



Empowering Women in the Peace Process

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Columbia Law School

Welcome and Introductions

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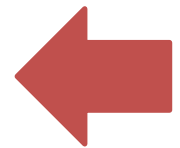
Goals for this Workshop

- Recognize the importance and urgency of increasing women's meaningful participation in peace processes.
- Discern how to instigate change at the organizational level.
- Understand how to spearhead change at the individual level.



Including Women and the UN

Including women in negotiations and other peacemaking processes is critical to many of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.



Sustainable Development Goals

5.1—End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.

- Measure 5.1.1—Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and nondiscrimination on the basis of sex.

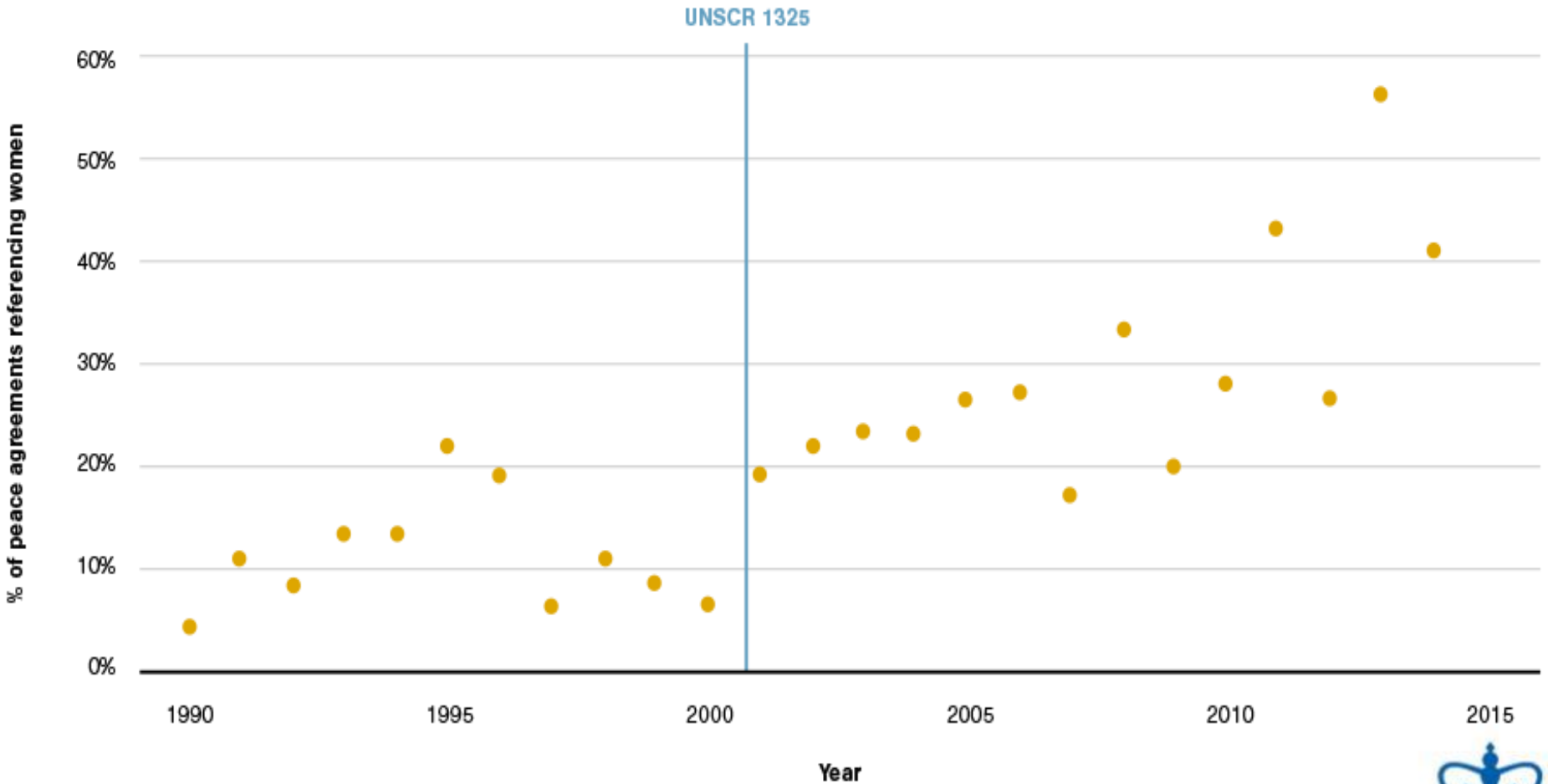


UN Resolution 1325

- Resolution 1325 was adopted by the UN Security Council in 2000. The resolution highlighted the importance of equity for women in efforts to promote peace and security.
- Its adoption has led to an increase in participation of women as negotiators, mediators, and signatories.



Peace Agreements Referencing Women (1990-2015)



Case Studies

Comparing Two Methods for Including Women



Case Study: Amplifying Women's Voices in the White House

- When President Barack Obama first took office, $\frac{2}{3}$ of his senior staffers were **men** who had worked on his campaign and subsequently filled his cabinet.



Case Study: Amplifying Women's Voices in the White House

- **What does this tell us?**
 - Women often struggle just to get a foot in the door.
 - Presidents typically select their most senior advisers from the male-dominated ranks of their campaigns.
 - Power is defined by proximity to a single individual: the President.
 - Being “in the room” and being heard is crucial to exerting influence.



Case Study: Amplifying Women's Voices in the White House

- Female staffers adopted a meeting strategy they called “**amplification**”:
 - When a woman made a key point, other women would repeat it, giving credit to its author.
 - This forced the men in the room to recognize the contribution — and denied them the chance to claim the idea as their own.



Case Study: Amplifying Women's Voices in the White House

“We just started doing it, and made a purpose of doing it. It was an everyday thing.”

—Former Obama aide



Case Study: Amplifying Women's Voices in the White House

- As a result...
 - President Obama noticed and began calling more often on women and junior aides to voice their opinions.
 - Women gained parity with men in the President's inner circle during his second term.
 - There was an even gender split among his top aides.



Case Study: Amplifying Women's Voices in the White House

Shine Theory

- “I don’t shine if you don’t shine.”
- There is tremendous power in women supporting other women.



Case Study: Amplifying Women's Voices in the White House

- **Small-group discussion.**

At your tables, discuss:

- In what ways might the amplification approach **succeed** in including women?
- What are some possible **limitations** of the amplification approach?

- **Whole-group debrief.**



Case Study: Gender Inclusivity in Rwanda

- The 1994 war in Rwanda left approximately 800,000 people dead.
- Immediately after, Rwanda's population of approximately 5.5 million was 60-70% female.
- President Paul Kagame decided that Rwanda could not rebuild on men's labor alone.

"Invisibilia: No One Thought This All-Woman Debate Would Crush It," Gregory Warner
<https://www.wbez.org/shows/invisibilia/invisibilia-no-one-thought-this-allwomans-debate-team-could-crush-it/57888661-38ef-4fd4-b116-585698c7c4e3>



Case Study: Gender Inclusivity in Rwanda

- The government pledged that it would:
 - Encourage girls' education.
 - Appoint women to leadership roles.
- Changes in Rwanda's laws also established a Gender Monitoring Office to promote and oversee gender-equality initiatives.
- Consequently, Rwanda's 2003 Constitution, decreed that:
 - 30% of parliamentary seats would be reserved for women.



“Invisibilia: No One Thought This All-Woman Debate Would Crush It,” Gregory Warner
<https://www.wbez.org/shows/invisibilia/invisibilia-no-one-thought-this-allwomans-debate-team-could-crush-it/57888661-38ef-4fd4-b116-585698c7c4e3>



Case Study: Gender Inclusivity in Rwanda

- **Today:**
 - 61% of Rwanda's parliamentary seats are held by women.
 - In the 2022 Global Gender Gap Report, which ranks countries according to gender gaps across economic opportunities, education, health, and political leadership, Rwanda ranks 7th in the world for political leadership (the U.S. ranks 38th).



Case Study: Gender Inclusivity in Rwanda

- **Small-group discussion.**

At your tables, discuss:

- In what ways might Rwanda's approach **succeed** in including women?
- What are some possible **limitations** of Rwanda's approach?
- What **challenges** would your country face in implementing a similar initiative?

- **Whole-group debrief.**





BREAK



Top-Down Approaches to Empowering Women

- The Rwandan government's approach to gender inclusivity is an example of a **top-down approach**.
- In a top-down approach, a few individuals at high levels in an organization decide what changes need to be made and hand down orders for others to follow.



Top-Down Approaches to Empowering Women

- ***Benefits*** may include:
 - Immediate action
 - Quick, visible results
 - Unified vision
- ***Limitations*** may include:
 - Lack of buy-in and resistance at lower levels
 - Unsustainability
 - Ineffective at addressing deeply rooted norms and mindsets



Bottom-Up Approaches to Empowering Women

- The White House staffers' approach to gender inclusivity is an example of a **bottom-up approach**.
 - In a bottom-up approach, a group of individuals at lower levels in an organization decide to take action.



Bottom-Up Approaches to Empowering Women

- ***Benefits*** may include:
 - Buy-in at multiple levels of the organization
 - Deeper and longer-lasting change
- ***Limitations*** may include:
 - Frustration and lack of results if the organizational structure does not support change
 - Focus on individuals' interests and not the organization's interests as a whole



An Integrated Strategy for Empowering Women

- In order to maximize **effectiveness** and **sustainability**, a strategy to empower women should integrate both the:
 - top-down approach &
 - bottom-up approach



The 8-Step Process for Leading Change

An **integrated** approach to empowering women in peacemaking processes that combines:

top-down leadership

+

bottom-up buy-in



The 8-Step Process for Leading Change

- 1) **Creating a sense of urgency.**
- 2) **Building a guiding coalition.**
- 3) **Creating a vision and developing initiatives.**
- 4) **Communicating the vision and soliciting buy-in.**
- 5) **Removing barriers to enable change.**
- 6) **Generating short-term wins.**
- 7) **Sustaining acceleration.**
- 8) **Reinforcing change.**



The 8-Step Process for Leading Change

1) **Creating a sense of urgency.** Statistics can be a tool for creating urgency.

1992 - 2019:

- **6% of peace agreement signatories** were women
- **6% of chief mediators** and **13% of negotiators** were women

1992 - 2011:

- **4% of peace agreement signatories** were women
- **2% of chief mediators** and **9% of negotiators** were women

1990 - 2000:

- **11% of negotiated peace agreements** included at least **one reference to women**



The 8-Step Process for Leading Change

1) Creating a sense of urgency.

What are some other techniques for creating a sense of urgency?



The 8-Step Process for Leading Change

2) Building a guiding coalition. Identify key people in the organization who will visibly support the new vision and can successfully lead change.

Consider individuals’:

- *Status*
- *Expertise*
- *Political importance*
- *Popularity*



The 8-Step Process for Leading Change

3) Creating a vision and developing initiatives.



The 8-Step Process for Leading Change

3) Creating a vision and developing initiatives.

For example, the UN uses sustainable development goals (SDGs) and measures to track change.

- **Goal 5.5:** Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.
- **Measure 5.5.1:** Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments and local governments.



The 8-Step Process for Leading Change

4) Communicating the vision and soliciting buy-in.



The 8-Step Process for Leading Change

5) Removing barriers to enable change.



The 8-Step Process for Leading Change

5) **Removing barriers to enable change.** Barriers may be conceptual.

- War and peace are seen as male-dominated areas.
- Women's presence is seen as "symbolic" and so their contributions are not valued.
- Men are seen as the primary decision-makers.
- Women are either discredited for being "too emotional" or are criticized for showing too little emotion.



The 8-Step Process for Leading Change

5) **Removing barriers to enable change.** Barriers may be practical.

- Men are more willing to share information with other men and exclude women.
- Women may have less education or less experienced.
- Women may spend more time at home because of unfair distribution of family responsibilities and insufficient institutional support for families.



The 8-Step Process for Leading Change

5) **Removing barriers to enable change.** Barriers may be structural.

- Women are excluded from both formal and informal networks.
- Participation in peace processes is limited to representatives from male-dominated groups.
- Women are excluded at lower levels, which prevents them from advancing to higher levels.



The 8-Step Process for Leading Change

5) Removing barriers to enable change.

- What are some other barriers to women's full participation in organization processes?
- What are some techniques for addressing these barriers?



The 8-Step Process for Leading Change

6) Generating short-term wins.

“8-Step Process,” Kotter

<https://www.kotterinternational.com/8-steps-process-for-leading-change/>



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The 8-Step Process for Leading Change

7) Sustaining acceleration.

“8-Step Process,” Kotter

<https://www.kotterinternational.com/8-steps-process-for-leading-change/>



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The 8-Step Process for Leading Change

8) Reinforcing change.

“8-Step Process,” Kotter

<https://www.kotterinternational.com/8-steps-process-for-leading-change/>



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The 8-Step Process for Leading Change

8) Reinforcing change. For example, one study showed that when women's groups were able to strongly influence a peace negotiation, the parties almost always reached an agreement.



The 8-Step Process for Leading Change

8) Reinforcing change. (Continued) When women are included in the negotiation process:

- 20% increase in the probability that a peace agreement will last 2 years.
- 35% increase in the probability that a peace agreement will last 15 years.



The 8-Step Process for Leading Change

- 1) **Creating a sense of urgency.**
- 2) **Building a guiding coalition.**
- 3) **Creating a vision and developing initiatives.**
- 4) **Communicating the vision and soliciting buy-in.**
- 5) **Removing barriers to enable change.**
- 6) **Generating short-term wins.**
- 7) **Sustaining acceleration.**
- 8) **Reinforcing change.**



The 8-Step Process for Leading Change

Questions? Comments?





BREAK



Case Study: Women's Role in Quelling the Troubles

The Troubles

- Conflict between Unionists (mostly Protestant) and Loyalists (mostly Catholic) in Northern Ireland following the independence of Ireland from the United Kingdom
- The conflict was violent and resulted in many casualties
- Lasted decades (60s-90s)



Women's Role in Quelling the Troubles

The Northern Ireland Women's Coalition

- Protestant and Catholic women's organizations joined forces to become one of ten political parties popularly elected to participate in peace negotiations
- Since the group was founded by both Protestants and Catholics, they were seen as honest brokers in both communities
- Organized a civil society campaign that was instrumental in getting the Good Friday Agreement of 1998 signed



Women's Role in Quelling the Troubles

The Principles of the NIWC

- Equality
- Human Rights
- Inclusion
- Something unique about the Coalition meetings was that participants were expected to acknowledge “identity baggage” or differences immediately



Women's Role in Quelling the Troubles

The Negotiation Process

- Since NIWC was exclusively female, they often did not get as much speaking time as men in negotiating. To confront this issue, NIWC ensured their perspectives were absorbed and confronted delegates who tried to monopolize the debates
- Ensured people from both sides were always at the table
- NIWC was able to broaden the negotiation agenda to focus on issues such as victims' rights and reconciliation



Women's Role in Quelling the Troubles

The Negotiation Process

- NIWC worked to promote an inclusive process and worked against delegates spiraling into the blame game for fear that it would derail the entire negotiation process
- NIWC produced well-researched position papers and tried to model a novel approach to politics based on cooperation, non-competitiveness and a willingness to share ideas



Women's Role in Quelling the Troubles

Role in Formalizing the Good Friday Agreement

- NIWC worked with civil society leaders to promote the Agreement for public referendum and spoke to constituencies across all backgrounds as a collective
- NIWC made a user friendly version of the Agreement that was more digestible for the public
- NIWC spoke at debates and also held their own debates



Women's Role in Quelling the Troubles

- **Small-group discussion.**

At your tables, discuss:

- **Why** do you think NIWC's approach was successful?
 - **How** can the approach be **applied** in other armed conflicts?
 - Do you see any **problems** with the approach?
- **Whole-group debrief.**



Conclusion & Thanks

- We hope that you will leave this workshop with:
 - A recognition of the importance and urgency of increasing women's meaningful participation in peace processes.
 - An understanding of
 - how to instigate change at the organizational level.
 - how to spearhead change at the individual level.



A wide-angle photograph of the Columbia University campus, featuring a central green lawn and a large, domed building in the background. The text "Contact Information" is overlaid in a large, blue, serif font.

Contact Information

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