

contribution to AGP's work in this regard.

Peacebuilding has been identified by DFAIT as focussing "primarily on the political and socio-economic context of conflict, rather than military or humanitarian aspects."⁵ Analyzing peacebuilding however through a gender lens makes drawing this distinction problematic. The linkages between these aspects will be explored further in the report.⁶

In many ways the subject "gender and peacebuilding" is a misnomer. Gender is already heavily inscribed in approaches to peacebuilding and the policies themselves. Policies which are posited as gender-neutral instead possess an inherent gender bias and therefore entail gender specific burdens and consequences. The case studies in this report demonstrate how policies are informed by gendered assumptions about men and women, their socially constructed identities and roles; and the relationships between them. These assumptions impact the field by determining who are considered legitimate actors in peacebuilding; and what are considered legitimate subjects of inquiry and action.

The Importance of Gender and Peacebuilding for the Larger Community

The need to apply gender-based analysis to the study of peace and conflict and incorporating a gender perspective into peacebuilding and foreign policy writ large extends beyond Canada's international obligations. By informing analysis and policy development, gender-based analysis can make peacebuilding policy and programmes more effective.

Gender-based analysis⁷ can, *inter alia*:

- inform the development and implementation of peace support operations and address the burdens and consequences that they can entail for recipient countries' populations;
- make the linkages between human and international insecurity more tangible and therefore offer points of entry for policy and programmes;
- offer new insights on a whole range of experiences including times of refuge, liberation

⁵ DFAIT, (1997), op. cit.

⁶ The terms "gender" and "sex" are often conflated or equated when in fact they have different meanings and utility as analytic tools. The term "sex" refers to a biological distinction. Gender, on the other hand, is understood as a social construction that assigns different characteristics including behaviours and attitudes, roles and responsibilities to women and men based on their biological difference. Gender is a more useful analytic tool because it takes into account the relationships between men and women but also the forces that are employed to construct the relationship, sustain it and replicate it on a global scale.

⁷ Here I refer to a specific gender-based analysis, known as a critical feminist approach. This will be further defined in the section, "Feminist Approaches to International Relations".