INCLUSION OF WOMEN IN PEACE PROCESSES: THE CASE OF COLOMBIA

Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy Capstone Project

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MAY 10, 2021

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Contents

INTRODUCTION

The international binding normative establishes the obligation for member states to include women in all peace development processes. That implies physical inclusion by assigning women to official leadership positions and intellectual inclusion by incorporating their perspectives and contributions. A more progressive approach includes the incorporation of gender mainstreaming in the peace accords. However, without trying to equate the gender approach with the inclusion of women, this work focuses on women. Given that the Colombian peace agreement has been recognized for the inclusion of a gender approach, this work tries to identify to what extent the Colombian case incorporated women in developing the peace agreement between the Government and the FARC, signed in 2016.

The work is structured in three parts. The first specifies the most relevant international regulations regarding the inclusion of women in peace-making processes. In the second part, some theoretical frameworks are established to understand better the equitable and sustainable development of peace when women are included. In the third part, the impact of women's participation in the development of the peace accords is explained, and a parallel analysis is made with the Colombian case.

This work stems from my curiosity to understand to what extent the Colombia peace agreement responds to international commitments on the inclusion of women and why there have been barriers to their proper inclusion. Furthermore, this is associated with the need to document and justify the importance of their participation in official positions.

The inclusion of a gender and women's approach in developing the peace agreement is an essential step for the country. It constitutes an opportunity for women to be incorporated into all institutions and leadership positions in the country. Furthermore,

understanding its importance is critical to generate a cultural and institutional change that facilitates, and does not hinder, the effective implementation of the gender approach of the Peace Agreement.

I. International Legal framework

International treaties, customary law, and general law principles shape peacebuilding today (Chinkin & Charlesworth, 2006). From the 1990s onwards, several treaties and declarations of political consensus have pursued the inclusion of women in different dimensions (Chinkin & Charlesworth, 2006). However, international and regional stakeholders involved in building peace do not prioritize the involvement of women. Thus, the implementation of international standards concerning the inclusion of women in building peace needs to improve (Kofi Annan Foundation, 2020).

CEDAW

The UN Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, adopted in December 1979, is often considered a women's human rights charter. While international law promotes women's involvement in public life in general, the CEDAW establish the right to participate in public policy formulation and all public functions, including peacebuilding functions (Chinkin & Charlesworth, 2006). CEDAW requires member states to adopt specific legal and political measures on issues related to women, peace, security, and criteria for accountability (UNWOMEN, 2015). It states that eliminating barriers and incorporating temporary special measures to encourage the equal participation of both men and women in the public sector is critical to true equality (Chinkin & Charlesworth, 2006).

CEDAW stresses the importance of women's engagement and leadership in all contexts, a foundation for the Women Peace and Security Agenda (UNWOMEN, 2015). In 2013,

CEDAW adopted General Recommendation 30, which guides Member States on ensuring compliance with the obligations before, during, and after conflict, particularly in including women in conflict prevention, war, and post-conflict scenarios (UNWOMEN, 2015).

Women's Peace and Security Agenda

The WPS is the result of more than a century of international women's activism. Civil women's movements at the local and national levels evolved after World War I to become an increasingly organized global wave to protect and promote women's rights. This expansion has addressed the rights, obligations, and institutions to increase women's participation and representation in all aspects of mediation, peace, and decision-making processes related to peacebuilding (OSCE, 2019).

Following the adoption of CEDAW, the international community has adopted a substantive normative framework on women through the Women's Peace and Security Agenda (WPS). The WPS agenda comprises ten UN resolutions adopted since 2000, recognizing the relationship between gender equality, peace, and international security. The UN resolutions are: 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2010), 1960 (2011), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015), 2467 (2019), 2493 (2019). Also, it establishes the capacity of women as peacemakers and their vulnerabilities as victims (Bouvier, 2016). The WPS agenda also includes the obligation to ensure the participation of women in conflict prevention, response, and peace processes.

- **UNSCR 1325 (2000):** UN Security Council Resolution 1325, adopted in 2000, was the first resolution passed recognizing different roles and needs of women and men in conflict and post-conflict scenarios. It acknowledges that the sustainability of peace depends on women's full inclusion and that peace is correlated with equality between women and men (UNWOMEN, 2015). It was lobbied as a human rights resolution prompting the Member States to guarantee a higher

representation of women at all decision-making levels in international, national, and regional institutions to prevent, manage, and resolve conflict.

This resolution has become the focal point for demanding and promoting global efforts around women's issues in conflict situations. The most significant effect has been the mobilization to increase awareness by international, national, and regional civil society organizations and institutions. The four pillars of the resolution are prevention, participation, protection, and peacebuilding and recovery (UNWOMEN, 2015). This resolution also calls for 'gender balance' and 'gender mainstreaming' throughout all processes and decisions in post-conflict societies around building peace. National Action Plans (NAPs) are the implementation routes of Resolution 1325 by the Member States, of which only 55 have adopted NAP in 2015 (UNWOMEN, 2015).

A summary of the other resolutions, based on the Peace and Women Organization (Peace Women, 2021), includes:

- **UNSCR 1820 (2008):** The first resolution to associate explicitly sexual violence, used as a tactic of war, with peace and security. It urges the participation of women in processes regarding the prevention of sexual violence, resolution of conflicts, and post-conflict building.

- **UNSCR 1888 (2009):** It claims for more target measures and indicators, for example, a database on gender-based violence.

- **UNSCR 1960 (2010):** It calls for the termination of impunity and the creation of monitoring and accounting systems on gender-based violence, promoting the prosecution of sexual violence in post-conflict societies.

- **UNSCR 1889 (2009):** It promotes the establishment of specific steps to enhance the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and to increase women's participation during all stages of peace processes. This resolution includes improving women's engagement in political and economic decision-making from the beginning of recovery processes. It also endorses countering negative societal behaviors and attitudes towards equal participation of women. It also requests the Member States to take into account women's empowerment in post-conflict planning.

- **UNSCR 2106 (2013):** The first resolution to calls for UN entities and donors to provide health services in a non-discriminatory and comprehensive way, including sexual and reproductive health.

- **UNSCR 2117 (2013):** The first resolution to acknowledge the impact of small arms and light weapons in conflict and violence against women and girls.

- **UNSCR 2122 (2013):** It reinforces the call for women's full and equal participation at all decision-making levels in peace processes. It further requires the full participation of women in post-conflict reconstruction, election processes, demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration programs, and security and judicial sectors.

- **UNSCR 2242 (2015):** It promotes collaboration with the Civil Society and calls for a rise in efficient strategies to implement the WPS agenda.

- **UNSCR 2467 (2019):** It recognizes the continuum of violence against women and girls during the conflict, particularly sexual violence. Also, it acknowledges structural gender inequality and discrimination as a root cause of sexual violence. It asks member states to provide non-discriminatory and specific prevention and response actions.

- **2493 (2019):** It reinforces the commitment with previous resolutions and calls for the increased participation of women in peacebuilding efforts and conflict prevention.

Despite the commitments, it is still a challenge to see an improvement in the reality of women in settings affected by the conflict. After 20 years of the adoption of UN Resolution 1325, women remain underrepresented in peace processes while facing war consequences and violence disproportionately. Thus, promoting the commitment to improve the implementation of the agenda by the Member States is a conformist goal (Kofi Annan Foundation, 2020). That shows the lack of political will of the Member States. On the other hand, women´s civil society organizations have exercised leadership globally, nationally, and locally aiming at changing women´s category as second-class citizens of the world to equal citizens as men. Further, they continue to mobilize and advocate for the evolution of a compelling agenda.

Some game theories suggest that when individuals face options where they can win or lose in the same proportion, they are more likely to choose the option to avoid the feeling of loss than the option where they could win something. Suppose this individual behavior is performed by the male decision-makers representing the Member States. In that case, it is possible to affirm that this behavior is mirrored at the national level. Thus, it seems that international commitments play with incentives to which the male elites do not respond.

It is worth asking whether a punitive framework is necessary for the effective implementation of resolutions and the meaningful incorporation of women at all levels and processes of societies. That questioning implies promoting a mentality where the punitive force has power. It seems that diplomacy, framed in a positive peace approach,

lacks enough incentives to generate real change. Further research is required to better understand this.

Colombia incorporation of international legal framework

Colombia has not fully incorporated CEDAW normative in previous peace negotiations. However, it must be recognized that regarding sexual violence as an international crime, Colombia has progressed as international law has evolved (Bouvier, 2016). Colombian courts convicted several former paramilitaries in 2014 for kidnapping, rape, and torturing a woman (Bouvier, 2016). This prosecution set a precedent for considering gender-based sexual violence (GBSV) as a war crime (Bouvier, 2016). Still, the practical implementation and materialization of international regulations has not been the preferred approach by male rulers in the country. However, international norms and institutions have been critical in the internal struggle and achievements by women organizations to advocate for equal rights. Advances in the international sphere provided Colombian women with new support frameworks for their efforts in favor of peace.

After adopting resolution 1325, Colombia assumed the commitment to prevent violent conflict, protect all civilians, and include women in the prevention and resolution of disputes and the resolution of peace (Bouvier, 2016). Also, after resolution 1325, women have mobilized *en masse* to demand accountability from the government. The mobilization of Colombian women achieved that the National Development Plan added a commitment to promote the inclusion of women's organizations in all dialogue and negotiation processes of the social and armed conflict at the national and local levels (Bouvier, 2016). Particularly, the initiatives "Women for Peace" and the "Coalition 1325" demanded the participation of women in future negotiating tables for peace. However, as of 2020, Colombia has not adopted a National Action Plans to implement the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda (Peace Women, 2021).

Women have based their actions on international humanitarian law, international human rights, conventions, norms, and regulations on women's rights. They have increasingly tried to generate awareness and alliances to bring international support to their struggle (Bouvier, 2016).

II. Frameworks for Equitable and Sustainable Peace and Justice

Negative peace to positive peace

The concepts of peace, security, and justice have evolved in recent decades, and this implies the need to broaden our understanding of the peace accords. Insofar as peace is associated with intergroup dynamics, Galtung asserts that there are two approaches to peace; the first analyzes the conditions for the absence of negative relations (negative peace), and the second looks for the conditions to promote positive relations (positive peace) (Galtung, 1967). Furthermore, he asserts that to pursue peace, the systems should organize to obtain both negative and positive peace (Galtung, 1967). In particular, a shift from negative to positive peace has been seen in peace accords.

Negative peace, according to Galtung, means the “absence of organized collective violence” (Galtung, 1967). This concept is associated with the silencing of weapons and the renewal of traditional forms of politics and governance (UNWOMEN, 2015). This approach is based on eliminating violence, generally with violence, where ceasefires and demobilization are the main points of interest.

Today it is recognized that peace means more than the "absence of violence." According to Galtung, positive peace is "the sum total of other relatively consensual values in the world community of nations - exemplified with the list of ten values" (Galtung, 1967). Thus, Galtung lists some of the values associated with positive relationships: Presence of

cooperation, Freedom from fear, Freedom from want, Economic growth and development, Absence of exploitation, Equality, Justice, Freedom of action, Pluralism, Dynamism.

This approach to peace is accompanied by political transition processes and institutional, structural, and social reforms. Inclusive political processes, commitments to human rights after the war, dealing with justice and reparation, elements of equity, conflict prevention, and the absence of exploitation are part of the change in peace focus. Also, working towards positive peace requires that we include differentiated experiences and living conditions of civilians affected by the war (Essig, 2020). Over time, research has shown that sustainable peace is only possible if there are inclusive peacemaking processes (UNWOMEN, 2015). The agreements that consider this approach are generally followed by processes of drafting the constitution, reforming the institutions, laying out frameworks for transition processes, post-conflict planning, identifying power structures, and other factors that can affect the recurrence of the conflict and the durability of peace (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, 2015). Thus, the main interests of positive peace go beyond ceasefires and demobilization, incorporating elements to build peace and shape social, political, and economic structures.

Peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding

There are three critical concepts embedded around peace and peace accords. Through the United Nations' lens, the first is peacemaking, which includes mediation, conciliation, arbitration, and negotiation to bring hostile parties to agreement. The second is peacekeeping, which is related to more immediate goals of keeping parties from fighting or harming each other, employing multinational forces of armed soldiers and police, authorized to use weapons only in self-defense. The third is peacebuilding, associated with formal post-conflict reconstruction processes that should address immediate

security needs and root causes of strife. Thus, peacebuilding includes elements of both peacemaking and peacekeeping (Remenyi, 2016).

Peacebuilding focuses on establishing lasting peace, which encompasses goals of both positive and negative peace (Remenyi, 2016). It should be noted that the UN identifies peacebuilding as a formal process. However, peacebuilding is also associated with informal processes, where the inclusion of women generates a positive influence on the proceedings and outcomes (Remenyi, 2016).

Security: Public and Private

Security was traditionally linked to the absence of physical violence and ensuring the survival of individuals. However, today security is understood expansively. Security has interference in politics, economy, social, public and private life, in the community and the home, in the absence of fear and the absence of want, in the active agency of decision-making by individuals affected, and in securing the well-being of individuals and their communities (UNWOMEN, 2015). Women did not represent a factor to take into account in the previous understanding of safety. However, they have become a central stakeholder in current security approaches (UNWOMEN, 2015).

The continuum of violence and insecurity that women face was not considered when discussing security in the peace accords. Earlier security concepts delimited the conflict and the post-conflict to the formal combat termination and the decrease in the death rate associated with the battle (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, 2015). Violence on the battlefield was the priority in security matters, ignoring or dismissing other violence types like violence against women. However, currently, violence against women in the home is considered one indicator of broader violence in society (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, 2015). It is incorrect to assume that violence and insecurity stop with a formal ceasefire since the forms and locations of violence are transformed after the ceasefire,

allowing violence against women to become a continuous phenomenon (Chinkin & Charlesworth, 2006).

It is necessary to expand the understanding and application of security around the peace accords. Distrust in formal security actors, the military, police, and even peacekeepers is higher in women because those authority figures can also be perpetrators of violence against women during conflicts. Thus, women are more likely to experience and feel an absence of peace and security because they cannot turn to accountability institutions for redress and security, even if peace agreements have been signed. (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, 2015). The end of the armed conflict does not immediately materialize in improved security for women, and a comprehensive peace must take into account the protection and rights of women (Krause, Krause, & Bränfors, 2018). Gender equity and power dynamics are vital perspectives to address security. Quantitative analyses show that women's safety and positive peace are intertwined since women's physical safety, and gender equality correlates with broader peace and stability in states (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, 2015).

Justice – human rights approach

Justice has also incorporated a holistic approach when dealing with peace issues. Communal healing and accountability processes include truth seeking, reconciliation, memorialization and reparations for female victims of conflicts (UNWOMEN, 2015). Post-conflict processes incorporate the concept of justice with a focus on human rights, which influences inclusiveness. According to Galtung, justice means that all individuals have the same value, none is implicitly worth more or is entitled to different types of life or existence than others, and in addition to value, basic and fundamental rights must be taken into account. Likewise, differences in opportunities or resources at the disposal of individuals should not be tolerated (Galtung, 1967).

Inclusion of civil actors

There is increasing acknowledgment that inclusive societies that provide equal opportunities for all are more likely to be peaceful and stable. Inclusion and inclusive development are increasingly seen as principles of conflict prevention. When peace agreements fail to recognize individuals' needs and skills differently at different levels of society, they become unsustainable. Establishing lasting peace requires awareness of the unique perspective that each individual or group can bring to the negotiating table (Remenyi, 2016). Peacemaking and its politics should be a comprehensive process that is inclusive, diverse, and incorporates society's interests (UNWOMEN, 2015).

Civil society participation increases social representation and brings knowledge and unique perspectives that enrich ownership of a peace agreement. Also, the inclusion of civil stakeholders allows the process to obtain broader reforms that consider more diverse issues. An agreement with few provisions leaves many sectors unaffected or untouched in post-conflict settings. In addition to the number and scope of the peace accords' provisions, the extent to which they are implemented is considered the most significant predictor of the peace's durability (Krause, Krause, & Bränfors, 2018). Thus, peace processes that incorporate civil society actors have a greater number of considerations in the socio-political reform agenda that will more likely result in durable peace if there are high implementation rates for those provisions after signing the peace agreement. Specifically, when civil society representatives participate, peace agreements are 64% less likely to fail (UNWOMEN, 2015). Furthermore, broadening the specter of stakeholders to include civil society creates more opportunities for women's participation. However, it should not be assumed that civil groups consist only of women, as this reinforces stereotypes (OSCE, 2019).

III. Impact of women's participation in peace agreements

In addition to justice and reparation, women's participation is another element that leads to a sustainable, more lasting, and stable peace, but this strategy has historically been ignored (CFR, 2020). Here I review the international literature and draw from past peace agreements to gain insight into the experience of women in the peace process in Colombia.

Resistance to include women

Many actors involved in mediation and conflict resolution remain resistant to including women, claiming a lack of evidence about the positive impact of women's participation, and fear that it may hinder the process (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, 2015). Furthermore, thinking about women's involvement implies, for many, entering into a dichotomy about whether the peace process is intended to end violence or build sustainable peace. Generally, involved stakeholders pursue mediation that favors short-term results associated with ending the violence. Furthermore, women's participation can significantly increase the chances of ending violence and building a sustainable peace (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, 2015).

Traditional negotiation processes that focus on ceasefire and political settlement do not favor the inclusion of women. This approach expects military and national security expertise from the delegation members. It is generally assumed that women do not respond to this expectation. However, some mediators have recognized that including civilian women in national security negotiations changes the dynamic by introducing civilian considerations into military logic (OSCE, 2019). The problem is that traditional peace processes consider bringing only belligerents (who are rarely women) to the negotiating table and do not want to dilute their power (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, 2015). Discussing peace at the table is associated with renegotiating control,

authority, and power. Thus, elite male negotiators want to restrict the field as much as possible, even determining peace priorities behind closed doors (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, 2015). Women are aware of the power game at stake. The inclusion of women complements growing trends in peacemaking, although it confronts entrenched power structures and time-worn conceptualization of peace and security (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, 2015).

Traditional mediators affirm that their participation is based on "effectiveness" and not "inclusiveness," so including women was not accepted (and still is in many cases). However, the traditional understanding of effectiveness is not justified because more than half of the peace processes that reach an agreement relapse into conflict within the first five years (UNWOMEN, 2015). The impact on effectiveness results from the fact that women work for consensus building to public debate, both on issues and the need to conclude talks and implement agreements (UNWOMEN, 2015). Women are peacebuilding forces deserving of an equal space across all peacebuilding processes (Kofi Annan Foundation, 2020). Thus, women are not solely responsible for address women's rights and social issues; they must have decision-making power in all instances of the peace process.

There is generally a stigma attached to women for advocating their own political agendas and agency, labeling them as "annoying women" or "the feminist one." This behavior is perceived as generally acceptable among men. Furthermore, the women included in the negotiations often face questions about their credibility, their constituencies, or qualifications. One female civil society leader said, "they seemed to want people -women- with PhDs in negotiation." There are much higher entry barriers for women than for other groups. They are expected to be both prominent leaders with technical knowledge and activists with considerable influence in their grassroots constituencies (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, 2015). In contrast, the entry of armed actors is justified in their direct involvement in violence. Despite this, it has been observed that women

negotiators' presence brings a change in attitudes and an improvement in interpersonal relationships around the negotiating table (OSCE, 2019).

In Colombia

The work of women and their ability to contribute to peace has been undervalued despite the adoption of binding international resolutions (Bouvier, 2016). After a year of starting the peace negotiations, the activism of national women's organizations and the support of international stakeholders achieved the inclusion of women at the table. This fact was controversial given the progress of international and national regulations on including women in peace negotiation processes from the beginning.

Furthermore, the situation demonstrated that the Colombian leaders ignored all the work from the roots and the lobbying that the women's organizations exercised to prepare the peace talks by not including them in official roles. The former main leader of the FARC group stated that "The debate between men who know war makes things easier." However, this statement is contradictory since women made up approximately 45% of the members of the FARC (Wilhelmsen, 2019). The attitude of the male participants reflected the same international attitude towards keeping decision-making capacity among a few men.

Impact of women´s participation in peace processes

The participation of women in peace and constitution-making has been based on a rights-based approach. By constituting half of society's population, women have the right to be represented and participate in decision-making processes that will affect their lives (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, 2015). International and national legal frameworks support that. In addition to rights-based arguments, social knowledge, conflict expertise,

grassroots networks, perceptions of femininity, and experiences during the conflict have also been emphasized (Krause, Krause, & Bränfors, 2018). Also, ensuring women's participation is a way to include their diverse needs and enhance the outcome's sustainability or lower the propensity for conflict (CFR, 2020).

Adding to that perspective, women's participation responds to growing global trends that demand better performance in democracy, accountability, and representation (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, 2015). Thus, involved women broaden the range of activities recognized as part of peacebuilding practice, like identifying power dynamics for possible confrontation in post-conflict societies (Adjei, 2019). Besides, women bring new degrees of democratic inclusiveness and recovery of political, legal, cultural, economic, and social structures aiming at gender equality achievements (Adjei, 2019). However, there may be women politically affiliated with a conflict party who can advance the party's agenda and not necessarily a feminist or humanist agenda.

The participation of women increases the probability of reaching a peace agreement. In a detailed analysis of 40 peace processes since the end of the Cold War, scholars demonstrated that there was not a single case in which organized women's groups had a negative impact on the peace process, unlike other social actors (for example, extremists or religious) (UNWOMEN, 2015). One of the most important effects was that women pushed for the commencement, resumption, or finalization of negotiations when they were stalled or faltered. However, it is inappropriate to consider women's inclusion only for their emphatic skills, it should be understood that their voices are equally valuable (Kofi Annan Foundation, 2020).

Furthermore, statistical analyses of 181 peace agreements between 1989 and 2011 showed that when peace processes included women as witnesses, signatories, mediators, or negotiators, there was a 20% greater probability that the peace agreement would last at least two years (UNWOMEN, 2015). Further, this probability increased over time, with

a 35% increase in the likelihood that the agreement would last 15 years (UNWOMEN, 2015). Thus, there is a positive relationship between inclusive negotiation models and a greater probability that the outcome will hold and prevent conflict.

The inclusion of women enhances long-term stability. When women are recognized as vital stakeholders on security, justice, economic recovery, and good governance, they will be direct recipients of more significant peace dividends, including job creation and public services (UNWOMEN, 2015). By giving women access to the benefits of the peace accords, sustainability is favored. By having access to job generation and economic security, women are more likely to invest in children's health and well-being, rebuild rural economies, and strengthen food security, contributing to long-term stability (UNWOMEN, 2015).

In Colombia

Women’s organizations have advocated for the continuation of peace talks in Colombia. During the negotiations between the Government and the ELN, women's organizations insisted on establishing formal talks and not leaving the negotiating table until the parties had reached a peace agreement (Bouvier, 2016). In 2002, when the peace talks between the Government and the FARC stopped, many women's organizations continued to insist on summarizing political solutions and preparing the ground for future dialogues (UNWOMEN, 2015). Furthermore, during the subsequent negotiations between the Government and the FARC starting in 2012, women's organizations and the female participants in the delegations encouraged the parties to remain at the table until they reached an agreement.

Their actions contributed to the cessation of hostilities, the initiation or resumption of stalled negotiations, the signing of the peace agreement through direct or indirect pressure in negotiations, lobbying, and the incorporation of specific commitments on

gender (Vargas & Díaz Pérez, 2018). In addition, the requests of women in Havana led the FARC to announce the release of girls and boys recruited as soldiers (Bouvier, 2016). In addition, women negotiators achieved necessary measures around land distribution, victims' right to justice and reparations, and political participation (Wilhelmsen, 2019). Likewise, they managed to include gender-specific provisions and harsher punishment for perpetrators of sexual violence. Some direct results of the visits of civil society delegations, including victims, women, and the LGTBI community, materialized in the recognition, apology, and amendment by the FARC (Bouvier, 2016). The participation of these delegations is unprecedented (Bouvier, 2016).

On the issue of transitional justice and victims, the group of jurists conforming the decision makers did not include any women. However, the men accepted the demand of many women's groups. They established that the amnesty would not apply to sexual violence and would be considered a crime against humanity (Bouvier, 2016).

Another example of what women negotiators accomplished was seen when Alexandra Tenny, former chief of the Eradication, Narcotics Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy in Bogota, joined the negotiation process. She suggested that the Home Office partner with mothers in local communities to identify improvised explosive device locations (Wilhelmsen, 2019). This idea, which had not been conceived by any man previously, allowed greater efficiency and speed in identifying and disarming devices (Wilhelmsen, 2019). That allowed men to see tangible results of women's incorporation in the negotiations. At the beginning of the negotiations, the role of women was almost invisible and became more prominent and worthy in the process.

Gender perspective

Focusing on the number of women and provisions for them in peace negotiations and peace accords is not enough. The emphasis should be on integrating a gender perspective

because "not all women have it and not all men lack it" (OSCE, 2019). The inclusion of women does not guarantee the coverage of gender issues. However, influential women's groups have advocated for both peace and gender-sensitive provisions (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, 2015). All the involved stakeholders must proceed within an inclusive mentality, incorporating a gender perspective throughout the process.

A gender perspective is associated with more equitable peacebuilding institutions, processes, and structures (GIZ, 2014). It highlights differentiated roles and needs of women, men, and other gender identities around the conflict. It is essential because it provides a comprehensive basis to analyze the conflict. A gender perspective challenges distorted, and simplified understandings of the process involved in "building peace" by incorporating the other half of the population's views and needs (GIZ, 2014). Recognizing diversity also implies acknowledging that women are a heterogeneous group who face different experiences during the war, with various problems, whose diversity is reflected in their representation, in the agreements and provisions.

Gender-related issues are traditionally not considered in negative peace security or military discussions. Gender issues are generally associated with women, particularly with sexual and gender-based violence or civilians' protection (OSCE, 2019). A study showed that there is no comprehensive mention of gender in most ceasefire agreements, except for those on gender-based sexual violence (OSCE, 2019). To ensure that a peace agreement includes a gender perspective, it must be part of the previous negotiations.

It is wrongly assumed that by including a woman in the negotiations, one is including a gender perspective in itself. Some women on negotiating teams may not want to carry a "gender representative" label and prefer to take on the political agenda without pushing for a gender perspective. One way to include gender mainstreaming, apart from adding a gender expert to the negotiation team, is to improve the gender knowledge and sensitiveness of the entire group through training and coaching (OSCE, 2019). Integrating

gender awareness is a matter not only about political rightness but also about a critical analysis of an effective, sustainable and equal process and professionalism (GIZ, 2014).

It is not only women who make important differences in the processes and outcomes of peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding. Instead, it is the comprehensive incorporation of a sensitive gender perspective that challenges structural gender inequality (Remenyi, 2016). The change in gender dynamics during and after the war creates opportunities for women, and other generally ignored populations, to gain from that shift in gender relations. However, they too may miss out on those opportunities. The transition from war to peace is a critical moment where changes in gender power must take place (Chinkin & Charlesworth, 2006).

In many cases, the first step to generate a positive effect is to include more women, especially in negotiation spaces where they are not traditionally accepted. However, women should not be added just to meet an inclusion quota, but because being a different gender than the male one advances in incorporating a gender perspective. Nor should it fall into the misconception of associating men with aggressive, authoritative, and violent traits that will unqualify them to address peacebuilding through a gender-sensitive view. We must challenge and transform traditional gender stereotypes where gender identities, be it women, men, or others, are no longer restricted by societal norms and beliefs. All individuals can offer a unique and valuable perspective that will enhance peace sustainability in peace negotiations and processes.

In Colombia

When the peace negotiations began in 2012, there was no reference to the gender approach or women's participation on the agenda of the formal talks. The parties' preference was to keep the schedule short and avoid references to international documents; otherwise, it would be difficult to negotiate (Salvesen & Nylander, 2017).

However, the Final Agreement between the government and the FARC included the gender approach as a transversal axis, describing it as:

> "In this Agreement, the gender approach means the recognition of equal rights between men and women and of the special circumstances of each one, especially of women, regardless of their marital status, life cycle and family and community relationship, as a subject of rights and special constitutional protection. It implies, in particular, the need to guarantee affirmative measures to promote that equality, the active participation of women and their organizations in the construction of peace and the recognition of the victimization of women by the conflict". (Presidencia de la República, 2016)

Following Vargas & Díaz Pérez, some of the gender measures included in each of the six main points of the Agreement are:

- Point 1) Towards a new Colombian countryside: Proposes priority for rural women heads of families in the solidarity economy, sexual and reproductive health, and facilitating access to land ownership.
- Point 2) Political Participation: promotes the creation and participation of organizations of women, youth, and the LGBTI population in development programs with a territorial approach.
- Point 3) Bilateral and definitive ceasefire. Laying down arms: Ensures that the parties refrain from perpetrating violence, primarily based on gender, and commit to training staff on gender issues and recruiting at least 20% of women into their ranks.
- Point 4) Solution to illicit drugs: it includes a differential gender approach in the programs to substitute illegal crops and in the development of rural strategies such as childcare centers.
- Point 5) Victims: will implement gender equality criteria in its composition and provisions for collective reparation.

- Point 6) Implementation, Verification, and Verification: establishes a gender commission to guarantee the integration of the gender mainstreaming approach in the implementation of the Agreement.

Even though women's and LGTBI organizations pushed for the inclusion of a gender perspective as a gender mainstreaming approach in the Peace Agreement, it did not fully incorporate it. Still, the Final Accord was one of the most inclusive in history thus far as it included, to some extent, the rights of women and the LGBTI community.

There was a commotion when, during the plebiscite to endorse the Agreement, a narrow majority rejected it. The ingrained patriarchal culture in the country made it easier for the opposition to win the votes to reject the initial Agreement. The political opposition took advantage of the misinformation and lack of knowledge of the population to generate controversy around the gender approach. They maneuvered traditional gender stereotypes to mobilize the society towards a collective attitude of discrimination (Vargas & Díaz Pérez, 2018). Thus, the "no" supporters argued that the "gender ideology" threatened the traditional family model and gender roles (Vargas & Díaz Pérez, 2018). In addition, there was a fuss about the affirmative actions for the LGBTI population included in the original text of the Agreement, against which the traditional religious and political sectors demanded modifications regarding content and scope.

The inclusive language generated rejection in society. Supporters of the "yes" feared that the gender approach would be sacrificed to satisfy supporters of "no" (Salvesen & Nylander, 2017). It is contradictory how the country almost forcibly accepted women at the negotiating table and rejected the adoption of the peace agreement because it included a gender perspective. In the reformed text, there are differences concerning the language. The final text changes the term "gender perspective" to describe a "gender approach," underlining the effect of the armed conflict on women. Furthermore, the new text reduced the number of references to "gender." Likewise, instead of "gender equity,"

the final text refers to "equitable participation of men and women" (Salvesen & Nylander, 2017). Also, references to LGBTI were classified within "other vulnerable groups."

The society must advance collectively and in parallel towards a broader and more comprehensive understanding of gender equality that incorporates other gender identities. Socially constructed stereotypes are one of the root causes of the armed conflict and GBSV. Thus, the entire society needs to deconstruct these stereotypes to build a stable and lasting peace. Despite the effort made to have the majority acceptance of the peace agreement, the final text modified the gender approach to accommodate traditional concepts of gender.

The gender subcommission

The gender subcommission was established in September 2014 as a formal mechanism to integrate the gender perspective in the Peace Accord. Initially, the gender commission was made up of female delegates from both parties, including only one man, despite the claim to include more. The composition varied depending on the issue being negotiated (Salvesen & Nylander, 2017). Although it was formed two years after the peace negotiations had begun, it is one of the most recognized achievements of the peace process. Its purpose was to advise the negotiating parties on incorporating gender-specific provisions into the final peace agreement.

Before establishing the gender commission, negotiators had already reached partial agreements in three of the six main areas of the plan (rural development, political participation, and resolving the drug problem). The gender commission had the tasks of guaranteeing the inclusion of the gender approach in the discussions on the remaining points of the agenda (rights of the victims, ending the conflict, and the implementation of the agreement), and in reviewing the texts of the partial agreement on the first three points of the agenda (Salvesen & Nylander, 2017). However, the revision of some

previously agreed points implied reopening discussions on controversial topics that had already been closed and men did not want to open.

Initially, the official negotiators perceived the subcommittee as a form of quell pressure from international organizations, and its work was considered not seriously. Evidence of this is that the subcommittee members were not assigned a formal space or time to meet, being forced to work in whatever available area they could get (Salvesen & Nylander, 2017). Another challenge was persuading the parties to accept the proposed gender changes. The gender commission concluded the review of the partial agreements in July 2016 (Salvesen & Nylander, 2017).

One result of the review is that in the rural development issue, it was included that women had the right to own land and to be prioritized in the redistribution and access to it (Salvesen & Nylander, 2017). Another important example of the gender commission's achievements was incorporating the gender approach in the mandate of the Truth Commission and creating a special working group to guarantee this objective (Salvesen & Nylander, 2017). The gender subcommittee succeeded in having the transitional justice mechanisms modified to address gender's specific cases.

Colombia took an essential step by incorporating women at the negotiating table. However, the minority participation in the number of seats is not sufficient, nor does it imply an equitable influence. Likewise, the creation of the gender subcommittee was a tokenistic symbol at the beginning. In addition, although it achieved the intellectual incorporation of the gender approach in the final text to some extent, it is crucial to recognize that the country was able to advance much more in terms of gender equity. And this was not only the responsibility of the gender subcommittee. The country needs to continue working to change stereotypes and patriarchal patterns rooted in the culture that stunt progress towards an equitable state.

Formal vs informal influence

In the early 1990s, the need to consider women's role in conflict prevention, crisis management, conflict resolution, and post-conflict rehabilitation started to be acknowledged (OSCE, 2019). Both in official and informal negotiation roles, the participation of women contributes to a lasting Peace (CFR, 2020).

Women have traditionally been excluded from official negotiation processes or Track 2 but have played an active role in informal peace processes. Peace negotiation processes are classified into three types: Track 1 negotiations are formal or official discussions between warring parties, typically involve high-level political and military leaders that focus on ceasefires, state security, peace treaties, and other agreements (OSCE, 2019). Track 2 processes comprise unofficial dialogues and problem-solving activities involving civil society actors like influential academics, religious actors, leaders of non-governmental organizations, and other actors who have more freedom to interact with the society than military and politicians (Dayal & Christien, 2020). They are diplomatic or consultative processes between stakeholders concerned with building relationships and encouraging new thinking to inform an official process. Track 3 refers to one-on-one interactions between individuals and private groups, generally focused on the grassroots level. It includes, among others, organizing meetings and conferences, raising awareness, generating media exposure, and conducting political and legal advocacy for marginalized people and communities (OSCE, 2019).

Although Track 1 peace processes generally exclude women, they are critical players in Track 2 peace processes (Dayal & Christien, 2020). They have always been present in peace negotiations at the informal level (UNWOMEN, 2015). In a study about 63 formal peace processes, it was found that 60 percent of them had parallel informal peace processes, and women's groups were involved in almost all of them (Dayal & Christien,

2020). Moreover, 71% of informal peace processes involved identifiable women's groups (Dayal & Christien, 2020).

The formal and informal power structures that men dominate constrain women's opportunities to get involved in meaningful positions in public spheres, politics, and official negotiation processes (OSCE, 2019). Three main structural factors affect women's involvement in official negotiation processes, inducing them to focus their work directly on the informal sector with civil society (OSCE, 2019). The first one is societal factors, including patriarchal structures that determine the social position that women play in public life, particularly gender roles and stereotypes. The second factor is institutions, referring to the dynamics of cooperation between government institutions and civil society. And the third element is factors related to the process, including the formal process setup and the strategies women use to engage with it. Although social and institutional factors are generally intertwined, all three of them mutually reinforce the hindering of women's involvement in formal peace processes.

In Colombia

In 2000, women's organizations arranged the first public hearing about economy and employment issues affecting women, attended by 600 women from a wide range of social sectors (Bouvier, 2016). This event had three main objectives: to increase visibility and awareness of gender inequality, to demand more significant representation of women at the negotiating table with the FARC, and to give the women's movement a role in the negotiations (which implied allowing women's civil organizations to access negotiations) (Bouvier, 2016). Although the participation of the government and FARC negotiators were expected in the hearing and none of them attended, the first point was achieved. The fulfillment of the two remaining objectives was impeded by a lack of political will, the slowdown in negotiations, and the promotion of a military solution through new resources from Plan Colombia that arrived from the United States (Bouvier, 2016).

This hearing demonstrated women's civic organizations' ability to convene and influence. In addition, it established a precedent for new forms of mobilization where rituals, symbolism, and creativity were the focus of action (Bouvier, 2016). After 2002, when the peace negotiations between the government and the FARC failed, many women continued to work in unofficial spaces. Women worked to find political and peaceful solutions and prepare the ground for new peace talks with armed groups.

Despite the lack of official talks, women continued to work in the regions, almost invisible to the leaders' eyes, in favor of peace through marches and other actions to demand peace (Bouvier, 2016). At the regional level, civilian women's organizations spoke with armed groups to free hostages and child soldiers, remove roadblocks, and agree to several local ceasefires that remained in place for several months in remote areas (UNWOMEN, 2015). Also, women's organizations have been tireless promoters against sexual and gender violence issues and critical promoters to increase awareness about differentiated effects on different populations (Bouvier, 2016).

National Summit of Women and Peace

In October 2013, the National Summit of Women for Peace was organized by civil women's organizations. The event had the support of UN Women and several international organizations to meet for three days. The Summit's main objective was to encourage Colombian society to participate actively in the peace process and propose specific recommendations on the participation of women in the negotiations.

It brought together around 500 representatives of Colombian women's organizations in the capital city with diverse backgrounds and facets of society. At the Summit, it was demanded that female victims participated in all official truth commissions that could be established at the departmental, municipal, and local levels (Bouvier, 2016).

The NGO Ruta Pacifica de las Mujeres, one of the organizers, created the Commission of Truth and Memory of Colombian Women with international support, which published its report in 2013. That report exposes the physical, psychological, and sexual violence derived from the conflict against women and the survival strategies of the victims. This commission is the first independent truth commission in Colombia, which analyzes the effects of the war on women with a feminist approach (Bouvier, 2016). The organization assured that they managed to get the attention of President Santos by advocating for their right to be peacemakers.

The Summit composed 800 recommendations and gained unprecedented support from international media and stakeholders that led to the recognition they sought and a change in gender dynamics in negotiations (Wilhelmsen, 2019). Two weeks after the National Summit of Women and Peace, the negotiating parties of the peace process reached an agreement on women's political participation. They recognized the "crucial role of women in conflict-prevention, conflict-resolution, and peacebuilding." Consequently, President Santos named two women with greater decision-making capacity in the official conversations (UN Women, 2015).

In Colombia, the women's movement has grown and strengthened over time. However, there are political differences among women that make it difficult to unify the movement. Still, there were different positions around various issues against which women's groups and the LGBTI movement managed to unite despite ideological and political divisions (Salvesen & Nylander, 2017).

In Colombia, women's civil movements have constantly been working to construct peace on the margins of the State. Women used different modalities of inclusion to influence various actors at different levels and stages of the peace process (Vargas & Díaz Pérez, 2018). While the actions of women's organizations have been more visible at the

international level, at the national level, the collective effort that women have exercised and deployed throughout the country has remained unnoticed. All these actions were a vital component to end the conflict. Although it had a different effect on women, the war did not eliminate their desire to find a solution without weapons to live in a peaceful country.

Quantitative vs Qualitative Inclusion

The number of women is generally spoken of as a piece of information to show off. However, guaranteeing women's participation must be done with both a quantitative and qualitative approach in formal spaces. In recent decades, the predominant strategy of the international community has been only to bring one or a marginal number of women with technical knowledge to the negotiating table, that is, to integrate more women into Track 1 processes (Dayal & Christien, 2020). Another strategy they use is increasing the number of women political advisers; however, it is an insufficient measure because their influence on negotiations will always be weaker than the influence of negotiators and mediators on the final agreement (OSCE, 2019). Including a marginal number of women does not represent an inclusive policy where there are a collective commitment and qualitative change in conflict situations (UNWOMEN, 2015).

An improvement in the numbers does not mean that women will influence the negotiations or shape their implementation. Divisions among female participants or the lack of a collective voice may be factors that affect women's ability to influence proceedings and outcomes; however, it is generally because a small group of male leaders makes crucial decisions, even if women are participating (UNWOMEN, 2015). The numbers of women's participation usually hide the reality, in which women are excluded from decision-making and where their engagement becomes tokenistic or symbolic (UNWOMEN, 2015). The inclusion of women should not be an exercise in checking a task on a list. Women should be included in each phase of the process, aiming at challenging

patriarchal norms, cultural and structural institutions that are at the basis of the conflict (Kofi Annan Foundation, 2020).

Despite international efforts and the benefits of including women influencers, the representation of women in formal conflict resolution processes has been low in recent years. It has been demonstrated that the participation of influential women's groups in peace negotiations is positively related to rates of implementation of the agreement and the durability of the peace (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, 2015) (Krause, Krause, & Bränfors, 2018). Also, agreements with women signatories show a higher quality of the deal, with a more significant number of provisions and more outstanding commitments for implementation ten years after signing, in contrast to agreements where there are no female signatories (Krause, Krause, & Bränfors, 2018).

However, women constituted 13 percent of negotiators, 6 percent of mediators, and 6 percent of signatories in major peace processes worldwide between 1991 and 2019 (Essig, 2020). Besides, about 7 out of 10 peace processes between 2015 and 2020 still did not include women in leadership roles as negotiators, mediators, or signatories (CFR, 2020). Also, statistics have shown that 85% of worldwide career ambassadors are men (OSCE, 2019). As there exist women with political and diplomatic careers, it poses a question about the procedures and willingness around identifying and appointing women to leadership roles in Track 1 processes (OSCE, 2019).

Furthermore, the low representation is as physical as intellectual since its inclusion in the peace accords through provisions and proposals has been extremely poor. In an analysis of 1,860 peace agreements between 1990 and 2019, most agreements do not refer to women or contain provisions focused on them (CFR, 2020). Only 20% have references to women, girls, and gender. Furthermore, only 6% include at least one provision specifically to address violence against women (CFR, 2020). Addressing this disparity is vital because

peace negotiations open the possibility of increasing women's political participation in the post-conflict, both physically and intellectually (Krause, Krause, & Bränfors, 2018).

The structural factors need to change to allow women to participate meaningfully, particularly in the diplomatic and political fields (OSCE, 2019). Those changes can be prompted by a combination of top-down guidelines by official or supranational institutions, bottom-up initiatives by the civil society, and influencers' work with access to the public sector and the civil society. To increase women's participation in formal peace processes, it must be rethink what is considered political, what is an adequate engagement of women on the ground, what is significant participation and involvement of women in peace negotiations? (UNWOMEN, 2015).

In Colombia

Progress has been plodding; women have built on lessons from every previous process. In Colombia, women were initially excluded but were eventually granted seats later on after significant internal and external pressure. In previous peace processes in Colombia, women have not had a notable role, or a marginal one, in negotiating teams. They have managed to be heard and have physical and intellectual spaces in the latest peace process through the new ways they have found to do so (Bouvier, 2016).

- **1990-1994:** In peace talks from 1990-1994, the Government of Colombia signed peace accords with the following armed groups: The Popular Liberation Army (EPL), the Workers Revolutionary Party (PRT), the Quintin Lame Armed Movement (MAQL), and the Socialist Renovation Movement (CRS), and it entered into dialogues with the Communist Party and the Simón Bolívar Guerrilla Coordinator. Although there were women in guerrilla positions in these groups, only one female fighter was included as a signatory. The rest of the signatories (negotiators, witnesses, guarantors) were men (Bouvier, 2016).

- **FARC I:** The first time a woman participated as a peace negotiator with the FARC was during the administration of former president Andres Pastrana, between 1998 and 2002. Two women were appointed as negotiators to the government team, and one to the FARC team. Even after the inclusion of the women negotiators, there was a lack of awareness and motivation among senior authorities to change the dynamics (Bouvier, 2016).
- **AUC:** In 2004 - Similarly, there were no women in the conversations that led to the demobilization of the paramilitary AUC in 2004 (Bouvier, 2016).
- **ELN:** In the same way, in exploratory talks with the National Liberation Army (ELN) between 2005-2007, women held no visible roles (Bouvier, 2016).
- **FARC II:** The mechanisms in which women have had the participation and the ability to exert influence in some way include commissions, sub-commissions, thematic working groups, and a commission in charge of the drafting (Bouvier, 2016). At the end of 2012, men filled the seats of the negotiating table, except for the female Norwegian moderator. Furthermore, all the plenipotentiaries and 29 of the 30 negotiators were men. However, a year later, a third of the delegates from each party were women (UNWOMEN, 2015).

  In April 2013, the FARC included a female negotiator on its team, although she was not a plenipotentiary. In November 2013, the Government appointed two women as plenipotentiary negotiators. Several months later, the gender sub-commission was established, and with it, the direct involvement of female victims and LGBTI people in the peace talks. And in February 2015, 40% of the FARC delegation was made up of women (Bouvier, 2016).

Women held positions of secondary influence in the central commissions, subcommittees, and work teams. Although they did not represent 50% of the negotiators, they managed to influence the final text to some extent. Their participation demonstrates

that there are women with appropriate qualifications to work at high levels of leadership for peacebuilding (Bouvier, 2016).

Roles, priorities, and transference strategies

Female signatories are more likely to have a direct influence in negotiations. Women signatories include a wide range of political actors like female members of armed groups, female government representatives, and civil society female delegates (Krause, Krause, & Bränfors, 2018). Given that gender equality is one predictor of peace sustainability, more female representatives in the national legislature and official processes make peace longer after ceasefires and negotiated settlements (Krause, Krause, & Bränfors, 2018).

Cultural stereotypes also prevent women from having influential participation in formal peace processes. Both men and women are related to different identity markers, relating to gender, ethnicity, or class, affecting their roles in the post-conflict period. It is generally assumed that women are included in peace negotiations to deal only with gender-based violations because of their victimization during conflict (Kofi Annan Foundation, 2020). The association of women with the role of victims and issues on the domestic or private sphere excludes them from decision-making positions and public sector issues during the peace negotiations (GIZ, 2014). However, women are more than victims. It has been recognized that women are political and religious leaders, peace advocates, public servants, peace negotiators, community organizers, armed groups militants, victims, perpetrators, and peacemakers (UNWOMEN, 2015) (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, 2015). Women are strong components and agents of change at every level of the negotiation and peace processes.

Although women are excluded from tables where power is negotiated, they are not bystanders while others shape the peace. Increasing the number of women in formal spaces is an important goal, but only one way in which women advocate for peace.

Alongside formal processes, they play active roles in informal areas advocating for peace (Dayal & Christien, 2020). Their work in informal spaces is essential and involves a wide range of activities that are often unrecognized, undocumented, and invisibilized in formal spaces and literature (GIZ, 2014). Dayal and Christien classified eight roles according to the type of activity in informal areas or Track 2 processes: inclusion in formal peace talks, legitimating negotiations or organizing for peace, affiliation with warring parties, engaging in local conflict resolution, providing information to Track 1 mediators and negotiators, advocating for inclusion in post-conflict government, advocating for gender equality, and advocating for pro-democracy systems (Dayal & Christien, 2020). In almost every case, women were prone to seek gender equality in post-conflict settings (Dayal & Christien, 2020).

A widely believed misconception is that women are more peaceful than men. By nature, that is not true. Also, like men, women can be politically affiliated. Assuming women are only agents for peace reinforces gender stereotypes. War affects all the people; that is a fact. However, women suffer the consequences of war differently than men; thus, they have differentiated experiences during the conflict. Men represent the majority of warfighters and are willing to die from the armed conflict's direct causes. On the other hand, women are more likely to die from the indirect effects of war after the end of the battle, particularly from causes associated with breakdown in social order, human rights abuses, economic devastation, and the spread of infectious diseases (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, 2015).

Their different experiences during conflict mean that women's peace priorities generally differ from men's priorities. Women address human rights, security, and development issues related to the causes and effects of conflict. Thus, women focus on "human security" and "positive Peace." These concepts are generally not compatible with dominant ideas of peace in the international system that prioritizes negative peace and

state security (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, 2015). These concepts respond to the masculinization of peace.

Men prioritize negative peace associated with the public sector; in contrast, women prioritize positive peace, focusing on private spheres, the family, and community needs (Remenyi, 2016). According to Remenyi, women tend to consider, for example, household issues, education for children, individual rights, and freedoms. That focus aligns with the fact that women's experiences in war are different from men's experiences, particularly concerning sexual integrity when gender sexual violence has been used as a war weapon (Remenyi, 2016). Despite the signing of the peace accords, the marked absence of women in formal peacebuilding processes leads to these issues being ignored and the goals of negative peace being prioritized; making women feel that peace does not reach them (Remenyi, 2016). Incorporating topics covered by women in informal spaces, particularly in Track 2 initiatives, can offer a more comprehensive and inclusive look at peace processes, increase feelings of ownership in the local community as well as support for negotiators, and can raise hidden issues for elite negotiators (Dayal & Christien, 2020).

Research has demonstrated that the most effective strategy to transfer results and insights from advocacy processes that emerge from women's groups is to combine 'insider' with 'outsider' tactics (UNWOMEN, 2015). The insider strategies used by women's networks and coalitions have been to develop a document that unifies their positions, submitted directly to negotiators, mediators, or technical advisors (UNWOMEN, 2015). The "insider" strategies also allow collaboration between women in formal processes and women in civil society groups. That is important because including civil society groups does not mean they can influence the negotiations. Further, strong linkages between them enhance accord content, implementation rates, and the number of provisions because of the continuous advocacy and well-informed support (Krause, Krause, & Bränfors, 2018). The 'outsider' strategies have focused on issuing public reports, lobbying international actors, and conducting media outreach (UNWOMEN, 2015).

Outsider strategies also include resorting to international support to advocate for the incorporation of women in negotiations.

In forty cases studied, the conflict parties, particularly negotiators and mediators, were the ones who included civil society groups. Generally, that was done to increase their legitimacy, achieve support from more constituencies, gain momentum for negotiations, add different perspectives, or test new ideas (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, 2015). In contrast, women's groups were only included when there was strong lobbyism by local and international organizations. That implies that for changing the political will to accept women's participation and women's topics, domestic and international pressure was required (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, 2015).

In Colombia

Women have played roles beyond victims. During the peace process, women took advantage of every opportunity and mechanism available to be present at conferences, working groups, and research projects about the negotiating agenda. Colombian women have generated the most significant number of strategies for constructing peace outside the official negotiations in Havana. Women developed resistance mechanisms, confronting violence with collective and non-violent methods (Vargas & Díaz Pérez, 2018).

During 2012 and 2013, women participated in civil society spaces around rural development, political inclusion, illicit crops, drug trafficking, and victim issues (Bouvier, 2016). At the regional level, women participated in nine working groups, in which women represented 40% -50% of the participants. The proposals that resulted from these tables were synthesized and transferred to the negotiators in Havana (Bouvier, 2016).

Many female victims were forced to change their traditional roles by circumstances. In many regions of the country, male leaders of human rights and peace organizations were

assassinated or disappeared, which justifies why some women felt the need to continue their search for a just and sustainable peace (Vargas & Díaz Pérez, 2018). Many of these women considered that women's organizations were their only form of resistance, and many found a wide range of organizational strategies to advocate for their rights (Vargas & Díaz Pérez, 2018).

The testimony of one of these women, found in Vargas and Diaz ‘piece, affirms that: "We women have rebuilt the social fabric through community work, we are guardians of the memory of our people, and we raise our voice against the war. But it is a highly complex job because we have a deeply rooted patriarchal culture, where the work of women is despised and made invisible. We have the feeling of always having to be arguing so that our work is respected. Why do we have to have a man by our side to defend us? Or why should we live in hiding to protect ourselves? " Brenda (Vargas & Díaz Pérez, 2018).

The community role of women allows them to retake public spaces to make visible a part of history that is generally ignored. Women have reconquered traditional forms of community organization through a pacifist path away from arms. Women "strategically deconstruct the dominant symbolism of violence and war and replace it with a new visual and textual language, and with creative rituals and other practices that recover what women brought to the world (…) it tries to investigate and recover the feminine knowledge that has been subordinated, silenced and buried". (Vargas & Díaz Pérez, 2018).

The women's work was a chain job. For example, the work of the gender subcommittee only reached the media if another woman supported its work and brought it to the press (Wilhelmsen, 2019). National and international pressure on negotiating delegations was critical to consider gender issues (Salvesen & Nylander, 2017). International media played an essential role in articulating international cooperation as a catalyst for change during the negotiations. National efforts by the civil society was made visible by the international community and international stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

Considering international norms and various theoretical arguments to justify the inclusion of women in peace processes, Colombia achieved substantial progress in retrospective to its history and culture. Still, it has many challenges and space to materialize its egalitarian approach embodied in the final text of the Peace Agreement. Three essential takeaways emerge from the above analysis.

1. Women´s civil organizations

Women's creative strategies to promote peace and justice adds to their leadership and the affirmative actions that position them as equal members of society. In all stages of peacebuilding, it must be guaranteed women's political, physical, and intellectual participation for them to exercise their power as citizens. They constitute half of the population and therefore have the right to shape the dynamics of society since it directly involves them. Women are not passive actors waiting for the favor of men to be considered. Women can make changes in their private lives and at the local and national levels.

The Colombian case demonstrates how women have worked from the grassroots and have exerted pressure, with the support of international actors, to advance for an equitable and sustainable peace outside the high circles of government power. It is evident how the accumulated effort of women for a decade has provided positive outcomes concerning local negotiations, humanitarian agreements, and the final agreement with the FARC (Bouvier, 2016). The civil organizations of women have advocated and achieved the creation of norms, laws, and guidelines to guarantee their

political participation in creating peace. Women have mobilized populations towards dialogue and have rethought social relations in the community. Their lobbying has contributed significantly to preparing the ground for talks with the FARC in Havana (Bouvier, 2016).

The roles that women have played in informal spaces must be recognized and supported. That does not justify the lack of inclusion in official leading positions to redistribute the country's political power. The quality of women's participation is a determining factor for the sustainability of peace. In this way, in future peace processes with other armed groups, the country and the rulers must accept and promote the inclusion of women as equal negotiators than men. Gender equality is not an issue only for women; it is the active responsibility of all individuals and the entire society.

2. Official decision-making positions

The allocation of official positions to include women negotiators and the creation of the gender sub-commission to guarantee the inclusion of the gender perspective in the agreement represent important official progress in Colombia. That was a first step in the advancement of equality. However, a chair at the negotiating table is an element, but it is not enough (Bouvier, 2016). Nor is it enough to create a gender subcommittee without the same decision-making power as negotiators (if they are primarily men).

The work of women negotiators and participants in the various commissions must have the full support of the parties, including the delegations and their leaders (Salvesen & Nylander, 2017). Also, the practical materialization of the proposals and the gender approach of the peace agreement requires more political will and resources. It is necessary that the programs and projects derived from the agreement guarantee the materialization of the gender equality and the empowerment of women, girls, and the LGBTI population.

The international agreements, CEDAW, and the WPS agenda establish that the inclusion of women at the negotiating table is a matter of international peace and security. However, in Colombia's peace processes, there is still a marginal representation of women. The latest peace process with the FARC, the most publicized for the inclusion of the gender perspective, shows that the lack of inclusion of women does not respond to the fact that they are not qualified or that there are not enough women. In addition, it reflects that there is still a friction force against the equitable inclusion of women in Colombian culture since, without external pressure, the results would probably have been different for women.

The development of future peace agreements in Colombia must continue to build on the lessons of the peace process with the FARC and previous processes. It is vital to give women an official space to be peacebuilders and decision-makers in official meetings and consider that all the problems to be resolved affect women, men, and other identities differently. Furthermore, if gender equality is a predictor for peace stability, it is more than necessary to include commitments and perspectives that address the diversity of gender identities, beyond those of women.

3. Gender dynamics and culture

Discrimination against women, and other identities, has become ingrained to the point that it has become invisible, normal. Women's organizations have worked hard to change the power relations and patterns of inequality that plague the country. However, efforts to create a more equitable country where peace is stable must not fall only on civilian women's groups and international allies. The country needs to continue advancing at the individual, communal, and political levels.

It is critical to understand the gender dynamics associated with the culture and the conflict to reconstruct the social fabric equitably. Suppose gender dimensions are not incorporated into the social collective, and their practical implementation is not promoted from the final agreement. In that case, the country may fall into the trap of regressing human rights development and perpetuate old patterns of discrimination, abuse, and intolerance that initially led to the conflict (Bouvier, 2016). The fight against patriarchy is not a task only for women; men and all people in society must expand their understanding of equality and power and must promote a more just and equitable society for all.

One of the reflections left by the plebiscite and the rejection of the initial peace agreement is how ready the country is to advance on issues of gender equality and how much the rulers allow voting on constitutional decisions that imply institutional power shifts. The traditional social factions still have considerable influence in the country. The moralistic discussions derived from not fitting into patriarchal stereotypes are still in force in Colombia, and they are solid and destructive. However, this does not imply that future peace processes should avoid the equitable inclusion of women. On the contrary, this justifies the work and promotion of greater gender equality for a comprehensive and robust peace. Bearing this in mind, it is worth highlighting the role of regulations and international support to generate a change in the dynamics of the country from the top-down and of women's civil organizations to create a difference from bottom-up strategies.

Additionally, the gender approach must be strengthened in all existing institutions of society and the institutions and mechanisms created as a result of the peace agreement, including future peace agreements. The design, implementation, and monitoring of a gender budget by local, regional, and national authorities must be guaranteed to include the gender approach in all development plans and institutions (Salvesen & Nylander, 2017).

Gender issues should not be set aside to address more pressing issues. On the contrary, in line with the peace agreement, the country must guarantee a gender perspective in the most urgent matters and all legislative processes in Congress. The case of Colombia provides an opportunity to analyze results and lessons learned regarding the inclusion of women and the gender perspective. That is a resource for other peace processes in the country and internationally.

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