

Fall 2017

WOMEN AT THE HEART OF PEACE



Development
and Peace
CARITAS CANADA

1967 • 2017
50 YEARS
OF SOLIDARITY

Women Peacebuilders

Women play a key role in conflict prevention and resolution, as well as in building and sustaining an inclusive, lasting and fair peace.

Women's crucial contribution to building peace is acknowledged in Security Council Resolution 1325, adopted in 2000, which recognizes, for the first time, specific crimes committed against women during armed conflicts. It highlights the importance of their meaningful, full, and equal participation at all levels of peace processes.

However, 17 years later, women's expertise is still underestimated, women's organizations are consistently underfunded, and they remain, by and large, excluded from formal peace processes.

- Out of the 504 peace agreements signed since Resolution 1325 was adopted, only 138, or 27%, mention women.
- Of the major peace negotiations that took place between 1992 and 2011, only 2% of chief mediators, 4% of signatories and 9% of negotiators were women.
- Only 2% of international funding dedicated to peace and security is allocated to equality between women and men or the empowerment of women.

Given the increasing number of violent conflicts and their dramatic repercussions on civilians, we must find new solutions to promoting peace!

Sources:

UN Women, *Facts and figures: Peace and Security*, n.d., online: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/facts-and-figures> (consulted on July 10, 2017).

M. O'Reilly, *Why Women? Inclusive Security and Peaceful Societies*, October 2015, Inclusive Security, online: Inclusive Security <https://www.inclusivesecurity.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Why-Women-Report-2017.pdf> (consulted on July 10, 2017).

“For me, peace is being able to touch the hearts of people around us. It is the ability to explain what is within us so that others understand. It is being able to influence others in a positive way.”

RABIA KADIRY

Lebanon

Co-trainer for HOPe

House of Peace (HOPe)

After attending a workshop on peacebuilding organized by our partner HOPe, Rabia saw the profound impact on participants, so she decided to get additional training from HOPe to become a co-trainer. In collaboration with HOPe, Rabia, a professional social worker, now organizes and facilitates workshops on alleviating social tensions and laying the groundwork for peaceful coexistence and reconciliation.



“For me, peace is a dream because I have always lived in conflict zones. To me, peace means that women’s voices are being heard and that we decide how we wish to live and what we want to grow. Peace is also being able to recover our land without fear. It is the right to clean air and water. Peace is the right to live a dignified life.”

LUZ ESTELLA CIFUENTES

Colombia

Coordinator of the CNA’s
Women’s Secretariat and
School for Political Training for
peasant, Afro-Colombian and
Indigenous women

National Agrarian Coordination (CNA)

The mandate of the school for political training headed by Luz Estella is to empower women and provide training that will enable them to represent the needs of their communities to local, regional and national authorities, as well as other organizations.

“If a woman is educated and aware of her rights, if she is empowered and protected from violence, I am convinced that she will contribute to the creation of community peacebuilders. For me, true peace is freedom from all violence against women.”

JAMILA SAFI

Afghanistan

Lead facilitator of the program “Mobilizing men to protect the rights of women, democracy and peace”

Noor Educational and Capacity Development Organization (NECDO)

As part of her work, Jamila organizes and facilitates training sessions for imams and women, addressing a variety of issues such as building peace, conflict management, gender equality, human rights and the elimination of violence against women. NECDO’s work is firmly rooted in the belief that women’s empowerment builds peace and development.



Strong and empowered women: lasting and inclusive peace!

Did you know...

Women help reduce violence and prevent conflict.

Societies where women and men enjoy greater equality are more peaceful and stable.

5%

A 5% increase in the percentage of women in parliament makes a state 5 times less likely to use violence when faced with an international crisis.

Women build peace

Peace initiatives are more legitimate, effective and sustainable when women are involved and their opinion and expertise are considered.

35%

Peace agreements have a 35% greater chance of lasting at least 15 years when women help draft them.

Women help sustain peace

Women tend to prioritize inclusive approaches and to mobilize civil society by bridging political, religious and ethnic divides.

35%

When 35% of parliamentarians are women, the risk of relapse into conflict is near zero.

Source:

M. O'Reilly, *Why Women? Inclusive Security and Peaceful Societies*, October 2015, Inclusive Security, online: Inclusive Security <https://www.inclusivesecurity.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Why-Women-Report-2017.pdf> (consulted on July 10, 2017).

By investing in women and girls' empowerment, we support peace!

In June 2017, the Canadian Minister of International Development and La Francophonie presented Canada's new International Assistance Policy. Canada, therefore, committed to ensuring that women and girls have the opportunity to take active roles in establishing and maintaining peace in their communities.

This is excellent news. However...

A few days earlier, the government announced a 70% increase in the defense budget, more specifically 13.9 billion dollars over the next 10 years. However, no new funds were committed to international development.

Canada's current international development assistance budget of 5.3 billion dollars, 0.26% of Canadian GNI (Gross National Income), is still far below the UN target, set at 0.7% of the GNI.

If the government believes women's empowerment is a catalyst for peace, why has it chosen to invest massively in defense instead?



You, too, can be at the heart of peace!

LET'S COMMIT to standing alongside women and organizations that strive to build a more just and peaceful world.

Now's the time to sign the Development and Peace – Caritas Canada action card asking Prime Minister Trudeau to support women and women's organizations working for peace, and to a tangible strategy with a precise time frame toward dedicating 0.7% of Canada's GNI to development assistance.



Sign the Development and Peace action card today:
devp.org/act

Contact your federal MP to discuss the issue and ask her or him to support this campaign.

Talk to your family and friends about the importance of involving women in conflict prevention and peace processes and ask them to sign the action card.

Use the hashtag **#womenbuildingpeace** on **social media** throughout the campaign, mentioning **@devpeace**.



Tweet our Prime Minister (@JustinTrudeau or @CanadianPM) or the Minister of International Development and La Francophonie, Marie-Claude Bibeau (@mclauddebibeau or @DevCanada), to denounce the government's failure to increase Canada's international development assistance budget.



Follow us on Facebook throughout the campaign and share the stories that we will be posting every week.



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