



Strong Women for Lasting Peace

Empowered women in the MENA region influence peace processes and thus contribute to peace in the region

Effect of UN resolution remains limited

In 2000, the UN Security Council called for the increased participation of women in peace processes and passed UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. The resolution was intended to help protect women from human rights violations and discrimination and promote their active role in conflict prevention, reconstruction and peace negotiations. Fifteen years later, the Global Study on the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 examined the connection between the participation of women in peace processes and a durable and stable peace. The Graduate Institute in Geneva analysed 40 peace processes and concluded that agreements are more likely to be reached and implemented, if women had a significant influence on the preceding peace negotiations. Peace agreements are more than 60 percent more successful, if women's organisations and other civil society representatives participate in an active and meaningful way. Not least for this reason, women's voices should be heard as a matter of principle - including on issues that go beyond gender equality.

However, two decades after the UN resolution was adopted, implementation remains a major challenge, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa, the so-called MENA region. In countries such as Syria, Libya, Yemen or

Peace agreements are more than 60 percent more successful, if women's organisations and other civil society representatives participate in an active and meaningful way.

Project title	Enhancing Women's Leadership for Sustainable Peace in Fragile Contexts in the MENA Region
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Implementing agency	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Project countries	Iraq, Syria, Libya, Yemen
Political partner	UN Women
National partners	Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative (IPTI), Political Settlements Research Programme (University of Edinburgh), Justice Rapid Response (JRR)
Overall term	October 2016 – October 2022
Financial volume	10 million Euro

Iraq, women are traditionally less included in political processes than men. The adoption of Resolution 1325 has changed de facto little in terms of women's political reality. While the Covid-19 pandemic has impeded the implementation of Resolution 1325 in many countries even further, the current crisis once

again underscores the importance of women's political participation in crisis and conflict situations as well as of gender-sensitive crisis management, so that women are not seen

exclusively as „victims“ but are valued as knowledge bearers with leadership capacity.

Published by

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Empowered women have a greater impact

On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is subsidising a project by UN Women which promotes the meaningful and effective participation of women in peace processes, thereby contributing to sustainable peace in the MENA region. The most important effect of women's participation in peace processes is not only the increased attention paid towards gender-relevant aspects in peace agreements, but also the positive shift in dynamics and the broadening of discussion topics.

Through training courses, needs-oriented advisory services and regional workshops, peace activists, mediators and selected women's groups in the four project countries learn how to contribute to and even lead important political processes of peace negotiations, including in the context of reconstruction, in a tactically and technically competent manner. Participants have access to a specially developed online platform and the so-called Peace Agreement Database, through which they can access key information such as strategy documents, individual case studies and training material. A user-friendly application for smartphones ('PeaceFem App') will facilitate even easier access to and use of information in the future. These digital learning and exchange formats are particularly relevant in times of Covid-19-related lockdowns. Regional meetings and the support of a regional network for female mediators further encourage joint learning and cross-national knowledge exchange. Furthermore, governments and other actors involved in peace negotiations are advised on relevant issues related to peace and conflict, the meaningful participation of women and the integration of gender-sensitive perspectives.

17 case studies on various peace processes, 36 infographics and 11 research reports have been produced

To ensure an evidence-based approach, advisory services and trainings are supplemented by a research component. This ensures a high-quality standard and guarantees the ability to connect and contribute to the state of knowledge and approaches of UN-led peace processes. Renowned international think tanks and research institutes are thus important partners.

Furthermore, UN Women supports the establishment of dialogue formats and strategic partnerships between mostly still male decision-makers and actors in official peace processes at a high political level (the so-called Track I level), with women peace activists at the non-state level (Track II) to identify synergies between the two levels and promote the inclusion of women.

Our impact: Knowledge enhances influence

With the help of the funds provided by BMZ, UN Women produces various information materials and publications for 'Women in Peace Processes'. This not only facilitates knowledge transfer, but also strengthens the influence of women in peace and

reconstruction processes. To this end, 17 case studies on various peace processes have been produced. Each case study analyses how women were involved in peace

processes, what kind of influence they had and what factors contributed to success or failure. In addition, 36 infographics and 11 research reports on topics such as 'Women and political power' or 'Gender and territorial power in peace processes' are available online. They demonstrate how strengthened women in crisis regions can positively influence peace negotiations. For example, UN Women succeeded in securing the comparatively high participation rate of women of almost 30 percent in the 'Constitutional Committee' for the Syrian peace negotiations.

By generating local and context-specific knowledge and supporting the participation of women in peace processes, the programme helps to put into practice the key recommendations of the Global Study on the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325.



Syria: after approximately nine years of conflict, the Government has reasserted control over most of the territory it had lost to opposition groups, though with large parts of the north under the control of designated terrorist groups, Kurdish groups and other political bodies. In October 2019, the Trump administration announced its withdrawal from northeast Syria, followed by the Turkish-led Operation named 'Peace Spring'. These developments have continued to destabilise the country and shift political dynamics across the region.*

Iraq: Street protests rooted in popular discontent and a harsh government response have embroiled Iraq in a crisis since early October 2019. After protests in Baghdad and several governates in southern and central Iraq, large-scale demonstrations re-commenced with a significant number of women at their core. Unarmed demonstrators and security forces have been killed and injured in the hundreds and thousands respectively.*

Libya: there was an outbreak of violence that continues at the time of reporting. On April 4th, General Haftar and his so-called Libyan National Army (LNA) in the East launched an offensive to seize control of Tripoli, halting the political process and returning the country to renewed conflict. From April to September 2019, more than 200 civilians were killed and more than 150,000 have been displaced from April to December 2019.*

Yemen: remained the world's worst humanitarian crisis with staggering levels of humanitarian needs in 2019. Approximately three million people are internally displaced across the country, and humanitarian access is still very limited. 2019 witnessed some diplomatic progress, with the signing of the Riyadh agreement between the internationally recognised government and the Southern Transitional Council mid-year.*

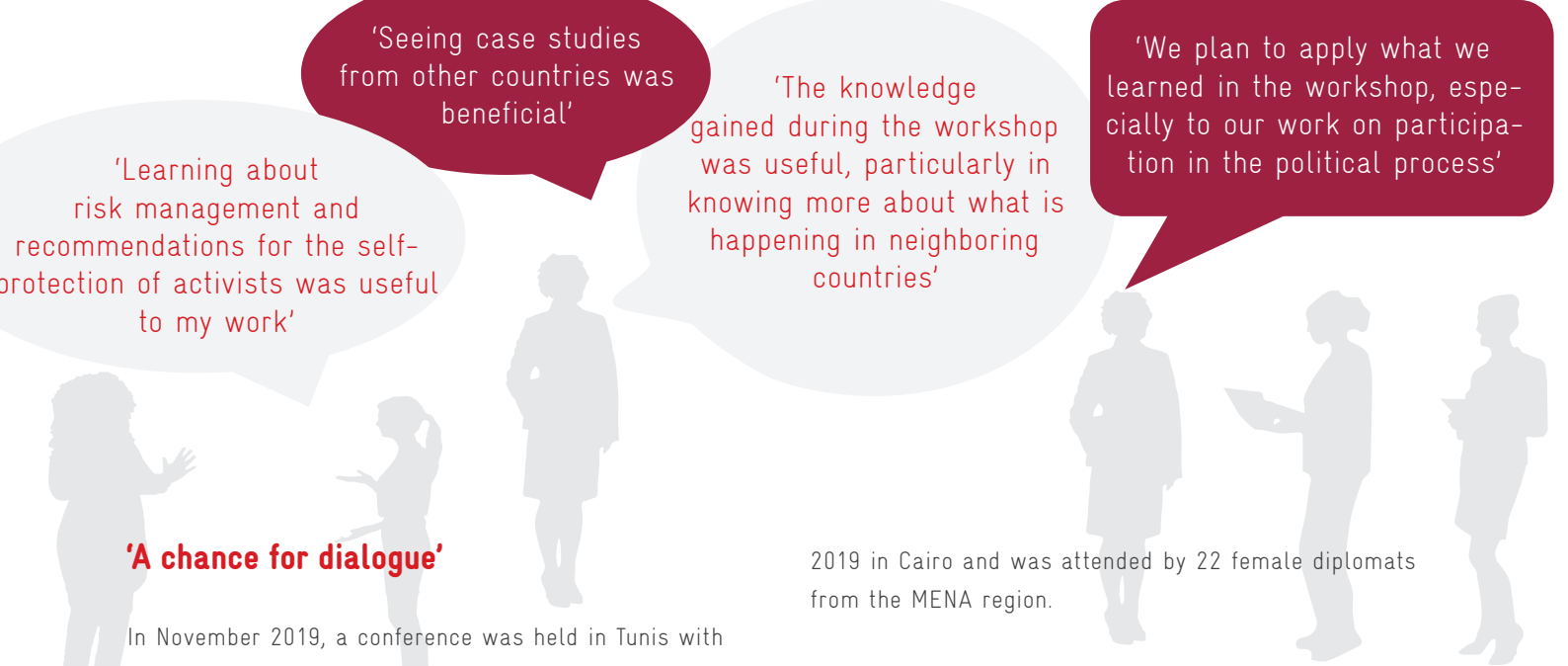
Good governance, political participation



Number of people who, with the support of the project, have participated in local, regional or national processes to form a political will or prepare a decision.



* Source: 'Enhancing Women's Leadership for Sustainable Peace in Fragile Contexts in the MENA Region. Fourth progress report to the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. January - December 2019.'



'A chance for dialogue'

In November 2019, a conference was held in Tunis with about 60 participants. The two-day event focused on 'Gender Perspectives and Confidence Building for Inclusive Peace'. It brought together a diverse range of different actors to develop ideas on how to get often stagnant peace processes back on track.

Another event to promote transnational, regional capacity development was held in cooperation with the Cairo International Center for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding (CCCPA) under the title 'Enhancing Arab Women's Participation in Peace Processes' in March

2019 in Cairo and was attended by 22 female diplomats from the MENA region.

In order to strengthen mutual understanding and intergenerational cooperation, a two-day workshop with 54 young people and female activists on 'Women and Young People in Peace Processes: Synergies and Cross-Learning' took place in Beirut in September 2019. This workshop particularly fostered the cross-national exchange of experiences in the conflict-ridden countries of the MENA region. Due to contact and travel restrictions, modified virtual formats are currently being examined and developed for upcoming conferences, workshops and other events in 2020.

The project is part of the BMZ special initiative 'Tackling the root causes of displacement, stabilising host regions, supporting refugees'. The supported measures benefit both refugees and host communities. In the long term, their sustainable approach reduces structural causes of migration and displacement such as social inequality or lack of (economic) prospects. This project contributes to strengthening the leadership role and participation of women in peace processes in the MENA region and raises awareness regarding the importance of women's participation among all relevant actors.

Published by:
Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices
Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1-5
65760 Eschborn, Germany
T +49 61 96 79-11 75
F +49 61 96 79-11 15
E info@giz.de
I www.giz.de

Enhancing Women's Leadership for Sustainable Peace in
Fragile Contexts in the MENA Region

Author/responsible:
Kora Gouré Bi
E-Mail: kora.goure-bi@giz.de

Design/Layout:
Ira Olaleye, Eschborn

Photo credits:
Photos: © UN Women

On behalf of
German Federal Ministry for Economic
Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Division 301 - Middle East II (Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey)
Florian Lewerenz
Berlin

Eschborn, July 2020

On behalf of



Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development