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Discourses in Post Conflict Activism:
How International and Local Movements Frame and Influence Each Other

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Abstract

In today's globalizing world it is impossible for social movements to avoid influencing each other. The differences and relationships between international and local movements show how international movements can help frame local ones and in various conflict zones, women have taken on the discourses and values of international NGOs in order to gain power for their national campaigns. Fighting against patriarchy, local women have sought to find a place for their narratives in the international discourse while empowering other women to better their lives. This study seeks to understand the ways in which local and international social movements represent the needs of women; in what ways those needs are made meaningful through language; and, reciprocally, how women use that language to advantage their campaigns. This study uses discussions of various international, post-conflict women's movements and how global discourses influence local campaigns to reach a conclusion about the nature of women's empowerment movements globally. Further, through a content analysis of the mission statements of international NGOs such as Women for Women International and MADRE, and national NGOs or campaigns such as the Association of Women of Vukovar in Croatia and Medica Zenica in Bosnia, this study points to the emphases movements place on different values and issues and thus considers which interests- cultural, economic, social- "matter." This research points out discrepancies between the emphases of local and international movements. It concludes with the questioning of whether the international community should focus on context-specific struggles and if so, what the international role should be, or if women can have universal demands and if so, if they are necessarily based on the opinions of donors and powerful nations.

Definitions

A number of terms in this paper warrant discussion in order to understand what I mean by them

and further, because a number of important themes that tie into this project are revealed in

exploring them.

Local- the issue with this term to describe social movements is in when to classify a movement

as "local." The NGOs I looked at in this paper received international money, have staff with

varying degrees of international exposure and privilege, and may have other unknown ties to the

international agenda for women's movements. Thus, for the purpose of this paper, local

organizations are those based in the country with most of the staff being local people.

Civil Society- civil society is a complex concept to define. As I will elaborate on later, my

working definition of civil society is the collection of non-governmental organizations,

movements, organized protests, and individuals working within a society and through civil

engagement, or activism, to create a *common* change and reconciliation of tensions between

sections of the "civil society" or the people and governing bodies.

Transnational and International Organizations- For the purpose of this paper these are

organizations based in wealthy countries, namely the United States that concern themselves with

the needs of those in other countries, primarily post-conflict societies.

Literature Review

    For this paper I am interested in the problem of defining the international community's role

in local civil society, specifically women-focused campaigns, and how does it impact movements

discursively and strategically? While there is a large body of research on how international

norms frame local movements, there is not a lot of work on these issues as they specifically

relate to women and how international activists' missions could influence or differ from those of local female activists.

There are a number of different ways to talk about the connection between international and local movements. In her book, *Unexpected Power: Conflict and Change among Transnational Activists*, Shareen Hertel discusses the difference between "norm entrepreneurs" and "receivers."[1] Norm entrepreneurs are "altruistically motivated individuals who 'promote norms or ideas because they believe' in them."[2] They can also be called "senders" as they are often international actors who have the discursive power to define human rights and the privilege to start campaigns "in defense of others"[3]- the "others" being the "receivers" of the norms and supposed benefits of the campaign.

However, Hertel shows that there are some ways in which stakeholders on the ground can take some power and influence over the outcome of an internationally initiated campaign. While international NGOs and norm entrepreneurs in general are, as Hertel shows, the "gatekeepers" (those who have the power to decide which issues the international community will take interest in), counter-movements and counter-campaigns have been successful in amending the direction and priorities of international movements.

Two key ways that local stakeholders encourage norm evolution (shifting of the internationally-defined agenda) that Hertel mentions in her book are backdoor and blocking techniques discursive shifts. When activists attempt to *block* a transnational campaign, they do so by speaking out completely in opposition to the campaign in order to stop the progress entirely. One example of this is in Bangladesh when local activists believed that international attempts to end child labor would hurt children and the country as a whole because they did not consider the

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[1] Hertel, Shareen. *Unexpected Power*. Pp 14
[2] ibid.
[3] Hertel, Shareen. *Unexpected Power*. Pp 15

blow to the economy such a campaign could have if successful.[4] If the local campaign does not overtly disagree with the norm entrepreneur, backdoor moves are useful to insert local goals without stopping the progress of the campaign. This results in the widening the framework that international activists work within. For example, in Mexico, local activists accepted the antidiscrimination discourse for which human rights activists from the United States pushed, but included an emphasis on the right to work and reproductive rights in their language.[5]

In both of these techniques, there is a sense that local activists are using the international presence in their campaigns, whether or not they agree with the specific agenda, to find a place for their demands and give strength to their movements. In *The Justice Cascade*, by Kathryn Sikkink, the author also discusses the role of norm entrepreneurs in bringing human rights norms to the forefront, but insists that it is often in collaboration with local movements that sustain the campaigns after capitalizing on the exposure from high-profile international organizations.[6]

In her article, "When Do National Movements Adopt or Reject International Agenda? A Comparative Analysis of the Chinese and Indian Women's Movements," Dongxio Liu discusses other theories regarding how and why local movements adopt or use international discourses. First, she mentions the leverage thesis, which argues that, "social movements will rally around international agendas as long as they need leverage against a repressive or unresponsive state."[7] This idea could potentially explain some instances in which activists use blocking or backdoor techniques. By using international discourse to frame a campaign, whether the campaign supports or rejects the international agenda, it seems likely, based on power dynamics, that a government would have to address the situation.

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[4] Hertel, Shareen. *Unexpected Power*. Pp 7
[5] ibid
[6] Sikkink, Kathryn. *The Justice Cascade*. Pp. 37-63
[7] Liu, Dongxio. "When Do National Movements Adopt or Reject International Agenda?" Pp. 922

The second theory Liu examines before problematizing both is channeling. This argues that context is irrelevant and therefore that social movements have the same meaning across the globe. This is tied to the idea of universality in human rights and implies that a "norm entrepreneur" or "sender" would be able to speak for a "receiver" because of a sense that there is a world culture. Liu insists that both the leverage and channeling theories are flawed because they both deny local thinking and assume that it can be replaced by global thinking. She argues that "international agendas are relevant to national movements not because their meanings are globally given, but because national movements attach to them locally relevant meanings."[8] Instead, Liu proposes the notion of "context-dependent meaning-making processes" in which national movements respond to international agendas in three phases: "attention to an international agenda, mobilization, and decision for or against the international agenda."[9] This gives the local movements a degree discursive agency, showing that they respond to international agendas strategically and as they wish.

One example of an international movement that local campaigns used widely is the UN Security Council Resolution 1325. This resolution made strides in challenging the mainstream view of women in conflict and empowered local movements to expand and unify. It also created new spaces for women to gain power in peace-building both discursively and tangibly. Discursively, as Niamh Reilly argues in her piece, "Seeking Gender Justice in Post-Conflict Transitions: Towards a Transformative Women's Human Rights Approach," Resolution 1325 "purposively [shifted] the focus from 'women as victims' of conflict to women as agents of transition…[it] signals an important contribution to expanding the definition of transitional

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[8] Liu, Dongxio. "When Do National Movements Adopt or Reject International Agenda?" Pp. 922
[9] Liu, Dongxio. "When Do National Movements Adopt or Reject International Agenda?" Pp. 937

justice beyond (quasi)legal responses to past harms."[10] On the tangible side, in Sanam Naraghi Anderlini's book, *Women Building Peace: What they Do, Why it Matters*, the author discusses how Resolution 1325 was important because it acknowledged for the first time that non-state actors have a right to be involved in peace negotiations. This is significant because women are more commonly involved in non-state activities than official roles. In some cases, the Resolution was used as leverage against governments that refused to acknowledge women or whose formal peace- processes failed to produce peace in post-conflict situations. In this way, movements used international discourse to frame local movements and to elevate women's voices when national leaders ignore them. For example, the Resolution guided the launch of the International Women's Commission in 2006 between Israeli and Palestinian women. The Resolution was unifying because it was an international resolution, not specific to either group, and because it gave legitimacy to all women's demands for inclusion in the formal channels of governance and peace talks.[11]

Despite international norms pushing for women's human rights and societal inclusion, there is still a lot of foot dragging from politicians who want to keep women out of the political realm, claiming that peace talks are not the right forum for "women's issues", thus denying that women's issues are human issues and the possibility that women might have a stake in conflict resolution and an interest in societal problems other than those issues only affecting women.[12]

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[10] Reilly, Niamh. "Seeking Gender Justice in Post-Conflict Transitions: Towards a Transformative Women's Human Rights Approach." Pp. 2
[11] Anderlini, Sanam Naraghi. *Women Building Peace: What they Do, Why it Matters.* Pp. 70-73.
[12] Anderlini, Sanam Naraghi. *Women Building Peace: What they Do, Why it Matters.* Pp. 61, 73.

Section I: Patriarchy and Silencing of Women in Post-Conflict Societies

The end of violent conflict generally signals an increase in patriarchy. While women may have gained power and economic independence during war, when men leave to fight, their return often marks an "attempt to force women into their 'traditional' roles."[13] These roles tend to not involve political or civil participation because the reconstruction of a political system involves a significant discourse relating to rebuilding society in the sense of "restoring" societal conditions to their pre-war state. Thus, rather than creating a space for an ideological shift away from oppressive patriarchy in a new era, subjugation of women is often reinforced in order to "make sense of" and reorganize a broken society.

This is seen in the creation of governing systems as well as in civil society. Oftentimes, women are told to wait for their own revolution in post-conflict societal reconstruction.[14] Women are often barred form peace talks because some argue that they are not directly involved in war and therefore are not stakeholders. As mentioned previously, some argue that women in peace talks would only be concerned with "womens' issues." This is problematic first, discursively, because it assumes that women's issues are not human issues that would be relevant to the rest of the population (men). Additionally, it assumes that women have no stake in the general rebuilding of society. In many situations, women are told "this is not the time" or "wait until the conflict is resolved and then we can bring in the women." Again, this sets women up as "other" than the neutral human- man, whose needs are assumed to represent the needs of the average citizen. This allows patriarchy to re-insert itself into a society that is in the process of being rebuilt and allows men to speak on behalf of all people.

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[13] Pankhurst, D. (2008). "The gendered impact of peace." Whose Peace? Critical Perspectives on the Political Economy of Peacebuilding. Pp 32.

[14] Anderlini, Sanam Naraghi. *Women Building Peace: What they Do, Why it Matters.* Pp. 61

This raises the important question of narratives and speaking rights. Who gets to speak on behalf of whom? If women are not given a place in mainstream talks for the rebuilding of society, either this means that, as touched on before, their needs as people are seen as simply irrelevant, or that men are given the power to speak for them as members of the general constituency. In her article, "The Problem of Speaking for Others," Linda Alcoff explains, **"in both the practice of speaking for and about others, I am engaging in the act of representing the other's needs, goals, situation, and in fact, *who they are*, based on my own situated interpretation. In postructuralist terms, I am participating in the construction of their subject positions rather than simply discovering their true selves."**[15] In this way, pre-conflict patriarchy is reinstated by denying women the opportunity to construct themselves and speak for their needs as part of the population that has most likely had different experiences than the neutrally defined male experience.

In some cases, women have used their exclusion as a tactic for change in conflict-ridden or post-conflict societies. For example, in Liberia, women sat outside the building in which the talks were taking place and refused to move until the men came out with an agreement. These women also went on sex strikes and threatened to remove their clothes if peace was not made: two ways in which they used their normatively defined womanhood to force political progress. Unfortunately, this still meant that their voices were silenced from the mainstream peace talks and, even though it gave them power, they were still limited to normative definitions of what women are.

Thus, because their voices are underrepresented on the national level simply because they are women and therefore seen as not representative of the "neutral" or "mainstream," women can

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[15] Alcoff, Linda. "The Problem of Speaking for Others" pp. 80

face ridicule and additional hardship in attempting to better their communities through activism[16].

Section II: The Give and Take Relationship between International and Local Women's Movements

Once the international community realizes the plight of women in post-conflict societies, international activists often take it upon themselves to support women's education and emphasize the need for more women in government and more women's civil society organizations. One reform international activists like to push is gender quotas for elected office.[17] Overall, these have been very effective at increasing the number of women involved in the government, however, there is more to representation than purely descriptive. Female representatives must have a gendered perspective of politics and speak out for justice to be truly effective in amplifying "women's" voices.

With this push comes the promise of international dollars and while local women can put this money to good use with the influence of their wealthy benefactors who have the final say in how their money will be used, the presence of outside forces can corrupt the truly local nature of a movement. In the process of attempting to assist women for what are likely somewhat altruistic motives, international campaigns can overpower local women's agendas.

Clearly, one reason local movements adopt the discourses of international movements is money. Other reasons include the ability of international themes to gain legitimacy and widespread recognition for a local movement, as a way to create power to stand up to oppressive

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[16] Pankhurst, D. (2008). "The gendered impact of peace." Whose Peace? Critical Perspectives on the Political Economy of Peacebuilding. Pp 39.

[17] Reilly, Niamh. "Seeking Gender Justice in Post-Conflict Transitions: Towards a Transformative Women's Human Rights Approach." Pp. 2

regimes, as a means of framing local issues on a global scale with a global agenda, and further, as a movement base from which to build a local movement through "backdoor" additions to the priorities and discourse. Additionally, local movements will sometimes use international movements as an oppositional force if the message is not welcomed or useful to local people. In some cases, the international community stresses one human rights aspect while local populations are concerned with something completely different.

In international activism, privileged activists from powerful countries can sway the discourse of a movement and speak for those on the ground. These norm entrepreneurs have the ability to "send" human rights discourses and make them seem universal. This phenomenon also seems to run the risk of paternalism and condescension in which western women with power believe they can speak for the needs of the marginalized women better than they can themselves. However, as Hertel points out in her book, when the values of local and international movements do not align, local activists can find ways to speak for themselves either within or in opposition to dominant discourse.

Although the research on this area specific to women is smaller, there are examples of women speaking on behalf of women from other cultures, essentializing the female experience and minimizing the importance of local input. International NGOs must constantly ensure that they do not fall into this trap and believe that the desires of western women are equivalent to and right for all women. Liu describes this assumption that domestic contexts are irrelevant, rendering dominant discourses universal for international and local movements, as the channeling hypothesis.[18] Although there must be some form of universal human (and therefore women's) rights, context and local needs and desires are clearly important to appropriate campaigns. This, this study includes a textual analysis of the mission statements of various local

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[18] Liu, Dongxio. "When Do National Movements Adopt or Reject International Agenda?" Pp. 922.

and international NGOs to see how well the points of emphasis align, and ponders whether existing alignment is a result of true agreement, use of an international discourse to gain power, or a strategy to win the hearts of international donors. Based on the research thus far, it is important to explore whether the concepts are demonstrated in the mission statements and other website content of local and international NGOs. By using these organizations' websites it can be seen how much tension or agreement is clearly visible to an outsider.

Section III: What is Civil Society and How is it Gendered?

In order to meaningfully discuss the connection between international and local civil society, we must understand what civil society is and how it can be useful in empowering women globally. For society to function in a way that reflects the desires of the people, there must be a strong core of citizens dedicated to civil engagement. This is especially important in post-conflict societies in order for the rebuilding of a healthy economy, a transparent and accountable political climate, and a population whose needs are satisfied. In post-conflict societies, the needs of women must be carefully examined because the end of violent conflict generally signals an increase in patriarchy. While women may have gained power and economic independence during war when men leave to fight, their return often marks an "attempt to force women into their 'traditional' roles"[19]. These roles tend to not involve political or civil participation unless the reconstruction of a political system involves a significant discourse relating to building a "new" society. Thus, women can face ridicule and additional difficulty in attempting to better their communities through activism or participation in civil society[20].

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[19] Pankhurst, D. (2008). "The gendered impact of peace." Whose Peace? Critical Perspectives on the Political Economy of Peacebuilding. Pp 32.
[20] Pankhurst, D. (2008). "The gendered impact of peace." Whose Peace? Critical Perspectives on the Political Economy of Peacebuilding. Pp 39.

There are a number of definitions of civil society. Following are a few examples of such definitions[21]:

1. Civil Society is "a collection of private individuals seeking solutions to collective, as well as to individual, problems, [such as trade unions]."[22]

2. "Civil society is the sector of voluntary action within institutional forms that are distinct from those of the state, family and market, keeping in mind that in practice the boundaries between these sectors are often complex and blurred."[23]

3. "Civil society is the aggregate of organizations that are independent of the government. It includes religious groups, civic clubs such as the Rotary International, political parties, and other groups organized around specific interests"[24]

4. "Civil society refers to a voluntary and non-profit set of institutions, organizations, and behaviours situated between the state, the market, and the family" that can hold governments accountable and is a main actor in conflict resolution.[25]

5. Civil society is a broad-based group of people working for common goals, created through resistance to a ruler.[26]

6. Civil society's focus includes different issues including social things such as violence. By participating in actions (protests etc.) and associations there are opportunities to educate

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[21] These definitions and the analyses of them were gathered for a previous work developed as a precurosor to this study: Kran-Annexstein, Margaret. "Proposal and Curriculum for Civil Society Strengthening and Youth Leadership Workshop." American University, December 2012.

[22] Johns, Gary. "Trade Unions and Civil Society." *HR Nicholls Society XXIII Conference: The Changing Paradigm: Freedom, Jobs, Prosperity.* No date. Pp. 2

[23] Paffenholz, Thania and Spurk, Christoph. "Civil Society, Civic Engagement, and Peacebuilding." Social Development Papers: Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction. Paper No. 36. World Bank, Washington DC: October 2006.

[24] FEMA. "CHAPTER 13: INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT." FEMA Training. Retrieved from: training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/edu/docs/fem/Chapter%2013%20-%20

[25] Wani, Hilal Ahmad. "The Role of Civil Society in Conflict Prevention in Jammu and Kashmir." *International Journal of Business and Social Science.* Vol. 2 No. 4. March 2011. Retrieved from: www.ijbssnet.com/journals/Vol._2_No._4;_March_2011/19.pdf

[26] Anonymous, Civil Society Leader. November 2012. Interview by Margaret Kran-Annexstein

and prevent conflict.[27]

7. Civil society is the people who are organized to make a difference and act on social issues. Civil society members must ways embrace their mission wholeheartedly and be willing to suffer financial crisis in order to stay true to their goals[28]

These definitions bear the question: does civil society have to be united to be considered true "civil society"? Is it possible for nations to have multiple civil societies? Realistically, civil society seems to not exist in many places if it must represent an entire set of people. Thus, my working definition of civil society is the collection of non-governmental organizations, movements, organized protests, and individuals working within a society and through civil engagement, or activism, to create a *common* change and reconciliation of tensions between sections of the "civil society" or the people and governing bodies. Thus, there can be multiple civil societies within one country working for different changes. For example, the homosexual rights organizations and advocates make up one civil society. Similarly, women's organizations can unite an otherwise divided civil society, or they could potentially fall in with ethnic divisions and perpetuate distrust.

Section IV: Primary Sources Research: Women's Movements in the Balkans and Internationally

While there has been research done on social movements' use of international discourse to benefit or frame their campaigns, it has been done with specific focus on movements for the purpose of empowering women in post conflict societies. As discussed before, Liu's research brings in a gendered perspective by looking at when women's movements choose to accept or reject international agendas. This research can be expanded on by trying to see how the

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[27] Anonymous, Medica Zenica Staff. October 2012. Interview by Margaret Kran-Annexstein
[28] Munthali, Mwiza, TransAfrica Forum Outreach Director. December 2012. Interview by Margaret Kran-Annexstein.

international-national connection manifests itself in the framing of movements to the public

through a content analysis of nongovernmental organization's mission statements. All of the

women's organizations in this piece will be from the Balkan region. Although this means that the

data will not accurately reflect the nature of post conflict regions in general, due to the

importance of context, it will give a case study example in how local and international

movements can differ and explain and describe some of the phenomena discussed earlier.

The following section seeks to answer the question: in what ways do local and

international social movements represent and give meaning to the needs of women? Through this

question I seek to discover what are the differences between the goals of international and local

social movements and civil societies? Are international movements' discourses in line with those

of local? I hope to answer these questions through a discursive and text-based analysis of the

similarities and differences in mandates or missions of women's organizations internationally

and in the Balkans. Through this discussion I seek to understand who has the right to speak in

these movements and who has been privileged. What influence do local movements and local

narratives have on the goals of international movements and vice versa?

While looking at the websites of three NGOs based in the Balkans: Medica Zenica, the

Women's Association of Vukovar, and Srecem Do Mira (which translates to "Through Heart to

Peace"), a number of interesting aspects of the language used stand out in comparison to

international discourses from Women for Women International, MADRE, and UN Women. First

of all, these local NGOs emphasize the importance of friendship and socializing, acknowledging

that normal relationships are important to rehabilitation in a post-conflict situation. For example,

the Women's Association of Vukovar runs the Women's Club where women can participate in

"daily socializing, free press reading, organizing workshops."[29] This piece is also important because it recognizes the need for women organizers and activists to add to the experiences of civil society in general. On the other hand, internationally based campaigns rarely mention the importance of socializing in post-conflict settings.

Another way in which the language of international and national movements differs is in the use of the words "victim" and "survivor." Interestingly, despite the fact that Resolution 1325 paved the way for women's campaigns to shift their emphasis from women as victims of circumstance to agents of change, the local organizations described their beneficiaries as "victims of war trauma and post-war violence"[30] or "survivors." While the international websites reviewed made no mention of "victims," the language created a certain image of victimhood with content such as, "Women for Women International could not provide direct financial and emotional support to women living on the margins of hope without the backing of a global community."[31] Describing people as living on the "margins of hope" implies utter dependence on donors, without whom they would be hope*less.* This language emphasizes the need for a "global community" to, in effect, help those who cannot help themselves: a damaging and disempowering discourse.

Notably, this section also mentions the "global community." In this case it does not seem to be truly implying that social movements do not need to account for local context, as discussed earlier with the channeling theory, however it is interesting to see the phrase used in mentioning local women's need for support from internationals. Further, the local NGOs spend a significant

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[29] Women's Association of Vukovar. Retrieved 16 Apr. 2013 from
http://www.udzvu.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5&Itemid=6&lang=en
[30] Medica Zenica. Retrieved 16 Apr. 2013 from
http://medicazenica.org/uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=64&Itemid=54.
[31] Women for Women International. Retrieved 16 Apr. 2013 from
http://www.womenforwomen.org/about-women-for-women/women-empowering-women.php

amount of content mentioning their international partners and the organizations that help fund them. Do these sentiments mean they are not truly "local"?

Another concept that local movements use that is not common on international websites is that of feminism. While, unfortunately, feminism occasionally takes a negative connotation in the United States- a potential reason why organizations avoid using it- local NGOs in the Balkans describe their organizations as "feminist nonprofits."[32] These organizations do, however, receive funds from organizations worldwide so describing them as "feminist" must not be deterring to funders on a large scale.

Economic empowerment is important to both local and international organizations. Importantly, considering the implications of where they come from, international organizations tend to talk about general societal change and overall empowerment that assisting women financially brings. Meanwhile, local movements tend to focus mostly on the immediate needs of women to be financially independent. The local organization, Srcem Do Mira, discusses their Work Therapy Project's success by saying "Through this they gain means for themselves and their families."[33] On the other hand, Women for Women International insists, "lasting change can only be achieved when women have access to both knowledge and resources."[34] Additionally, UN Women claims, "Gender equality's…achievement has enormous socio-economic ramifications. Empowering women fuels thriving economies, spurring productivity and growth."[35] These two emphases might suggest that international organizations focus more on broad issues of social justice in the long term while local ones are still dealing with the immediate aftermath of a conflict.

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[32] Women's Association of Vukovar. Retrieved 16 Apr. 2013 from http://www.udzvu.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5&Itemid=6&lang=en
[33] Screm Do Mira. Retrieved 16 Apr. 2103 from http://adis79202.tripod.com/id1.html
[34] Women for Women International. Retrieved 16 Apr. 2013 form http://www.womenforwomen.org/).
[35] UN Women. Retrieved 16 Apr. 2013 from http://www.unwomen.org/about-us/about-un-women/

Conclusion

There has been a plethora of research done on the impact that international law and international caucuses and NGOs have on local movements and how those movements have been able to use the discourses to frame their arguments and fight their governments. For future research, it would be interesting to see if there are any examples of representatives from international NGOs taking themes or advice from a local movement in a post conflict zone, where the women would know first hand what the climate for women is like.

Few women's voices from the developing (oftentimes conflict-prone) world have been given a place in international discourse. Wangari Maathai, the environmental activist from Kenya and Vandana Shiva, land rights activist from India, are two examples of famous activists but there are more stories to be told. Unfortunately, in corrupt political situations, citizens often feel that their voices do not matter and that activism is for naught. Because I believe so strongly in the importance of shifting public discourse and grassroots activism, I have decided to create an activist training guide[36] aimed specifically at women. This is because in post- conflict zones, women are often subjected to more stringent patriarchy. Because women's groups are often denied access to mainstream political systems, they often do not have the exposure or experience to "devise comprehensive political strategies or to enter the national political arena as a formal entity."[37] Thus, in order to ensure that governments recognize local women's needs, this workshop curriculum seeks to train women on effective activism skills and campaign strategies as well as inspire them to work in oftentimes frustrating and limiting political situations.

One big dilemma campaigns face is how far to push mainstream society. This was seen in the discussion of the excuses made by the leaders of peace negotiations to keep women out.

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[36] See Appendix A
[37] Anderlini, Sanam Naraghi. *Women Building Peace: What they Do, Why it Matters.* Pp. 59

"Wait until we resettle society and fix the government, then we will worry about women's issues" is the argument that is so frustrating to female activists. However, similar discrimination even existed in the early years of the women's rights movement in the United States when lesbians and women of color were ignored to make white, middle-class, heterosexual white women's liberation easier to swallow. Was this a necessary step in the fight for all people's freedom? Or should social movements be as radical as necessary to include everyone from the start, even if it means making slower process? For the purpose of looking at broad-based social movements, this research has for the most part focused on women as they are normatively defined. There is obviously much more research to be done on how these movements impact people who identify as intersex or gender queer and whether these voices are allowed a space in public discourse.

Additionally, a vital piece of further research for this field is to study local movements in the field. Many organizations in post-conflict societies do not have websites and those that do can be in other languages or else, likely tied heavily to international funds. It would also be interesting to speak candidly with local female leaders about their place in civil society and their relationships to men in the government as well as men and even strong women with activism backgrounds.

An important aspect to consider when defining campaigns that use the connection between international and local movements is the need for solidarity over advocacy. Further, can international NGOs meaningfully advocate for local women across the globe, or does their lack of contextual understanding render their words pointless? In solidarity, should international activists simply use the language and tactics that local people tell them to? Or is there something to be said for universal needs and rights? One thing for certain is that the discourse of creating a

"voice for the voiceless" is disempowering and implies that local women are defenseless and silent without the help of international activists. While these senders do have more resources to successfully develop and run campaigns,[38] advocacy over solidarity can be discursively disempowering and perpetuate the idea that women in post conflict societies are only victims rather than potential leaders.

Based on the content analysis of the NGOs, there seemed to be some overlap in goals, such as the need for economic empowerment. Further, local movements were obviously grateful for the money they received and at least on the surface seemed to value international input. Thus, there must be a sort of partnership between local and international movements that prioritizes local goals while using internationally applicable discourse that can unite movements for maximum success.

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[38] Hertel, Shareen. *Unexpected Power*. Pp. 15

Appendix A:

Curriculum For Women's Activism Training[39]

I. Mission

> To empower female activists to stand up for women's and general societal issues in post-conflict countries for the sake of women's status and community betterment.

II. Goals

- To equip women with the necessary skills to become strong activists in their post-conflict communities, specifically those in the former Yugoslavia.

- To increase the level of activism, or civil engagement, among women in post conflict societies, especially those with fledgling governments.

- To build lasting relationships between women in the region so that they will continue to work for justice.

III. Objectives

> To have participants leave the workshop with...

- An understanding of what civil society is, the different types, how it is gendered and how to become involved

- An understanding of the impact international campaigns can have on local campaigns

- Knowledge of concrete ways to influence society such as letter writing campaigns, petitioning, protesting, and social media outreach

- Leadership skills to encourage engagement among their peers

- The basis of a group project for social change that is on its way to implementation

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[39] The framework and some of the activities for this curriculum is adapted from a work developed as a precursor to this study: Kran-Annexstein, Margaret. "Proposal and Curriculum for Civil Society Strengthening and Youth Leadership Workshop." December 2012.

- The ability to articulate their needs professionally through grant writing tutorials as well as in narratives which will be complied on a website for international access and communication about local goals.

IV. Methodology

This leadership conference and workshop will be a combination of trust and team-building exercises, activities, discussions, presentations and exercises to train and empower women in post-conflict communities.

V. People

    a. 15-20 Female Participants

        i. Variety of ages

        ii. Range from seasoned activists and those with little to no experience in civil society

    b. Trainers

        i. Local women from a variety of backgrounds who have had experience in civil society. This is so that there is no risk of international goals being prioritized over local goals.

    c. Trainers of trainers

        i. Experts in the field of civil society with previous experience running workshops

        ii. Members of civil society with first hand, reputable knowledge on how to have an impact on an international scale.

        iii. Experts in conflict resolution

        iv. People with in depth local knowledge

        d. Supervisors/ Facilitators

            i. Experts on running workshops to assist trainers

            ii. Medic for outdoor activities

        e. Translators

            i. Depending on the country and the trainers/ trainers of trainers/ supervisors

VI. Logistics

        a. Location: Post-conflict city with access to women of different backgrounds

        b. Setting: Neutral place just outside the city with access to a conference room, and green space

        c. Timeline: 10 days

        d. Housing: women would preferably stay in dorm-like accommodations to further their trust-building and to keep the participants and trainers in the atmosphere of the workshop.

        e. Meals: Provided based on funding

        f. Transportation: A bus to travel to and from women's homes, the conference hall, and local NGOs

VII. Curriculum/ Lesson Plans

Day 1-4:

Theoretical Framework:

Contact Theory is the idea that "more contact between individuals belonging to antagonistic social groups (defined by culture, language, beliefs, skin color, nationality, etc.) tends to

undermine the negative stereotypes they have of each other and to reduce their mutual antipathies, thus improving intergroup relations by making people more willing to deal with each other as equals."[40] It is possible that the women involved in this workshop could be potentially antagonistic in a post-conflict setting, depending on their roles in the conflict and the roles of their family. Further, depending on how involved each individual woman is already in civil society, tension based on political and ideological plans for their communities could cause conflict. While Contact Theory tends to simplify the process involved in reconciling difference however, the purpose behind trust building exercises and games is to have a group of people work together to achieve a goal, even if it is menial. Activities that build a sense of team and camaraderie through shared experience can result in trust-buildin while allowing people to take on leadership roles whether it is leading a conversation or assisting someone set up a tent. This will pave the way for leadership in activism.

1. Introductions
2. Ice breaking games

    1. Human knot: Participants stand in a circle and close their eyes. Each person puts his/her hands in the middle of the circle and joins hands with other random hands. The goal is to create a perfect circle, in which everyone is standing next to the person whose hand he/she is holding without breaking the chain of hands. This activity, in addition to putting people in close physical proximity, requires basic team work, communication and coordination to complete.

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[40] Forbes, H.D. "Ethnic Conflict and the Contact Hypothesis." The Psychology of Ethnic and Cultural Conflict. Retrieved from
http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CB8QFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.intech.mnsu.edu%2Fleey%2F04.69_88.pdf&ei=giJsUI6wCamw0QHJ1IGgBw&usg=AFQjCNHtIwV1mSQlZi0ac8RpEI9Iz2Svw&sig2=7HOqFznig9bDbMOeSSTcAg

2. Fear in a Hat: Participants anonymously write down their fears on slips of paper and place them in a hat. Each fear picked from the hat by another person who reads it and articulates what his/her understanding of that fear is. This activity promotes substantive discussion on common fears and promotes a sense of unity and understanding. This can also lead to a discussion about the group's collective fears, what they would like to accomplish with the workshops and even what they would like to change within society.[41] It is vital that before this activity takes place, every member of the group participates in a discussion regarding the guidelines for such discussion and the importance of respect.

3. Overnight camping and day-long hike (Day 2-3): This activity focuses on team-building and leadership. Participants will navigate themselves on a hike, step up to help with what they can and trust and learn from each other. The camping aspect, although short, instills a sense of community living as participants will have to work together to set up camp and cook dinner.

Day 4:

Theoretical Framework:

In order to observe the variations in civil society as described above, it is important for the participants to visit NGOs where they work. This will, ideally, inspire ideas for action while also showing that activism is hard work.

1. Site Visit: Participants will visit 2-3 active organizations working for women's empowerment to get ideas and see how the organizations interact with international NGOs and funders.

Day 5:

Theoretical Framework:

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[41] http://www.icebreakers.ws/team-building/fear-in-a-hat.html

The objectives of this leadership workshop is to have participants come away with the motivation and know-how to get involved to make positive change in their communities while working with international activists in a productive, beneficial way. This can be done through lectures, discussions, and activities to inspire. Because post-conflict societies tend to have underlying divisions still to negotiate, it is important for the participants to have a basic understanding of conflict theories. This is especially true if the country is under poor leadership that uses the divisions to weaken civil society, as is the case in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

1. Understanding of Negative and Positive peace spectrum[42]

    a. Negative peace is when a conflict has settled to the point at which there is no longer physical violence but ethnic tensions still abound.

    b. Positive peace is when a conflict has been resolved so that tensions have relaxed and people have integrated themselves into a functional society.

2. Understanding of Entrapment Theory: Entrapment Theory is based on the idea that individuals continue to engage in conflict or course of action, even if it is doing more personal harm than good, because they feel they have invested too much to "give up" and to justify prior actions.[43] Further, it is important to understand how this leads to escalation (or increased violence and tension) during conflict management.

Day 6:

Theoretical Framework:

In societies destroyed by violence, it is common to have a citizenry that seems apathetic or one that has little faith a government that, oftentimes, was involved in the conflict. This sense of

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[42] Grewal, Baljit Signh. "John Galtung: Negative and Positive Peace." Auckland Institute of Technology. August 30, 2003. From http://upeaceap.org/hando_upfiles/FCPC_RM_06_1.pdf

[43] Maiese, Michelle. "Entrapment." Beyond Intractability. Eds. Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess. Conflict Information Consortium, University of Colorado, Boulder. Posted: July 2004 <http://www.beyondintractability.org/bi-essay/sacrifice-trap>.

hopelessness must be combated with a discussion of goals and motivations. Assuming that the people who have chosen to come to this training are looking for the tools to build movements and shift society, it is likely that they have some sense of motivation. However, it is important to keep that motivation up and to help participants find ways to channel that motivation into specific actions regarding tangible problems.

1. Speakers: Currently successful activists will come and talk about some of the problems facing the post-conflict society. These should be inspiring people who have completed impressive projects or are very knowledgeable.

2. Second discussion on common problems and fears regarding life and society for all ethnicities as well as possible solutions

3. After this discussion and perhaps into the evening, participants will spend time writing narratives about their experiences as women in post conflict societies. If they are already engaged in civil society, they could write about the work they have done that should be supported by the international community while if they are budding activists, they could write about the problems they see in their community that should be addressed, whether or not the international community has already acknowledged the need. These narratives will be compiled on to a website as a means of educating would-be international activists in order to influence the discourse being used, and as an example of a type of action activists can take.

Day 7-8:

Theoretical Framework:

In addition to inspiration to act, participants, depending on their level of current engagement, may need to learn what kind of actions they can take to have an impact.

1. Speakers: People talking about their projects to reform society. These should be local speakers: one speaker from an NGO and one who started a protest that turned into a successful movement so that the participants can understand examples from many different sectors of the activism world.

2. Crash-course on how to actually do these projects

    a. How to build a movement (recruitment, training of activists, sending a clear and consistent message)

        i. Social Media (twitter, Facebook, blogging)

        ii. Petitioning/ canvassing

        iii. Protests

        iv. Letter-writing campaigns

    b. How to start an NGO (funding, registration, mission, goals, implementation)

Day 9:

Theoretical Framework:

It is important to keep the momentum of the training up and encourage engagement beyond learning about the activism of others. Therefore, day 9 will be reserved for participants to develop their own ideas on projects to implement for positive change in their communities, specifically to bring justice to women in the face of post-conflict patriarchy. Ideally, the groups will be divided so that there are various levels of experience and skill-sets. Further, by this time participants will have gained enough trust among themselves that they will not self-segregate between identities. In this way, they will be collaborating as they did at the beginning of the

workshop, this time on something useful, and thereby actively doing conflict resolution, as well as improving the lives of women in their communities, on a personal and societal scale.

    1. Discussion on project ideas (ie photo petitions, letter-writing campaigns, teach-ins)

    2. Break into groups to plan and start projects

    3. Group discussion of each project's goals and procedures and what needs to happen

    for its successful completion

Day 10:

Theoretical Framework:

Because the goal is that a few of the projects started on day 9 will be completed and that a few of the participants will go on to continue activism, it is important to have a discussion on obstacles to civil engagement, expanded upon from those obstacles faced by the NGOs from the site visit. Additionally, after the 10 day intensive training, it is important for participants to be able to give feedback, especially since they will ideally go on to train future activists with the knowledge and experience gained from this workshop.

    1. Obstacles to civil engagement:

        a. Government influence and corruption

        b. Lack of funding

        c. Difficulties of recruitment

        d. How to handle police

        f. How to handle press to promote a cause

        e. How to deal with international norms and successfully partner with members of

        the international community

    2. Evaluation and Feedback

a. Rate each aspect of the workshop based on how useful, enjoyable, and

informative it was

b. Feedback on accommodations and logistics

c. Feedback on effectiveness of trainers and facilitators