

movements and post-war reconstruction;<sup>8</sup> and finally,

- demonstrate how prevailing state and military discourses rely on specific constructions of sexed and gendered women and men.

Apart from the benefits that a gender-based analysis confers on the creation of policy, the motivation for its inclusion and consideration is compelling. Policies and programs need to be developed from a gender perspective because in all, and especially fragile, war-torn societies, the social order can easily be reconstructed in a way that reconfigures gender inequality.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, gender-based analysis should be employed because unequal gender relations are increasingly understood as contributing factors to the causes of violence and armed conflict itself.

### **Peacebuilding: An Opportunity for Change?**

In this report multiple phases of peacebuilding are examined including the pre-conflict situation; the examination of a genocide; and a peace operation. The report is organized according to the geographic case studies of Rwanda, Cambodia and Guatemala and a variety of issues are contextualized within each of them. For example, in the case of Cambodia the focus is on the impact of the United Nation peace operation on Cambodian society, as opposed to exploring the similarities and differences between the UN operations in all three countries. This approach is not to suggest that the gendered consequences of UN peace operations are an anomaly or specific to Cambodia. Indeed in many instances, UN peace operations have entailed significant gender-specific burdens and consequences for host populations regardless of size of mission, duration of stay or the complexity (or simplicity) of the operation's mandate. Nor should the approach of this paper be construed as dissatisfaction with comparative studies. In fact, they are extremely useful tools in the identification of similarities and differences, but sometimes this is done at the expense of particularities and specificities. In many ways, the search for similarities and differences acts as a filter and eliminates from view the nuances which may provide for a richer, more contextualized analysis.

The rationale for focussing upon one or two issues within each case study is so that more attention could be granted to:

- gender relations in the pre-conflict stage and how it impacted on the status of women in the

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<sup>8</sup> In many countries, due to heavily skewed demographics, the burden of post-conflict reconstruction falls primarily upon the shoulders of women. Therefore, programs and policies need to take into account the specifics of gender roles and responsibilities in any given society. Peacebuilding policies also need to take into account the already existing demands on women's time as the primary caregivers and managers of the household before expecting them to engage in additional activities.

<sup>9</sup> Cynthia Enloe, *The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993. pp. 23