



Recent Crisis Group Publications Integrating the Gender Dimension – 1 March 2019

The different roles women and men play in deadly conflicts and in efforts to prevent and resolve them remain under-researched and analysed. At Crisis Group, we seek to understand the relationship between conflict dynamics and gender identities, and to integrate all relevant perspectives in our analysis and policy prescriptions. Proactively including women's voices in the field of security and post-conflict reconstruction is critical to building resilient societies and shaping solutions for lasting peace. We have long advocated the full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions on gender-based violence; greater gender diversity in political leadership and within security forces; and increased women's participation in peace processes. Below is a selection of recent publications reflecting our integration of the gender dimension in our analysis and recommendations.

Reports & Briefings

[Mitigating Risks for Syrian Refugee Youth in Turkey's Şanlıurfa](#), Europe Report N°253, 11 February 2019

Turkey has borne the brunt of the mass exodus of people from neighbouring Syria due to its war, hosting 3.6 million Syrian refugees, half of whom are under eighteen. The border province of Şanlıurfa has been particularly affected and is an example of the dangers Syrian refugee youth are susceptible to. This report suggests they are being targeted for exploitation by criminal networks, including sexual exploitation particularly targeting adolescent girls and widows with few avenues of income. The report also highlights exploitative marriages, with young Syrian daughters married off to Turkish men to offer destitute families some form of protection, status and material relief; these girls are often underage and vulnerable to maltreatment and abuse. We recommend putting in place measures informing young women and their parents of their rights and particular early-marriage risks, as well as increasing opportunities for refugee education and advancement and recruiting of females into the security services and civil administrations tasked with protecting and helping Syrian youth.

[Chad: Defusing Tensions in the Sahel](#), Africa Report N°266, 5 December 2018

This report looks at how growing discontent among young people in Chad's Sahel regions is driving them to join armed rebels. We note that the central regions of Chad are among its poorest, registering alarming malnutrition rates and maternal and child health indicators; and that state abuses have increased tensions in the region. We call for the rebuilding of trust between these communities and the government, holding accountable those guilty of abuses.

[Shaping a New Peace in Pakistan's Tribal Areas](#), Asia Briefing N°150, 20 August 2018

In May 2018, Pakistan's central government merged the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) with an adjacent province, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, following years of military operations against the Pakistani Taliban. This briefing examines how those living in FATA suffered under the pressures of a military campaign, mass displacement and militant attacks, with women and girls heavily targeted. Our analysis of the fighting in FATA demonstrates the experience of women in conflict is multifaceted, with female IDPs par-

ticipating more in the mainstream of public life amid the breakdown of social hierarchies during the conflict and playing increasing roles in civil society movements. We call for a repeal of FATA's often colonial-era laws and for the government to respect civil liberties.

[The Missing Peace: Colombia's New Government and Last Guerrillas](#), Latin America Report N°68, 12 July 2018

This report focuses on peace talks between Colombia's government and the country's last guerrilla group, the National Liberation Army (ELN), which could be under threat after the election of Iván Duque as the new president. Tangible short-term results are essential to ensure negotiations continue when Duque takes power on 7 August. To reinvigorate the peace process and help persuade the incoming government not to resume hostilities with the ELN, we call for the government and the ELN to agree and implement as soon as possible mechanisms for local civil society participation in the peace talks, to ensure the engagement of women and women's movements, ethnic groups and social leaders who are victims of violence.

[Mexico's Southern Border: Security, Violence and Migration in the Trump Era](#), Latin America Report N°66, 9 May 2018

While Mexico is vigorously policing its southern border, stemming the northward flow of Central Americans escaping poverty and violence, it is deporting thousands and accepting thousands more as refugees, though many remain in legal limbo. If Mexico is not better equipped to handle the influx, the human costs and the risk of conflict will rise. Already xenophobia and violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, are increasing across Mexico's south. Among other measures we call on the government to improve security for those whose lives are endangered by transnational organised crime according to gender-specific and age-appropriate needs, and to deterring their recruitment by these groups through employment and community development programs.

[Preventing Boko Haram Abductions of Schoolchildren in Nigeria](#), Africa Briefing N°137, 12 April 2018

On 19 February, militants from Boko Haram's Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) faction seized 112 schoolgirls and one boy from the town of Dapchi in Yobe state, north east Nigeria. In mid-March the militants released 107 of the children, marking a contrast to kidnappings that took place in Chibok in neighbouring Borno state in 2014. By analysing the state response to the abduction, we outline a set of proposals to strengthen current and future interventions. We call in particular for better military deployments and other security arrangements, including, where possible, relying on female operatives in security units deployed to schools, to promote diverse teams able to build trust with communities and assist victims of crime, including those who may have suffered from sexual and gender-based violence.

[Containing the Shock Waves from Venezuela](#), Latin America Report N°65, 21 March 2018

Examining the latest developments of the Venezuelan crisis and their impact on the region, we outline how global and regional powers might respond to help minimise violence and suffering, and create the conditions for a restoration of economic health and a more inclusive and stable body politic in Venezuela. We highlight a year-on-year increase of 65 per cent in maternal mortality and a rise of more than 30 per cent in infant mortality, as well as poverty, corruption and instability allowing human trafficking to thrive in the region. The report calls on Venezuela's immediate neighbours to work with multilateral bodies, particularly the UN, to ensure the needs of migrants are adequately met and those at risk of trafficking, including women and girls, are protected as best possible.

Commentaries & Op-eds

[“The West Should Let Islamic State Recruits Come Back Home”](#), Middle East Op-Ed by Azadeh Moaveni, Senior Gender Analyst, 21 January 2019

With Islamic State’s battlefield defeat almost complete, this op-ed tackles the issue many Western countries must now confront; what to do with the hundreds of citizens who joined IS’s violent jihad and now wish to return home. It analyses the ethical quandary of judging women, like Shamima Begum from the U.K., who did not participate directly in violence but gave moral and propaganda support to a jihadist group. It recommends the merging of rehabilitation with prosecution, highlighting that these citizens have rights but also that repatriation is not equivalent to forgiveness; legal cases should be brought against those who committed crimes. It also highlights governments have used access to a child (or its potential return) as leverage against women returning from ISIS.

[“What Would Make A Woman Go Back To Boko Haram? Despair”](#), Africa Op-Ed by Azadeh Moaveni, Senior Gender Analyst, 14 January 2019

This op-ed illustrates how the Boko Haram militant group exploits a broken social system in northeastern Nigeria to recruit women. It analyses how structural factors such as poverty and patriarchal societies can act as motivations for women to initially join the group, but also for them to re-join Boko Haram after leaving, with the displacement camps they live in rife with hunger, sexual exploitation and more. It also warns how assumptions that being with the group is worse than being without them hinder understandings of why people join such movements.

[“Life Under Gang Rule in El Salvador”](#), Latin America Commentary, 26 November 2018

Over the last three years, gang violence has killed nearly 20,000 people in El Salvador, propelling tens of thousands northward in search of safety. This illustrated commentary looks at how gangs force entire families to flee, threatening both violence and sexual abuse, as well as attempting to recruit young boys and girls as either gang members or sexual slaves. It also notes how, unlike previous migration waves that were predominately young men, many families with children, expectant mothers, and other vulnerable groups are now making the risky journey north.

[“Grossesses et mariages précoces : la face cachée de la guerre contre Boko Haram au Cameroun”](#), Africa Op-Ed by Hans De Marie Heungoup Central Africa Senior Analyst, 31 August 2018

This Op-Ed highlights the impact of the conflict against Boko Haram in Cameroon on women and girls – with high statistics pertaining to teenage pregnancy since the conflict started in 2014 and the ongoing unchecked problem of sexual violence by state security forces which fuels resentment.

[Prospect of Talks and Threat of Escalation Both Rise in Yemen](#), Middle East Commentary, 14 May 2018

As the Yemen war enters its fourth year, we warn of the risks of a looming Saudi-led coalition invasion of the Red Sea port of Hodeida, which would compound the already acute humanitarian crisis and could spark a wider war. We recommend that the UN envoy be assisted in reviving a political process that is more inclusive and realistic. In particular, we call on the EU and its member states to work with the UN envoy to produce a negotiating framework that more effectively includes women and other civil society representatives in decision-making roles early in the process, a deficiency during the last three rounds of UN-sponsored talks.

[ISIS Returnees Bring Both Hope and Fear to Chechnya](#), Europe Commentary by Anna Arutunyan, Russia Senior Analyst, 26 March 2018

This commentary focuses on the return of ISIS fighters to Chechnya, which could pose a security challenge for the war-torn Russian republic. As has been the case in the past, authorities might not stop at jailing returnees, but might also go after their families, friends or associates, potentially hardening hatred of the regime among a wider circle of people. On the other hand, some officials and activists in Chechnya are spearheading efforts to bring back women and children stranded in the Middle East after the death or imprisonment of their insurgent husbands and fathers. Contrary to prevailing assumptions, some women chose to join ISIS voluntarily and their motivations are complex. While some may return disillusioned, others still share the group's beliefs and need rehabilitation programs adapted to their specific needs.

[To Reunite Ukraine, Kyiv Must Overcome Its Own Prejudices](#), Europe Commentary by Katherine Quinn-Judge, EU Eastern Neighbourhood Analyst, 20 March 2018

This commentary discusses the barriers to unity among the Ukrainian people, including prejudices in Kyiv toward the approximately three million people who live in the eastern region of Donbas, which is partly controlled by Moscow-backed rebels. While some Kyiv representatives in Donbas are sympathetic to civilians on the front line, they often interpret the grim living conditions there as signs of their innate immorality. The commentary explains that many front-line residents, who are disproportionately female, have lost their livelihoods to the war: the cities where they worked are in separatist-held territory and the fields where they sowed crops are mined, leaving them with few options to survive.

[A Hidden Face of War](#), Commentary by Isabelle Arradon, Director of Research & Special Adviser on Gender, 7 March 2018

Ahead of International Women's Day, this commentary puts the spotlight on the impact of conflict through the prism of reproductive health and explains that amplifying women's voices is critical to removing risks to their well-being. In ways that can be easy to overlook, conflict can exacerbate pre-existing patterns of gender discrimination and inequality, leaving women and girls with few survival options. With health infrastructure destroyed and information about sexual and reproductive health missing, they may face a higher risk of dying due to pregnancy-related complications. Over half of the world's maternal deaths occur in countries torn apart by armed violence and in fragile states.