 2014f, 6, emphasis added). In particular, she underlines: 'The national DDR programme ... needs to gain **immediate traction**. It remains stalled due to the lack of an agreed approach and an agreed funding plan with international partners' (ibid., 8, emphasis added). Again, a key regional Action Plan benchmark (2.3) deals with DDR (Appendix A) and requires lead implementers and collaborating partners, including civil society, to:

15 See Security Council Resolutions 1925 (2010), 2053 (2012), 2076 (2012), 2078 (2012), 2098 (2013), 2136 (2014), 2147 (2014).

Design and implement **gender-sensitive national and regional DDR/DDRRR programmes** for **combatants and dependents, with particular attention to women** and children associated with armed forces and groups in line with UNSCR 2098 (2013), UNSCR 2106 (2013) and proposed AU Guidelines on DDR. (Action Plan Activity 2.3 (a), emphasis added)

With adequate support of designated implementers, partners and donors, this commitment offers real potential to help ensure women's participation in decision-making and full inclusion in resulting programmes, as an integral part of implementing the PSC Framework and advancing peace in the DRC and region.

More generally, regarding the mandate of MONUSCO in the DRC, especially in relation to its military operations with the FARDC, it is important to underline the **ongoing obligation** on the UN Secretary-General and Head of MONUSCO to **report on a quarterly basis** to the Security Council on, among other things:

- The situation on the ground, including sexual violence **and** impact of conflict on women and children (emphasis added)
- Progress made in the design and implementation of DDR plans
- Efforts undertaken to mitigate civilian harm (UN Security Council 2013c, 11)

Added to this, the recommendation of the Group of Experts on the DRC remains very pertinent in the context of regular gender-sensitive reporting. It calls on MONUSCO to 'increase human rights monitoring and protection activities prior to and during Force Intervention Brigade operations' (UN Security Council 2014a, 51).

A further recommendation of the Group of Experts calls on the Government of the DRC to 'improve efforts to negotiate with armed groups by appointing small teams of officials specifically focused on one armed group, whose task would be to liaise with and coordinate the actions of local authorities, MONUSCO and United Nations agencies to secure the armed group's surrender' (UN Security Council 2014a, 50). This complements benchmark and activity commitments in the regional Action Plan to:

- Commit to the peaceful and negotiated resolution of conflicts, including the conclusion of the ongoing Kampala Dialogue (Action Plan, Benchmark 1.2)
- Establish or strengthen local and cross-border conflict management networks and mechanisms such as gendered peace committees... (Action Plan, Activity 1.2 (b))
- Create or strengthen cross-border community Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanisms.#... (Action Plan, Activity 1.2 (c))

The latter in particular, names civil society as a lead implementer. Again, properly supported, these provisions have the potential to enable women's participation and leadership in key peace-building roles.

Finally, regarding the role of bilateral partners, echoing SE Robinson's prioritization of DDR, the Group of Experts expressly calls on international donors 'to finance [DDRRR] deployments before and during Force Intervention Brigade operations against FDLR ... to facilitate surrenders' (UN Security Council 2014a, 51). It also calls on international donors to provide financial and technical support in the supervision of demobilization programmes and centers, and for security sector reform in the DRC. SE Robinson calls for 'international engagements and messaging to Member States ... [to] be strong, constant, well coordinated and coherent to achieve the desired results' (UN Security Council 2014f, 8). It is important to read the Group of Experts' recommendations in conjunction with the regional Action Plan and to continually underline the obligation on the part of international donors to provide such support in gender-sensitive ways.

THE DRC DIMENSION

The PSC Framework calls on the DRC Government to demonstrate 'a renewed commitment' to:

- Continue, and deepen security sector reform, particularly with respect to the Army and Police
- Consolidate State authority, particularly in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, including to prevent armed groups from destabilizing neighbouring countries
- Make progress with regard to decentralization
- Further economic development, including with respect to the expansion of infrastructure and basic social service delivery
- Further structural reform of Government institutions, including financial reform
- Further the agenda of reconciliation, tolerance and democratization (PSC Framework 2013, para. 5)

Through a presidential ordinance (PO 13/020), the Government of the DRC authorized the establishment of the National Oversight Mechanism (NOM). The central obligation of the NOM is to 'guide and oversee the implementation of the commitments made by the Government as set out in paragraph 5 of the Framework Agreement' (PO 13/020, Article 2). In doing so, the NOM is required to maintain 'regular dialogue with bilateral and multilateral partners to mobilize their support for the implementation of the Framework Agreement' (Article 18).

The NOM consists of three organs: a Steering Committee, an Executive Committee and a Consultative Council. President Joseph Kabila presides over the Steering Committee, which is composed of the Prime Minister and government ministers responsible for foreign affairs, national defense, the interior and security, justice, budget, and finance (PO 13/020, Article 6). It is supposed to meet at least once every two months (PO 13/020, Article 14). The Executive Committee is headed by the National Coordinator of the NOM (Francois Mwamba) and two adjunct coordinators (Léon Olivier Engulu and Ody Kalinda). The remainder of the Executive Committee is composed of 'experts' across seven thematic groups and supported by a technical secretariat (PO 13/020, Article 8). A core responsibility of the Executive Committee is to develop a national action plan for the implementation of the PSC Framework and to submit this for approval to the Steering Committee (PO 13/020, Article 7). Once a national action plan is adopted, the Executive Committee is also responsible for ensuring its implementation and appropriate communication to the public on reforms made by the Government in line with the PSC Framework (ibid).

The members of the Consultative Council should be drawn from public institutions, political parties, religious groups, civil society, **women's organizations**, and youth organizations (PO 13/020, Article 14, emphasis added). It is expected to meet four times per year (PO 13/020, Article 14). It is intended to be 'a forum for dialogue and exchange with the vital forces of the Nation, on the implementation of the Framework Agreement' (PO 13/020, Article 12). A key responsibility of the Consultative Council is to 'comment on the operation of the National Oversight Mechanism; [and] make appropriate recommendations on the implementation of reforms' (ibid). The Prime Minister has overall responsibility for implementing PO 13/020 (Article 19). Progress on establishing and activating all bodies of the NOM has been slow. At the time of publication of this report, the Steering Committee has met just once, experts have not yet been recruited to the Executive Committee, the Consultative Council has not yet been convened, and a national action plan has not been devised.¹⁶

Pending the constitution and activation of all of the bodies of the NOM, at present the coordinating office of the NOM is organizing its PSC Framework implementation efforts on the basis of the following ranked order of priorities:

- Security sector reform
- Consolidation of state authority
- Promotion of national reconciliation, tolerance and democratization
- Progress on decentralization
- Structural reform of state institutions, including financial
- Promotion of economic development, including infrastructural expansion and provision of basic services¹⁷

Parallel to the PSC Framework mechanisms, in 2013 President Kabila also launched a National Dialogue (PO 13/109) with a range of stakeholders in the DRC. This process brought together approximately 700 people from 'various DR Congo provinces representing political parties and civil society organisations' to participate in talks aimed at bringing 'cohesion and peace in the country' (Kambale 2013). Aligning the PSC Framework and National Dialogue processes remains a central challenge in the implementation of the PSC Framework at the DRC level. In January 2014, SE Robinson encouraged the Government to 'align the roles and responsibilities of the monitoring committee on national consultations with that of the National Oversight Mechanism to create greater coherence' (UN Security Council 2014f, 7).

16 According to reliable sources in the DRC.

17 Ibid.

The National Dialogue generated 679 recommendations. The Government of the DRC subsequently identified 100 of these as priority actions to be taken. Two explicitly address women and gender equality. The first calls on the Government to ‘ensure at least 30 percent representation of women in all implementation and monitoring structures relating to DDRR,¹⁸ DDR, PNDDR¹⁹ and STAREC²⁰ programmes’ (République Démocratique de Congo Comité National de Suivi des Recommandations des Concertations Nationales 2013, 12 (Action no. 50)). The second places responsibility with the President to ‘accelerate the promulgation of the law on the implementation of parity [of men and women] in conformity with Article 14 of the Constitution, to put an end to discrimination against women’ (ibid., 15 (Action no. 62)).²¹ It follows that Actions no. 50 and no. 62 must be read in conjunction with other related priority actions including no. 37, which requires the President, Government and the Parliament to:

Strengthen the new DDR and DDRR programmes, and use responsibly the substantial level of national funding allocated in this area, with a particular emphasis on the socio-economic reintegration of demobilized soldiers and their dependents. (ibid., 10)

Likewise, Action no. 42, which calls on the President and the Government to ‘reactivate the STAREC programme and extend it to the entire national territory,’ must be interpreted in conjunction with the priority actions on gender parity (ibid., 11). There are five priority areas supported by STAREC to date, including:

- Security, including DDR
- Political processes, principally in the framework for implementing peace accords
- Restoration of state authority
- Return, reintegration and recovery of internally displaced persons and refugees
- Combating sexual violence (Fonds de Consolidation de la Paix en République Démocratique du Congo 2013, 10)

18 Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration, Repatriation.

19 National Programme for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of ex-combatants

20 Plan de Stabilisation et de Reconstruction pour l’Est/Plan for the Stabilization and Reconstruction of East Congo. STAREC is the national plan for stabilization and reconstruction in the DRC. It operates in tandem with the UN-led ISSSS (International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy).

21 Article 14 of the Constitution of the DRC reads: ‘The public authorities shall ensure the elimination of any form of discrimination against women and shall ensure the protection and promotion of these rights. In all fields, especially in civic life and in economic, social and cultural policy, they shall take all measures appropriate to ensure the total and full participation of women in the nation’s development. They shall take measures to combat any form of violence perpetrated towards women in the public and private spheres. Women have the right to equitable representation within national, provincial and local institutions. The state guarantees the implementation of gender parity within the aforementioned institutions. The law shall lay down implementation modalities for these rights.’

The remit of STAREC clearly overlaps substantially with the Government's commitments under the PSC Framework, including obligations to consolidate state authority, deepen security sector reform (encompassing and PNDDR), reform government institutions and further economic development (including basic social services). Moreover, as a principal Government mechanism for channeling resources to conflict-affected areas, STAREC (and the related ISSSS²²) is integral to implementation of the PSC Framework. However, a recent external evaluation of the STAREC programme points to many shortcomings in its operation. While beyond the scope of this report to review these in detail, women and gender issues have been dealt with explicitly in STAREC only in the sexual violence pillar, which accounts for 62.3 million of a total of 361.2 million US dollars (Fonds de Consolidation de la Paix en République Démocratique du Congo 2013, 14).

A revised ISSSS in support of the PSC Framework was submitted to the DRC Government and international partners in January 2014. The overall focus of this new strategy is on 'the root causes of the conflict,' which will be addressed through programmes in the following five pillars:

- Democratic dialogue
- Security provision
- Restoration of state authority
- Socioeconomic development
- Putting an end to sexual violence in conflict (UN Security Council 2014c, 13)

While closely related to the five established pillars of the previous STAREC, the explicit inclusion of socioeconomic development in the strategy is significant. When the new STAREC/ISSSS programme is reactivated, it will be important to ensure that women and gender perspectives are comprehensively integrated across all pillars.

Toward this end, National Dialogue commitments (especially Actions no. 37, no. 42, no. 50 and no. 62 noted here) will need to be fulfilled and the new STAREC/ISSSS programme will have to meet the requirement of 30 percent representation of women within its monitoring and evaluation structures. Moreover, Article 14 of the Constitution will have to be fully applied for the DRC to meet its stated commitments. Building on this logic, it is evident that the alignment of the National Dialogue and NOM processes sought by SE Robinson is vitally important in order to strengthen the prospects that PSC Framework commitments will be adequately resourced and in line with existing national DRC legal and statutory commitments to ensure the equality of men and women.

INTRODUCTION

This part explores the views of women civil society leaders in the DRC regarding national level implementation of three key dimensions of the PSC Framework: security sector reform, consolidation of state authority, and economic and social development. The rationale for focusing on these three areas is: 1) In the first year of implementation of the PSC Framework, security sector reform and consolidation of state authority have featured most prominently as the stated top priorities for DRC-level activity at international, regional and national levels. As part of our evaluation, we wanted to find out more about the views and experiences of women in the DRC regarding this order of priorities and how it is being implemented; and 2) Recognizing that advancing implementation of the economic and social development dimensions of the PSC Framework has been named repeatedly by SE Robinson as a major priority for the coming year, we also wanted to learn more about women's views of the links between development and peace, and the priorities in this nexus from a gender perspective. The following sections discuss the responses we gathered from a selection of 11 women civil society leaders in the DRC (Appendix C).

SECURITY SECTOR REFORM

On the subject of security sector reform, research participants were asked for their views on the aspects of security sector reform that they consider to be ‘most urgent to address from the perspective of women,’ as well for the wider society. The following paragraphs present and discuss the responses we received to these questions.²³

The aspects of security sector reform that are most urgent for women

Awareness of the destructive legacy of integrating armed groups into the FARDC as part of an earlier failed peace settlement informs many of the contributions given on this topic. As one respondent notes, ‘I agree that DRC’s security force should be ... unified. ... I don’t agree that all rebel forces should be assimilated into FARDC’ (Namadamu).

The implementation of existing DRC laws and commitments to reform the FARDC and the national police force (PNC) was repeatedly cited by respondents as the most urgent aspect of security sector reform for women, in addition to being essential to ‘regain and deserve the population’s trust’ (Katana). Within this, multiple respondents stressed the need for effective and adequate training of the members of both the FARDC and the PNC (Birhaheka, Katana, Kavira, Mutombo).

Others underline the necessity for the Government to ‘consider the law on [the] application and implementation. ... [of police reform] in current budget law’ (Mutombo); ‘Design the necessary budget to reform FARDC’ (Kavira); and to ensure adequate ‘budget planning and funding provisions for activities linked to the police, army and justice reform’ (Ngalula).

Several respondents noted particular gender-specific deficiencies in the implementation of security sector reform. This includes the as yet unmet challenge of ‘integrating the gender dimension’ (Ngalula) or ensuring ‘effective consideration of the gender dimensions’ in reforming the army and police (Mutombo). The continuing ‘lack of women officers within the police force’ and ‘sexual harassment of women within the army and the police and security forces’ were also flagged as major obstacles to achieving women-friendly security (Birhaheka). Others pointed more broadly to the necessity of ‘women’s participation in leadership roles’ (Katana) and ‘speeding up the application of the action plan of [resolution] 1325’ (Bokolo) as key factors in ensuring that security sector reform will benefit women.

The establishment of local community police forces was underlined as particularly important to women’s security (Katana). This is especially noted with regard to the east of the country where ‘there are many villages in our North Kivu province where police presence is a dream not a reality’ (Kavira).

23 Respondents were also invited to suggest specific concrete actions that the Government of DRC should take in relation to reform of the security sector. Responses are summarized in Appendix B.

At a national and regional level, the necessity of implementation of effective DDRRR²⁴ programmes was underlined. One respondent insisted: 'A plan of disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation, resettlement and reintegration ... for national (not foreign) armed group forces must also be implemented' (Ntububa). Another noted the need to: 'Return ... displaced people to their places of origin; [gather] up all weapons distributed to civilians by some authorities during rebellions; and [eliminate] both local and foreign armed groups' (Bandu).

Applying the law

In addition to implementing existing commitments to reform the army and the police in gender-sensitive ways, most respondents stressed the importance of applying existing national laws against violent crimes, including sexual and gender-based violence. In the words of one contributor: 'The most important aspects to tackle for women concerning the reform of the security sector are linked to justice' (Matundu-Mbambi). She continues:

Ensuring security is important to protect women and young girls, who are the first victims of violent crimes and insecurity and [of] the climate of fear that results from legal and penal failures or army corruption. (Matundu-Mbambi)

Echoing this view, others stressed the need to: 'Punish the perpetrators of crime' (Bandu); to 'reorganize criminal police' and 'strengthen the structures responsible for child protection and combating gender-based violence' (Kavira); and, to 'create tribunals and courts of justice to provide justice for the citizens' (Mutombo).

Economic and social security

A strong focus on the economic and social dimensions of security sector reform is a striking feature of the analyses offered by women civil society leaders on the subject. One respondent notes that ensuring security means addressing 'the needs of the population who doesn't have access to public services [and] cannot invest in its own future or escape from poverty' (Matundu-Mbambi). Another stresses the links between 'restoring a sustainable peace in non-secured regions' and 'setting up income generating activities' (Bandu).

For women, in particular, security sector reform entails addressing 'aspects linked to social and economic security [in order] to answer the basic social needs that women do not have access to' at present (Ngalula). And another respondent lists: 'Professional security,' 'social security,' 'women's participation in leadership roles,' and 'employment' as the four 'most urgent aspects of security sector reform to tackle' (Katana). In a similar vein, the need to ensure that employees are provided with health insurance was noted (Birhaheka).

The lack of economic and social security enjoyed by members of the army and police was highlighted as an obstacle to achieving security in everyday life in the DRC. In particular, one respondent called for measures to address the 'lack of accommodation and care provided for the families of police, armed and security forces officers,' as well as the issue of 'homelessness of police and army officers' (Birhaheka). Also, the need to 'provide sufficient equipment, [and to] train and pay the army regularly and properly' was underlined (Kavira)

Finally, one respondent emphasizes the inextricable relations between economic and social development on the one hand and ensuring security on the other. She notes:

The fact that our security forces have no roads on which to patrol and secure our province is not an economic issue, but a vital security issue ... And unless DRC is leaving all security to the very few patrolling helicopters of the United Nations, then infrastructure must be built to facilitate providing security, i.e., roads, telecommunication, electricity, and water. Are these economic issues or basic security infrastructure requirements? (Namadamu)

CONSOLIDATION OF STATE AUTHORITY

Regarding the commitment to consolidate state authority, research participants were asked if they agreed that this should be a top priority of the Government. We also asked respondents to give their own definition of the 'consolidation of state authority' and to consider if the current approach to the consolidation of state authority is being implemented in ways that are beneficial to women and to the wider community. A linked question asked each respondent if she was satisfied with current steps being taken to address the challenges posed by armed groups. The responses we received are presented and discussed in the following paragraphs.²⁵

All respondents agree that the 'consolidation of state authority,' especially but not only in the eastern part of the DRC, is or should be a top priority for the DRC Government. Notably, however, women civil society leaders interpret the 'consolidation of state authority' as a multidimensional and comprehensive process, rather than in narrow security terms.

As one respondent explained: 'Reinforcing state authority has a double meaning for us.'

Internally, state institutions must be accountable towards the population ... [and] provide all services [while] externally, the state must protect its national borders and maintain friendly relations with bordering states and other states without endangering national governance. (Birhaheka)

Others define the 'consolidation of state authority' as follows:

'Reinforcement of the state's legal authority and stability in a given country.' (Kavira)

'Implementing the necessary reforms to firmly establish rule of law and democracy within the country, respecting rule of law and human rights while acting for the good of the people.' (Matundu-Mbambi)

'The presence of legally established authorities, of institutions, including public administration, courts of justice, police forces.' (Mutombo)

'All government sectors are effective and operate without any trouble.' (Bandu)

'Administrative authorities as well as a police force that are accessible and accountable towards the population; [there is] independent, fair and equitable justice [including] overcoming impunity, [and] a professional and Republican army.' (Bokolo)

'A ... state's ability to operate its institutions ... ensuring its citizens are protected and safe without ... war lords enforcing their own laws.' (Ngalula)

'The state must defend its citizens and shouldn't let foreign governments deprive them of their own resources or the state's resources.' (Birhaheka)

'[Making the state] omnipresent, even in the most remote places of the country and in the entire republic.' (Katana)

²⁵ Participants were also invited to suggest concrete actions that the Government of DRC should take in relation to its efforts to achieve the consolidation of state authority. These responses are summarized in Appendix B.

The need to ensure the quality of public administration was also emphasized, including the 'effective nomination of public servants across the country [who must be provided] with the necessary means [and with] training and professional development' (Nasha-Mulangala). The same respondent linked consolidation of state authority to decentralization, calling for the: 'Effective transfer of power to provinces and decentralized administrative institutions [including] a local community administration' (ibid.)

Other contributors underline that achieving such a comprehensive vision of effective state authority entails investment of substantial resources to underpin the 'resumption of economic activities ... [and] effective support for distressed populations' (Mutombo); and for 'renovating and constructing buildings and state infrastructures' (Nasha-Mulangala).

Are women benefiting from current efforts to consolidate state authority in the DRC?

Some respondents are hopeful that ongoing efforts to consolidate state authority will benefit women, as well as men, if implemented properly (Birhaheka, Katana, Ntububa). One contributor explained:

[Reinforcing] state authority would benefit women, as it would imply good governance and the restoration of peace and safety within the entire country. Justice would also be restored. These [changes] would benefit both women and the community at large. (Ntububu)

To benefit women substantially, however, Annie Matundu-Mbambi notes:

[Women must] be involved in the consolidation process, in prevention, in local level management of conflicts through peaceful measures, [and] in establishing reconciliation and community-building mechanisms for communities involved in long-running conflict. (Matundu-Mbambi)

Several respondents express concern that ongoing measures to consolidate state authority are not being implemented in ways that benefit women. Josephine Ngalula observes that 'women are the first victims of weak state authority [but] ... the way consolidation is applied currently is not seriously benefitting women, because women do not take part in decision-making processes.' Gogo Kavira notes that: 'the Constitution of the DRC is far from being applied, especially Article 14 on equal representation between men and women in public and private institutions at all levels [and that] women are still not included in decision-making processes within state management.' Echoing this point, Nasha-Mulangala calls for 'positive discrimination ... to make up for the lack of women [which] will benefit women and the entire country.'

Along with the need for greater efforts to ensure women's participation in decision making, respondents underlined the continued need to protect women 'from violent crimes and discrimination' and for the state 'to fulfill its responsibility to protect the population against war crimes' (Matundu-Mbambi). As yet, 'the perpetrators of war crimes, crimes against humanity, insurrectional violence, sexual violence, corruption or others still go unpunished in our country' (Kavira).

Satisfaction with current steps being taken to address the challenges posed by armed groups

Most women civil society leaders who contributed to this report expressed full or qualified approval for recent military actions by the FARDC supported by MONUSCO's Force Intervention Brigade, notably against the M23 armed group. Most strongly, one respondent stated that 'these actions must continue to eradicate foreign and national armed groups on the Congolese territory [and that] ... state authority should be restored on the territories, areas and villages previously occupied by armed groups' (Kavira). On similar lines, another contributor underlined that FARDC actions with MONUSCO are vital to the restoration of state authority and 'to also eradicate the climate of fear triggered by these forces and the plundering of resources in the DRC' (Ntububa). Others called for 'stronger actions [to be] carried out against armed groups' (Nasha-Mulangala) or expressed concern that 'the actions to drive the FDLR and other groups away [in contrast to efforts against the M23] do not seem to be very positive as there is significant migration flow in the area and the DDR programme appears to be stuck' (Birhaheka).

Nasha-Mulangala also noted the need for 'neighbouring countries ... [to] eliminate rebel groups.' Regarding non-military actions, respondents expressed support for efforts to 'combat illegal trade and exploitation of the ores used to fund armed groups in the east of the DRC' (Matundu-Mbambi) and underlined the need to 'eradicate impunity and send a strong message against impunity' (Nasha-Mulangala).

However, other respondents are less convinced. Some express concern that 'The government is using violence to combat violent armed groups without establishing a safe civil protection system' (Katana). One stresses the need, in the context of military action, to ensure 'appropriate support to protect civilians and their property' (Bandu). Florence Bokolo notes that 'the interests of victims are not taken into account sufficiently.' In particular, she is concerned that 'perpetrators of sexual violence are not always brought to justice ... [or] sentenced in accordance with the law. ...' or cases are often dropped (Bokolo).

One contributor comments that: 'FARDC doesn't have the bandwidth to do more than address the large, vocal groups, therefore many, many small ones continue to kill and terrorize' (Namadamu). Rose Mutombo also questions the effectiveness of recent efforts, noting that 'several armed groups still keep operating throughout the country [and] new armed groups keep spawning.' Moreover, she cautions that the 'DDR III plan does not meet the expectations of those who should benefit from it,' while pardons appear to be granted selectively. Another respondent sounds a note of concern that 'everything is managed by the international community [while] the army is still weak and neglected within current political management' (Ngalula).

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING PEACE

The regional Action Plan for implementation of the PSC Framework includes a funding provision (via the World Bank and UN/UNDP) for ‘innovative, integrative, and transformative projects’ (Action Plan, Benchmark 4.1). Specific commitments of the DRC Government include:

Finalize mapping of priority projects under the economic cluster (Action Plan, Activity 4.1 (a) – Priority I)

Conduct mapping of human dimension cluster covering social sectors and promoting justice, inclusion and social cohesion (Action Plan, Activity 4.1 (b) – Priority II)

Create economic opportunities for women and youth ... [and] build their capacity ... for cross border legal trade and commercial exchanges including promotion and protection of rights (Action Plan, Activity 4.1 (d) – Priority I)

In contrast to the seeming high priority given to economic and social development in the regional Action Plan, the DRC Government gives its lowest ranking to the obligation to ‘further economic development, including ... expansion of infrastructure and basic social service delivery’ (PSC Framework, paragraph 5). At present, the Government ranks the latter last in a list of six priority areas in the national implementation of the PSC Framework.²⁶ Noting this disjuncture between the regional and national level, we asked women civil society leaders in the DRC for their views on: the importance of economic and social development to peace building, including environmental concerns; whether they know of any concrete economic or social development projects arising from the PSC Framework; and if they are confident that such development projects (if they happen) will benefit women and men equally.²⁷

The importance of economic and social development to building peace in the DRC

All respondents emphasize the interdependence of peace building and economic and social development. In the words of one: ‘Sustainable development cannot happen without peace. Peace is essential for development’ (Ntububu). Another respondent insists: ‘Effective peace means developmental peace for a positive integrated change’ (Katana). Others highlight the positive contribution of economic and social development to peace by ‘improving living conditions of the population’ and fostering ‘a positive change of mentality across all sectors for sustainable development of the country’ (Bandu). More comprehensively, Rose Mutombo asserts that investing in economic and social development is necessary to:

26 According to reliable sources in the DRC.

27 Respondents were also invited to suggest concrete actions that the Government of DRC should take in relation to women’s participation vis-à-vis social and economic development and development policy in DRC more generally. Responses received are summarized in Appendix B.

-
- Consolidate state authority and reinforce democracy
 - Provide security to citizens and their property
 - Improve business conditions
 - Strengthen the justice system and citizens' rights
 - Renovate basic infrastructures and strengthen economic growth and the fight against poverty
 - Build a climate to promote job growth and provide basic social services.
(Mutombo)

From another perspective, Neema Namadamu considers social and economic development to be very important to building peace, primarily because it 'gives men an opportunity for constructive channeling of their natural desire to be somebody, contribute something, put their name on something.' She explains: 'There are few options for men in this country' and some, 'looking to establish themselves [or] advance their standing ... manipulate, subjugate, rape, and ... terrorize' others in order to achieve their ends. On this account, economic and social development is fundamental to creating the conditions of peace by reducing the chances that some men will resort to violence, including sexual and gender-based violence.

At the same time, several respondents emphasize that 'peace is the key that is necessary for sustainable development' (Bokolo). Immaculée Birhaheka elaborates:

No country anywhere in the world has ever built roads, schools, hospitals, etc., in a period of conflict or war. So for the DRC, peace is a prerequisite for any internal and harmonious development process. [Moreover], peace is essential to support any physical or intellectual activity so that it can have effective results. (Birhaheka)

Gogo Kavira likewise argues that peace is vital to enable longer-term, multifaceted development programming:

Building peace in the DRC is essential to support national economic growth, support financial consolidation, [to] develop a real capacity to analyze prospectively, to plan and programme development, as well as [to] develop the financial sector. (Kavira)

Some skepticism was also expressed about the commitment of the state authorities to achieving peace and the broad based and sustainable development that peace makes possible. One respondent noted that many people in the DRC believe that 'state authorities want the country's conditions to remain chaotic and insecure [in order] to remain in power ... [and] to gain more money' (Ngalula).

The PSC Framework: An impetus to economic and social development?

Despite the prominence of economic and social development provisions in the PSC Framework, more than one year after its adoption, none of the civil society leaders interviewed for this research knows of any concrete development initiatives on the ground arising from implementation of the PSC Framework. Specifically, when asked about such initiatives, respondents note:

'[Development is] mentioned in the Accord-cadre but concrete actions haven't happened yet. That's why women and civil society should cooperate to make it effective.' (Bandu)

'I don't [know of any]. The programme has only started and it is slowly beginning.' (Bokolo)

'In the North Kivu province, some projects have started in the Lubero and Rutshuru territories within the STAREC project framework. [But within] the framework of the Accord-cadre..., we hear about roadwork, school building and drinking water access projects, but we only ever hear words.' (Birhaheka)

'No, I don't. I know that the DRC has plans to conduct through its National Ministry of Planning but I don't have any idea of any ongoing plans within the Accord-cadre.' (Kavira)

'No, I haven't heard about the implementation of [development projects] to be carried out within the framework of the Accord-cadre. ... We are waiting for the strategic action plan from the UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region and that of the DRC Government on specific actions to promote the implementation of basic services.' (Matundu-Mbambi)

'There are none currently.' (Mutombo)

'We haven't heard anything about this since the Accord-cadre was signed. Job creation certainly is not a priority for the leaders of this country.' (Nasha-Mulangala)

'I don't know any. I haven't heard of any funding for a national action plan to apply the Accord-cadre.' (Ngalula)

'No infrastructure has been started as part of the Accord-cadre so far. For this particular matter, the Government should make conditions more flexible for foreign companies and operators to allow for job creation.' (Ntububu)

Just one example of Government planning for basic service provision, which is believed to be related to implementation of the PSC Framework, is given by Salomé Ntububu. She notes:

The Government plans to create a modern medical structure in each district in each province, like the one recently created in Kinshasa. ... [And] the Government plans on rehabilitating university buildings under state management. (Ntububu)

Overall, however, this reported lack of prompt action on the part of the DRC Government to drive economic and social development appears to be a very significant missed opportunity to capitalize on key peace-building provisions of the PSC Framework, especially in eastern DRC where the needs are great. As one respondent notes: 'Unemployment is sky-high which has led to criminal activity, an increase in armed and religious groups, children living on the street and juvenile delinquency' (Birhaheka). Further, respondents raise wider concerns about the quality of the engagement of national state authorities with the citizens and the willingness or capacity of the state to fulfill its duty to govern and lead, as the people wish it to, including with respect to development programming. For example, Birhaheka notes that 'for most questions, state institutions refer citizens to local and international NGOs to get answers to their questions' and, further, there is a perception that 'the state is absent in the DRC, except as a source of administrative hassle.'

Echoing these concerns, another contributor cautions:

If a substantial portion of any economic development initiatives are not being channeled through grassroots organizations, then ... [the benefits] will never reach the common citizen. Every dollar will get caught up in a whirlwind of government and international NGO activity, but never touch or effect the intended [beneficiaries]. (Namadamu)

Are the protection of the environment and addressing climate change important in the DRC?

All respondents are unanimous in the view that protection of the environment, proper management of natural resources, including forestry and mineral extraction, and addressing climate change are very important in the DRC. For some, this is necessary to combat particular problems including 'erosions, [illicit] lumberjacking and deforestation' (Ngalula) and, more generally, because 'using [natural resources] properly would help the country's economy' (Bandu). For others, the duty of the DRC Government to prioritize proper management of these issues stems from recognition that the DRC is home to the second biggest rain forest in the world (Katana, Mutombo, Namadamu) and some of 'the largest deposits of the minerals that make the world go-round' (Namadamu).

Other contributions underline the human welfare and human security dimensions of environmental issues, noting that 'fighting against climate change must be [a priority] for our Government' because 'human life is linked to the environment' (Kavira). Annie Matundu-Mbambi further elaborates:

Conflicts have severe consequences on the environment, which must be addressed to preserve the population's health and living conditions. Therefore, it is essential, within the peace consolidation framework, to manage environmental impacts and drivers in conflicts, to defuse tensions and use natural resources sustainably to reinforce stability and development in the long term. (Matundu-Mbambi)

One contributor recognizes that some progress is being made. She notes:

Protecting the environment is essential given that the DRC already experiences climate change due to disorderly deforestation and the extinction of rare species. The Government is fighting to protect the environment; for instance, anyone who is caught felling a tree without the approval of the state's specialized services may be imprisoned. Currently, farmers are being taught how to grow their crops and preserve the environment. (Ntububu)

Others, however, believe that, to date, not enough has been done by the authorities to address these issues. One respondent notes: 'The Government seems interested. However, more efforts are needed to raise awareness and increase people's participation' (Bokolo). Another observes that 'these issues do not occupy a special position for the DRC state leadership because there are many other issues the authorities must respond to after 22 years of armed conflicts that are not yet ended' (Birhaheka). Summing up, in the words of one contributor:

We see that this is not a priority for the current Government but we must sound the alarm because the environment is being destroyed systematically in the DRC. (Nasha-Mulangala)

Confidence that women will benefit from development projects

Several respondents express some confidence that women will benefit on par with men if and when development projects gain momentum (Birhaheka, Katana, Mutombo, Namadamu). This expectation is bolstered by Article 14 of the 2006 Constitution, although one respondent notes that she has not 'seen any equality in social and economic development initiatives despite [Article 14] which enshrines gender equality in both public and private sectors' (Ngalula). Sounding a similar note of caution, another contributor observes that 'unfortunately, as usual, women are marginalized [even though they] should be part of the decision-making process like men because they have the same skills as men' (Bandu). This viewpoint is echoed by Matundu-Mbambi: 'We have not seen any sign yet that men and women are going to benefit equally from economic and social development initiatives a year after the Accord-cadre was signed' (Matundu-Mbambi). Moreover, Salomé Ntububu expresses doubt that the necessary change will occur under the present government. She believes: 'First, the political framework should be restructured in depth ... [and] responsible and respectable women and men should be elected and engaged to rebuild the country.' Gogo Kavira captures the overall tenor of responses when she says: 'This is what we want to achieve but it's still only a dream.'

Hence, more action is needed by the Government to ensure that women will participate in decision making and benefit from economic and social development projects on par with men. Toward this end, one respondent asserts:

The Government should demonstrate its commitment to implement effective parity between women and men. This is not the case. Equality is being talked about but nothing is being done. (Ngalulu)

Finally, regarding how to achieve gender equality in implementation of the development dimensions of the PSC Framework, Florence Bokolo insists: 'This will only be possible if a good gender integration strategy within the Accord-cadre is developed and established.'

CONCLUSION: A FRAMEWORK OF HOPE — THE ROAD AHEAD

As this report has documented, the challenges involved in achieving the successful implementation of the PSC Framework are numerous and difficult. Yet, significant progress is evident since the ‘Framework of Hope’ was signed in February 2013. As discussed in Part II, the establishment of the Regional Oversight Mechanism (ROM) and its Technical Support Committee (TSC), and the subsequent adoption of the regional Action Plan are clear milestones in advancing implementation of the PSC Framework ‘from the top down.’ This includes the formulation of initial benchmarks, specific activities, named implementers and collaborating partners, and some timed indicators, some of which are specific to women (detailed in Appendix A). In this conclusion we highlight some of the main achievements discussed in the report, with a focus on those aspects that present particular challenges, as well as opportunities for increasing women’s participation and leadership in the implementation process. In addition to addressing the central question of enabling women’s participation, we recap particular challenges for implementation of the PSC Framework at the DRC level; the necessity and requirement to include women and gender perspectives in the implementation of ‘new’ priority areas related to DDR and socioeconomic development; and observations on opportunities for women’s organizations and civil society to engage with monitoring implementation from below, thereby enhancing the chances that champions of peace at the highest levels will succeed in their efforts.

Increasing women’s participation and leadership

Regarding women’s leadership at the highest levels, the appointment of Mary Robinson as UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region and, subsequently, of Bineta Diop as African Union Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security, are achievements in themselves. This success is amplified by the fact that both bring to their respective roles a long record of promoting women’s participation in public life more broadly. However, the fact that the membership of the ROM and the TSC is entirely male reflects a major constraint. To date, in practice, the onus of ensuring the inclusion of women and gender considerations in the work of the ROM has fallen to the personal initiative of SE Robinson. Increasing the number of women appointed to high-level peace-building roles (such as special envoy) is an important part of UNSCR 1325. In the case of the PSC Framework, the appointments of SE Robinson and SE Diop have done much to ameliorate the chronic problem of the underrepresentation of women at the highest levels. Ultimately, however, long-term solutions to this problem will have to address the factors underpinning the very poor representation of women in the ROM and TSC, which is a reflection of the wider problem of women’s underrepresentation in leadership positions in the local and national contexts from which the members of such bodies are drawn.

Toward this end, addressing ‘bottom up’ participation, Benchmark 1.5 captures an overarching PSC Framework commitment ‘to strengthen involvement of civil society organizations and women’s groups’ in line with UNSCR 1325. The launch of the Women’s Platform, as an initial mechanism to support the participation of women’s organizations in the implementation of the PSC Framework and action plans relating to UNSCR 1325, is an important achievement in this area. While small in scale, it sends a clear message that women’s leadership and participation ‘from below’ is as vital a part of ensuring that the PSC Framework succeeds as is women’s leadership at the upper echelons. In the coming months, in order to make additional, measurable progress in strengthening the involvement of civil society and women’s organizations, the concerted support of bilateral donors will be vital to ensuring that lead implementers in this benchmark area will have the necessary resources to develop the Women’s Platform and other programmes identified in the Action Plan.

Implementation challenges at the DRC level

The women civil society leaders interviewed for this report are all in agreement with the Government of the DRC that security sector reform and the consolidation of state authority are top priorities in implementation of the country's PSC Framework commitments. Within this, most of the study's participants named comprehensive reform of the FARDC and the national police as the most urgent aspects of security sector reform. Ending impunity for SGBV perpetrated by members of the army and police is flagged as an important aspect of the reform process. However, this is not addressed in isolation, but as one among a set of interrelated dimensions. For example, respondents underline the imperative of completely transforming the army through large scale investment in new recruitment, proper training for all new and current army and police personnel (including the integration of gender dimensions), adequate Government budgets to carry out the necessary reforms (including investments in all necessary infrastructures), decent living standards for all members of the army and police and their families, and increased representation of women in both forces.

Hence, while respondents agree with the Government's prioritization of security sector reform, they understand it as a multidimensional and comprehensive process, rather than in narrow, state security terms. In doing so, they depart from the DRC Government's current relegation of economic development (including provision of basic social services) to the end of its list of PSC Framework priorities. In the responses offered in Part III, in contrast, economic and social security are viewed as integral to security sector reform. From these answers, we get some sense of the difference that could be made to the future of the DRC if such women were centrally involved in decision making in every organ of the National Oversight Mechanism for the PSC Framework, and in peace building in the DRC and region more generally.

However, as discussed in Part II, the NOM appears to be at a standstill. In particular, over one year since the adoption of the presidential ordinance to establish the NOM, its Consultative Council – the body through which women's organization are given a formal role in shaping the national implementation plan – has yet to be convened. To begin to give women's and civil society groups at DRC level a say in the implementation of the PSC Framework, the NOM must be fully constituted and activated without further delay. Moreover, noting the significance of the inclusion of two strong commitments to women's participation and equality among the 100 priority recommendations that emerged from the parallel process in 2013, the alignment of the two processes, as called for by SE Robinson, will potentially serve to strengthen the position of women in the national-level implementation of the PSC Framework. Toward this end, the ROM in particular has a role to play through its communiqués to strongly encourage the DRC to fulfill its PSC Framework commitments to fully operationalize the NOM in line with all of its existing commitments to increase women's participation. SE Robinson and all PSC Framework signatory bodies, along with international actors, must also take every opportunity to call on the Government of the DRC to do the same.

Including women and gender perspectives in current and upcoming priority areas: DDRRR and socioeconomic development

While welcoming progress made in recent months by the FARDC (and the Force Intervention Brigade) in tackling the M23 and other armed groups, SE Robinson has repeatedly underlined the imperative that such gains should be followed quickly by effective disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and appropriate repatriation processes for eligible parties. The women's civil society leaders interviewed for this report concur with SE Robinson, noting the necessity to do so for both domestic and foreign armed groups. Further, as international partners and the DRC Government take steps to meet this obligation, they must ensure that women are involved in developing the programmes in line with UNSCR 1325, and that the DDR processes put in place are responsive to the needs of women as well as men. Benchmark 2.3 of the Action Plan underpins these requirements, calling on lead implementers and collaborating partners, including civil society, to:

Design and implement gender-sensitive national and regional DDR/DDRRR programmes for combatants and dependents, with particular attention to women and children associated with armed forces and groups... (Action Plan, Activity 2.3 (a))

In the year ahead, along with the urgent focus on developing and implementing DDR/DDRRR programming, economic and social development has been increasingly underlined at regional and international levels as a key priority. In particular socioeconomic development explicitly features in the proposed new STAREC/ISSSS programme to be agreed by the DRC Government and international partners. The ROM 'Priority I' Action Plan provision to 'create economic opportunities for women and youth' is especially salient in this context, not least in relation to the allocation of the over 1 billion dollar investment pledge made by the World Bank in 2013.

The emphasis on socioeconomic development, and on the creation of economic opportunities in the DRC and region, resonates with the calls of women's civil society leaders in Part III for multidimensional peace building, where the interrelation of peace and sustainable development is recognized. As such, this is a timely juncture to advocate for and seek resources to advance women-led, social, economic, and business development. Further, at the DRC level, socioeconomic development initiatives must be implemented in conformity with Article 14 of the Constitution of the DRC and in line with the National Dialogue agreed priority Action no. 50 to 'ensure at least 30 percent representation of women in all implementation and monitoring structures relating to DDRR, DDR, PNDDR and STAREC programmes.'

Monitoring and driving progress from below

A central theme of this report is the important role that women's and civil society organizations can and should play in monitoring and driving progress toward implementation of the PSC Framework. In its first year of operation, the OSESG has organized or briefed several meetings with representatives from a wide range of DRC-based civil society groups and international non-governmental organizations. Such informal consultations play a vital role in disseminating information about the PSC Framework and its processes and enhancing understanding within the OSESG of conditions on the ground. Over time, it will be important to also create structured mechanisms for gathering targeted input from civil society actors to assist both in monitoring progress and in shaping the content and priorities of the Action Plan as a living document. The work of the TSC in beginning to formulate specific, time-bound indicators of progress is very welcome (Appendix A). To enable transparent monitoring of implementation, this process needs to be extended and elaborated, so that all activities listed in the ROM will eventually be accompanied by associated SMART²⁸ indicators.

In the meantime, civil society actors, and all who have an interest in the success of the PSC Framework, must continue to monitor progress and provide feedback to the lead implementers and collaborating partners named in the ROM Action Plan (especially governments, regional and national oversight mechanisms, international and regional bodies, the OSESG and larger, non-governmental organizations).²⁹ In doing so, it is helpful to prepare such feedback around existing reporting processes of relevant bodies. Upcoming examples include the interim and end-of-year progress reports on implementation of the Action Plan, scheduled to be presented at ROM meetings in September 2014 and January 2015. These, and other monitoring windows, are opportunities for women's and civil society groups to provide coordinated input to PSC Framework review processes and, in doing so, to draw attention to both achievements and shortcomings on the part of lead implementers in fulfilling their obligations under the accord. Equally important, they are also opportunities to advance solutions to the problems faced on the ground by women, men and children in communities seeking to transform the root causes of conflict and to achieve peace and human security in the DRC and region through sustainable development and democratic rule of law.

28 Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound

29 Examples of this are recent reports produced by civil society organizations from the DRC such as: Coordination Provinciale de la Société Civile du Nord-Kivu, "Contribution de la Société Civile du Nord-Kivu dans la mise en oeuvre des engagements regionaux pris au titre de l'Accord-cadre d'Addis-Abeba," Addis Ababa, 14 February 2014; Réseau pour la Réforme du Secteur de Sécurité et de Justice (RRSSJ), "Etat des lieux de la mise en oeuvre de l'Accord-cadre du 24 février 2013 et de la Résolution 2098 (2013) du Conseil de Sécurité des Nations Unies: 'Observations des Organisations de la Société Civile' – Rapport Préliminaire," Kinshasa, 24 February 2014, <http://www.rrssjrdc.org/?p=6285>; and Société Civile du Sud-Kivu, "Aide-mémoire de la Société Civile du Sud-Kivu à l'occasion de la rencontre à Bukavu avec la délégation de l'Envoyée spéciale du Secrétaire Général des Nations Unies pour la Région des Grands Lacs et la République Démocratique du Congo," Bukavu, 24 January 2014.

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APPENDIX A

PSC Framework Regional Action Plan: References to Women, Gender, or Civil Society within Action Plan Benchmarks, Activities, Lead Implementers, and Collaborating Partners

Benchmark or Activity	Lead Implementers (LI) and Collaborating Partners (CP)	Indicators and (Target Date)*	Priority Level
Activity 1.2 (b) Establish and strengthen local and cross-border conflict management networks and mechanisms, e.g., gendered peace committees, development of infrastructures for peace (IfPs), emphasize early warning and early response.	LI: Govs of the Region, ICGLR, SADC; CP: UNDP, OSESG, MONUSCO, Int. Partners, CSOs		No priority assigned
Activity 1.2 (c) Create or strengthen existing cross-border community Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanisms, traditional justice systems, transitional justice systems and reconciliation processes where appropriate.	LI: Govs of the Region, ICGLR, SADC, CS; CP: UNDP, OSESG, MONUSCO, Int. Partners		No priority assigned
Activity 1.2 (d) Design and launch a sensitization campaign targeting media and political actors to refrain from inciting violence and to promote conflict-sensitive discourse and reporting.	LI: Govs of the Region, ICGLR, SADC; CP: Media, CSOs		No priority assigned
Benchmark 1.5: Strengthen the involvement of civil society organizations and women's groups in regional efforts aimed at addressing sources of instability in line with UNSCR 1325 (2000).		No. of high-level outcome documents taking into account CS and women's groups' inputs (by 09/2014).	N/A
Activity 1.5 (a) Establish the Great Lakes Women's Platform to support, advocate for, and monitor progress on the implementation of the PSC Framework.	LI: ICGLR Women Forum, Femmes Africa Solidarité; CP: OSESG, UN Women, AU, CS		I

Activity 1.5 (b) Establish a Regional Steering Committee for the Regional Plan of Action on UNSCR 1325 in line with the Bujumbura Declaration and in tandem with the PSC Framework.	LI: Gov of Burundi, ICGLR Women's Forum, Femmes Africa Solidarité, OSESG; CP: Govs of the Region, CSOs, Bilateral Donors	II
Activity 1.5 (c) Strengthen partnership among Regional Women's Forum, Youth Forum and Civil Society Forum and enhance regional collaboration with governments through actions such as cross-border reconciliation dialogues.	LI: Govs of the Region, CS, ICGLR, Femmes Africa Solidarité; CP: UN, OSESG, Int. Partners	No priority assigned
Benchmark 2.1: Neutralize and disarm armed groups operating in Eastern DRC, with due regard to zero tolerance to SGBV, in line with UNSCR 2098 (2013), and other relevant AU and ICGRIL decisions and instruments.	No. of armed groups neutralized and disarmed (by 02/2014). Complete Force Intervention Brigade operationalization (by 02/2014).	N/A
Activity 2.1 (a) Implement the DRC National DDR/DDRRR Plan, with particular attention to vulnerable youth, women and children associated with armed forces and groups, and promote cooperation among countries in the region to repatriate ex-combatants.	LI: Govs of DRC, Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi; CP: Govs of the Region, AU, AfDB, MONUSCO, Int. Partners, World Bank Group	I
Benchmark 2.3: Establish and operationalize regional gender-sensitive DDR/DDRRR programs for combatants and dependents, with particular attention to the immediate release of children from armed groups.	No. of combatants handled via regional gender sensitive DDR/DDRRR programs (by 06/2014).	N/A

<p>Activity 2.3 (a) Design and implement gender-sensitive national and regional DDR/DDRRR programs for combatants and dependents, with particular attention to women and children associated with armed forces and groups in line with UNSCR 2098 (2013), UNSCR 2106 (2013) and proposed AU Guidelines on DDR.</p>	<p>LI: Govs of the Region, MONUSCO, UN;</p> <p>CP: AU, SADC, UNDP, Int. Partners, CS, World Bank Group, AfDB</p>	I
<p>Activity 2.3 (b) Develop and implement programs that promote local and cross-border community recovery and reconciliation (e.g., cross-border legal trade, community dialogue, social cohesion).</p>	<p>LI: Govs of the Region, CS, UN;</p> <p>CP: ICGLR, SADC, AU, World Bank Group</p>	II
<p>Activity 4.1 (d) Create economic opportunities for women and youth (microfinance facilities, creation of markets, cooperatives) and build their capacity (train on trade policies, market management, custom regulations) for cross border legal trade and commercial exchanges including promotion and protection of rights.</p>	<p>LI: Govs of the Region, ICGLR, CEPGL;</p> <p>CP: UNDP, World Bank Group, Bilateral Donors, SADC, ICGLR</p>	I
<p>Activity 4.5 (c) Carry out advocacy and awareness-raising campaigns against unlawful mining and minerals smuggling.</p>	<p>LI: Govs of the Region, ICGLR, CEPGL, SADC;</p> <p>CP: Media, CSOs</p>	II
<p>Activity 4.6 (b) Support the operationalization of the ICGLR Audit Committee to monitor the level of implementation and compliance to its certification mechanism.</p>	<p>LI: ICGLR;</p> <p>CP: Govs of the Region, SADC, AU, CSOs</p>	I
<p>Activity 4.8 (a) Using a participatory and collaborative approach, develop guiding and regulatory mechanism for Artisanal and Small-scale Mining (ASM) including demarcating areas for licensed ASM.</p>	<p>LI: Govs of the Region, ICGLR, SADC;</p> <p>CP: UNDP, Int. Partners, Experts, World Bank Group, CSOs, Communities</p>	II

Activity 4.8 (b) Sensitize communities living in resource locations to organize into cooperatives and groups to access finances for legal ASM.	LI: Govs of the Region; CP: Private Sector, Media, World Bank Group, CSOs	I
Activity 5.3 (c) Undertake cross-border humanitarian and development initiatives and form community-level partnerships in areas where resettlement and reintegration is occurring to facilitate smooth and sustainable return and build trust.	LI: Govs of the Region, UNHCR, UNDP, UNOCHA, UNICEF, OSESG; CP: ICGLR, SADC, CSOs, Int. Partners, World Bank Group	II
Benchmark 6.1: Facilitating the prosecution of all those suspected of violations of human rights, including the perpetrators of SGBV. Priority will also be given to victims of war crimes, victims of SGBV in line with UNSCR 1325 (2000).	No. of suspects of human rights violations, including SGBV perpetrators arrested and prosecuted (by 03/2014).	No priority assigned
	Significant reduction in acts of violence against civilians, including SGBV, perpetrated by members of security forces (by 03/2014).	
Activity 6.1 (a) Develop and/ or implement domestic criminal legislation for prosecution of international crimes and gross violations of human rights, including SGBV, in accordance with the Statute of the ICC, ICGLR Protocol on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity and the Protocol on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence Against Women and Children.	LI: Govs of the Region, ICGLR, SADC; CP: UNDP, Int. Partners, CS	I

Activity 6.1 (b) Convene at least two regional workshops for stakeholders to share information and lessons learned on national investigations and prosecutions of international crimes including SGBV and formulate options for further action in fight against impunity.	LI: Govs of the Region, ICGLR, SADC, OSESG; CP: UN, AU, Int. Partners, CS	II
Activity 6.1 (c) Identify and support ongoing interventions (including among others Panzi Hospital and Heal Africa) for the protection and recovery of victims of war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and SGBV in conflict contexts.	LI: Govs of the Region, ICGLR, SADC; CP: UN, Int. Partners	No priority assigned
Activity 6.2 (a) Establish and strengthen national committees on the prevention of genocide in accordance with the ICGLR Protocol on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity.	LI: Govs of the Region, ICGLR, SADC; CP: UN, CS, Int. Partners	III
Activity 6.2 (b) Allocate both financial and technical resources to the ICGLR Regional Committee on the Prevention of Genocide to execute its mandate including monitoring and reporting on states' compliance with the Protocol.	LI: Govs of the Region, ICGLR, SADC; CP: UN, CS, Int. Partners	II
Activity 7.1 (a) Convene a high-level consultation on regional judicial cooperation with a focus on the ICGLR Protocol on Judicial Cooperation and the establishment of Joint Investigations Commissions.	LI: ICGLR, Govs of the Region; CP: AU, UN, UNDP, CS	II

Benchmark 7.3: Operationalization of the SGBV Regional Training Facility in Kampala, Uganda.	No. of training programs carried out by the SGBV Regional Training Facility (by 09/2014).	N/A
	No. of countries participating in trainings (by 09/2014).	
7.3 (a) Launch the SGBV Regional Training Facility in Kampala, Uganda.	LI: Gov of Uganda, Govs of the Region, ICGLR, OSESG, SVC;	1
	CP: UNDP, Int. Partners, UN Women, other UN agencies	
7.3 (b) Through the Training Facility, conduct trainings for judicial and security sector personnel from across the region on SGBV prevention, response and investigations.	LI: Govs of the Region, ICGLR;	1
	CP: OSESG, UNDP, AU, Int. Partners	
7.3 (c) Establish partnerships between the Training Facility and other regional and national mechanisms on SGBV prevention, response and investigations.	LI: Govs of the Region, ICGLR;	1
	CP: UN, UNDP, AU, SADC, CS, Int. Partners	

* Indicators and target dates for this table were taken from the 'Regional Commitments under the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework Agreement for the DRC and the Region: Benchmarks and Indicators of Progress September 2013 – September 2014' chart. Within the aforementioned chart, only the 'benchmarks,' included in the Action Plan, and not the associated 'activities,' have itemized indicators and target dates. As such, indicators and target dates have only been matched with their associated benchmarks for this table.

APPENDIX B

Implementation of the PSC Framework:

Compilation of Recommendations of Women Civil Society Leaders to the Government of the DRC

I. SECURITY SECTOR REFORM

Overarching

- Ensure that security sector reform is centered on human beings and based on democratic values, as well as respect for human rights
- Allocate adequate resources to and ensure the effective application of the National Action Plan of UN Resolution 1325
- Create and fund the national action plan to implement the PSC Framework
- Establish mechanisms for parliamentary control of the security sector
- Employ a 'framework of reflection' aimed at solving the different security issues faced by the population and the state; the resulting actions of the Government should be cross-sectional
- Create an army reform dialogue framework to bring together civil society and development partners to contribute to reforming measures
- Create and operate dialogue frameworks between the police and the population
- Effectively nominate judges throughout the entire country
- Improve living conditions for police and military forces
- Recruit, fund, train and integrate women as police, army and security officers
- Recognize that DRC's security is the DRC's responsibility; instead of blaming others for taking advantage of the DRC's weaknesses, the DRC must become strong so that such actions against us are not possible
- Use internal DRC resources first in budget planning and funding provisions for reforms of police, army and the justice sector, instead of always asking for international help

Army reform

- Rejuvenate the army by recruiting new soldiers; create a republican army, professionally trained, that is able to protect the entire country
- Finalize and implement the provisions of the enabling act on army forces organization and operation
- Finalize the reform plan including the plan's communication structure
- Finalize structures and staffing rosters for armed forces units
- Ensure the necessary budget to reform the FARDC
- Start hiring new military recruits (men and women)
- Renovate and/or build military infrastructures (barracks and logistical infrastructures)
- Train current officers and deputy officers

- Recruit and train young people, including for the infantry, parachuting and marine specialists
- Create rapid response units or corps
- Build a DRC-wide, republican army and transfer military officers from the Kivu region to the western part of the DRC, or other provinces
- Continue actions undertaken by the Government to eliminate armed groups in the eastern part of the country

Police reform

- Restructure, reorganize, and/or organize the PNC central management, central services, specialized national training courses, provincial police stations and state units
- Improve security for women within the police, armed and security forces by punishing harassment or sexual violence these women are subjected to, by their male colleagues or superiors
- Establish a communication strategy on child protection and gender-based violence
- Manage properly the transfer system that affects families within the police and armed forces
- Create leadership positions for women in border areas where violence against women has been reported, especially affecting women involved in trans-border business activities
- Pay police officers their wages and provide accommodation in barracks to discourage criminal activity among members of police forces
- Organize and run the payment chain. Establish a unit to supervise the payment chain
- Ensure proper vetting of all PNC staff
- Enforce staff regulations on age limits and physical, psychological and professional ability.
- Recruit younger NPC staff
- Ensure the appropriate materials and logistic facilities are available
- Run a whistle-blowing mechanism for abuses perpetrated by police officers
- Test community police forces in pilot provinces. Then, extend this community police force to the rest of the country in accordance with territorial divisions
- Run the Académie and Écoles de Police (police training colleges) and organize police training at different levels
- Improve living conditions for prisoners

Disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, reintegration and resettlement

- Ensure effective demobilization, reintegration and social and economic support for demobilized troops
- Put in place mechanisms to care promptly for former fighters who enrolled voluntarily
- Assess the needs and organize all activities necessary to the checking, termination and retirement of children linked to armed groups and any other staff who do not match legal recruiting criteria

II. CONSOLIDATION OF STATE AUTHORITY

Restoring rule of law

- Enforce the law on the equality of men and women
- Chase away or demobilize all armed groups
- Strengthen the police, the army and the justice system
- Establish a conscientious, capable army to defend the population and the national borders
- Eradicate impunity; punish perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity

Strengthening democratic governance

- Reinforce state sovereignty to enable decisions to be taken without foreign influence
- Support the autonomy of women to improve their participation in elections
- Strengthen women and girls' understanding of how state management works to foster greater participation
- Develop a gender integration strategy within the Peace Security and Cooperation Framework
- Ensure fair elections and respect for the current Constitution in the 2016 presidential election
- Go to war against corruption
- Organize a civil society forum on peace and democracy
- Democratize state management by applying the commitments on women's political participation in public administration management
- Abolish the rule that only people who come from a given province or area should gain a position within the public sector of that province
- Prioritize meritocracy instead of using quotas, which weaken women's position
- Renovate, modernize and adequately resource territorial administration infrastructures
- Create incentives to young people to join territorial administration and retrain territorial authorities

Economy

- Make the economy autonomous
- Put people back to work by renovating infrastructures destroyed during the war and nominating administrative authorities and officers in the security sector and the justice system

III. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Implementation of laws and policies

- Implement all existing constitutional provisions, laws and statutes relating to women's participation and gender
- Speed up of the Family Code reform process and implementation of the law on equality
- Create a gender integration strategy within the PSC Framework, provide the means to carry out the strategy, and supervise and assess progress on its implementation
- Ensure protection of women, young girls and children from violent crimes
- Ensure adequate responses to victims and survivors of violence, including managing information and data, as well as harmonizing collaboration between public and private institutions and support partners
- Implement the strategies outlined in the paper on Growth Strategy and Reducing Poverty;
- Implement the National Plan of the Security Council Resolution 1325

Gender-sensitive social development

- Improve social and distributive justice
- Provide programmes to strengthen capacities of the population in general and for women especially
- Include women in public sector management
- Prioritize and implement actions to support women's participation in development
- Build hospitals and health centers properly outfitted, and physically and financially accessible so that women and their children have access to quality care
- Combat delinquency and homelessness among girls to help reduce levels of STDs and HIV/AIDS
- Promote schooling and higher level education for women, with accommodation provided across provinces and regions to combat the lack of education for women and girls due to poor study conditions

Economic development and business

- Make political, economic and financial spheres autonomous
- Improve business conditions, including for small businesses and in the private sector
- Develop funding mechanisms for women to develop women-led business projects
- Mobilize and integrate women into different business sectors
- Promote business literacy, awareness and professionalization of women
- Promote agriculture to increase agricultural production
- Develop and improve energy, communication and telecommunication, and transport infrastructures
- Develop industry and crafts sectors

NOTE: This is a compilation of recommendations provided in response to selected interview questions. It does not reflect a consensus of views; not all respondents necessarily agree will all recommendations included in this appendix.

APPENDIX C

Respondent	Email	Organization
Jeanine Bandu Bahati	bandujeanine@yahoo.fr	Groupe thématique protection sociale/ EFIM – Encadrement Des Femmes Indigènes et des Ménages Vulnérables
Immaculée Birhaheka	paifcongod@yahoo.fr	PAIF – Promotion et Appui aux Initiatives Féminines
Florence Boloko Mularika	mularika@live.fr	WOPPA – Women as Partners for Peace in Africa
Gégé Katana	sofad_dh@yahoo.fr	SOFAD – Solidarité des Femmes Activistes pour la Défense des Droits Humains
Gogo Kavira	cafednordkivu@yahoo.fr	Comite Provincial des Femmes du Nord Kivu
Annie Matundu-Mbambi	amatmbambi@yahoo.fr	WILPF – Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom – DRC
Rose Mutombo Kiese	rkm5@yahoo.fr	CAFCO – Cadre Permanent de Concertation de la Femme Congolaise
Neema Namadamu	neema@namadamu.com	Maman Shujaa
Marianne Nasha-Mulangala	rdc.afac@yahoo.fr	AFAC – Association des Femmes d’Affaires du Congo
Joséphine Ngalula Kabeya	joseengalula2001@gmail.com	FORFEM – Forum de la Femme Ménagère
Salomé Ntububu	SNtububa@christian-aid.org	Christian Aid – Goma
SARCAF c/o Salomé Ntububu*	sarcaf1@yahoo.fr	SARCAF – Service d’Accompagnement et de Renforcement des Capacités d’Auto Promotion de la Femme

*Salomé Ntububu consulted with SARCAF in preparing the responses she provided to the research questions.

