

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY ROTARY PEACE CENTER

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FINAL REPORT SCI -SARA FORMISANO

Title: Women in Equality for Lasting Peace
Location: Italy, Ukraine and Sudan
Start and Completion Date: 10th of May 2023 end 16 February 2024

Abstract: My SCI is about putting in touch with women's organizations of Sudan and Ukraine to compare and help each other on the implementation of some aspect of the WPS agenda, concretely to improve their participation in peace talks and negotiations in their respective wars. This initiative called Women in equality for Lasting Peace (WELP) focuses on the successful activism of Sudanese and Ukrainian women organizations that have vigorously contributed to strengthening civil society's role in putting into actions the WPS agenda. To explore this, I selected six organizations, three in Ukraine and three in Sudan, for them to share their experiences and come out with a joint peace-statement, which has been published on websites and shared with social media.

Summary: (250 words)

Women in Equality for Lasting Peace is a Social Change Initiative supported by the Rotary, and implemented by the Sara Formisano, in the framework of the Rotary Peace Foundation Fellowship Program. This peacebuilding initiative is based on solidarities and empathy between women organizations living in wars contexts.

WELP initiative offered to six leaders of women organizations, such as Olena Sulsova, Dom 4828, Ideas for Change, Sitia NGO, Women against War and Alya Abdullah, respectively from Ukraine and Sudan, a virtual space to share their peacebuilding expertise, to learn with each other good practices, while improving their chances to participate in peace processes.

Additionally, several joint peace-appeals have been published in various social media, creating further international awareness about women conditions in wars and denouncing also their systematically exclusion from negotiation tables.

Ukraine and Sudan were selected as main actors of the WELP initiative because their conflicts present some similarities; both countries are caught by endless wars, where women and girls continue to be the victims of violence and denigration.

However, on a good note, in both countries there are strong women leaders and peacebuilding associations working "Above Self" to voice appeals for immediate ceasefire, requesting gender equality conditions within political decision-maker institutions.

Thanks to WELP's initiative, leaders of these selected organizations, worked cross countries, comparing their experiences, and sharing their know-how. As result, Italian Rotary Clubs have decided to support a fundraising campaign to sponsor an in person encounter of Rotarians, Ukrainians, and Sudanese, in Italy, next summer, to explore the possibility of transforming the WELP initiative in a two years humanitarian project.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction and Background:

The crisis in Ukraine started on November 2013, when the pro-Russian government of President Viktor Yanukovich decided not to sign a planned Association Agreement with the European Union. A huge street demonstration started in Kiev, the capital, known as the 'Euromaidan' demonstration, which turned violent, provoking the disappearance of the President and new early elections which brought current president Zelensky into power.

Meanwhile, pro-Russian Crimea, a region in the south of Ukraine, declared its independence and issued a referendum to join Russia. Since then, Russia has maintained its control over Crimea and supported pro-Russian separatist forces who also took control of parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions on the eastern side of Ukraine (the Donbas), in 2014.

Unfortunately, on February 24th, 2022, the agreement collapsed, while Russia officially launched military action in Ukraine, with forces crossing into the country from Belarus in the north, Russia in the east, and Crimea in the south, thus transforming the Ukrainian conflict from an internal dispute into an international invasion which is still on today.

The Sudan Crisis and the current civil war broke out on the 15th of April between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), chaired by Gen Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, the head of the armed forces and in effect the country's president, and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), led by Gen Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, better known as Hemedti. Two years early, both forces, together with support of civilian population protesters, led a coup against longtime dictator Omar al-Bashir, giving life to what became known in history as the Sudan Revolution.

A government formed by military-civilian, was established after the 2019 coup; meanwhile the transitional Military Council (TMC) was formed. However, the civilian population feared the group of militaries would resist the establishment of a democratically elected government, and would be unwilling to step out.

So, an opposition umbrella group that had emerged over the months of protest, the Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC), pushed and obtained the signature of the constitutional declaration, in 2021, and the establishment of a new transitional executive body and a civilian prime minister. The FFC is the coalition representing the protestors consisting of labor unions, civil society organizations (including women's organizations), political parties and neighborhood committees. The FFC also pushed for the transitional government to incorporate Sudan's traditionally marginalized groups, including women and those living in the periphery, and address these groups' demands.

Despite these positive developments, when elections were due to be held, but Gen Burhan took over with another coup in October 2021, ending the transitional government, and taking the power for himself, claiming he was stepping in to avert a civil war.

Gen Burhan, with the intent to secure his power, felt that the RSF had become out of control and took action to monopolize power, dissolving the TMC, which included both the SAF and RSF. As a response Gen Dagalo, from the RSF, called Gen Burhan's government "radical Islamists" and started to fight against him under the slogan "RSF is fighting for the people of Sudan", to ensure the democratic progress they had yearned for.

Today Sudan is in an impasse and these military clashes among two different groups are now escalating to a full-on civil war. In this last month, the escalation of the civil war is also reaching the all provinces outside Khartoum.

The Ukrainian and Sudan conflicts are very different but they are also similar because in both cases, there are routinely violence actions against civilians, such as looting, kidnapping, raping, torture, disappearances and random killings; all these crimes are committed by the armed forces and remain unpunished.

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Sudanese and Ukraine women are, among the group of the civilians are the one that suffer the most, making them the ultimate victims of these horrific conflicts. Their struggle is on multiple fronts, because they are the ones left in charge of securing the livelihood, shelter, food, water, medical care, and protection of the entire family, but ultimately the war and consequently martial laws brushed away their human rights.

Problem Statement:

- Lack of political power to influence peace processes:
In both conflicts, Women's organizations constantly call for an immediate ceasefire and peace appeals, nevertheless they are mostly silenced by armed forces, rather fiscally with violence repercussions or virtually through denial of access to the political life; essentially, they are on purpose left out from decision-making power position.
- Issues of safety and security:
In both countries to protest publicly against the war is forbidden, and any peace demonstration is oppressed with force from soldiers, and more often pacifist activists are killed or disappear.
- Women organization desegregation:
 - Dominance of male power in war context is also strengthened by desegregation of women organizations, meaning that, both in Ukraine and Sudan, women organizations represent different interests, geographical areas, ethics groups etc. Unfortunately, not always women organizations from the same country succeed to find a common agreement; when it comes to peace revendications, frequently, the pacifist movements are not united, and this desegregation fuels the hegemony of the male power.
 - Limit of the United Nations 1325 Resolution of Women Peace and Security:
Most of the problems mentioned above are addressed by the United Nations 1325, which obliges UN member states to create favorable conditions to include women in peace and security processes, adopting an annual national action plan the involvement of Women in Peace and Security. However, in most cases Resolution is practically ignored, and apart exceptions, women's role in mediation, negotiation, and peacebuilding is *de facto* ignored, both in Sudan and Ukraine.

Goals and Objectives: (400 words)

The goal of the initiative is to amplify and spread women's success in participating in peace processes in armed conflict, using women's exchanges of experiences and good practices as an international solidarity tool.

WELP initiative is based on the idea that sharing "peer experiences" and using some joint peace-statements will obtain more attention from the international decision-making powers, translated in a stronger support to request immediate ceasefire and international peacekeeping's interventions in favor of humanitarian law. Finally, join forces has the objective to push stronger for women to play a bigger role in peace building initiatives, as asserted by the UN Resolutions 1325.

Additionally, the initiative's objective is helping women of Sudan and Ukraine to gain more skills as peace makers, with regards to war trauma management, mediation techniques and healing and rehabilitation actions, thanks to a solidarity partnership.

Furthermore, the selected women organizations are scaling-up these experiences, empowering and galvanizing local communities' women organizations in their own countries, complying with the objective to transcend individual's political, ethical, and cultural differences, in favor of cross-country peaceful dialogues.

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A more general object of the WELP initiative is to create awareness among the international community about the struggles of women's conditions in Ukraine and Sudan, with the aim to endorse internationally, their joint peace-statements.

Challenges and mitigation strategies: (400 words)

Gender studies prove that in times of war, gender roles become less fixed, and women sometimes manage to get more influence in society, but this space decreases once the war is over. Women's exclusions from official peacebuilding efforts starts with their absence at negotiations tables; rarely peace agreements are signed off also by women representatives.

Women's contribution to the peace processes is shadowed, and their value as active peacebuilders is forced into passivity; so, women return to being seen mainly as victims of the conflict or simply as mothers, consequently excluded from political and executive positions.

To mitigate these challenges, women organizations in Sudan and Ukraine are working hard to gain more influence and strength, they are "fighting" to be considered proactive actors instead of just victims of the conflict, or of being typecast simply as mothers.

In Ukraine and Sudan women organizations, through activism and public campaigns, are trying to break free from the global images that limit women's contribution and coming out from passivity, and pushing to be included in political and executive positions.

Undoubtedly, these women are still facing plenty of difficulties and we are far from talking about success; however, their involvement is proving to the world, and internally to the executive powers of different countries, that equal gender power is crucial for a lasting peace.

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CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review (1000 words)

Mostly, the initiative literature review was based on an academic research paper, entitled “*Exploring the Role of women in Sudanese and Ukraine Peace processes*”. This research paper was completed during one month and it has been used as baseline document for the initiative. Thanks to this research it was possible to identify strategies, to set priorities, and design tactics for the definition of outputs, outcomes, interventions, and actions. The research is available on line, in the website of the Association Scintille, at www.genderandpeace.com. The association Scintille is a stakeholder of Women in Equality for Lasting Peace initiative, and it has offered its web to diffuse to promote the initiative.

The fundings of this research paper have been used for the WLEP context analysis, its needs assessment, the identification of problems statements, together with challenges, and risk mitigation strategies.

The research showed that, women and civil society actors are often excluded from peace negotiations talks, to the extent that armed forces and military intelligences might classify the information shared during the negotiations. As a result, women and, more in general, the civil society inputs, are not reflected in the formal agenda of peace talks and peace agreements. So, most peace processes fail to incorporate a gender perspective and analyze the roots cause of the conflict when it comes to the civil society. Consequently, many peace agreements are still missing out on the unique opportunity to integrate strategic gender and human rights objectives, and to address the structural roots of inequality in the reform of the courts, the police, the security sector, and other government institutions, building a more equitable society in the post-conflict reconstruction.

To fill this gap the Security Council adopted Resolution (S/RES/1325) on women, peace, and security on the 31st of October, 2000. This Resolution, apart from reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and peace negotiations, stresses the importance of their equal participation in all efforts for countries’ peace and security, urging all Member States to implement a National agenda for Women Peace and Security (WPS)¹.

This initiative offers a comparative perspective on women’s movements participation in the current conflicts in Ukraine and Sudan. It also introduces readers to the struggles of these women involved in peace processes, who for years have argued that armed violence is not a solution to conflicts and have spoken out against militarization and the large military budget that prioritizes machine guns over human lives.

However, even if in most cases Resolution 1325 is ignored, there are some exceptions, as is the case of Sudan and Ukraine, who can boast important actions that have allowed the intervention of women’s movements in mediation, negotiation, and peacebuilding, defying the stonewalling of warring parties. To start with, both countries have national plans for the development of the WPS agenda, as part of the Resolution 1325². Thanks to which, Women movements, as part of civil society organizations, are playing an important role in pushing peace processes towards democratization and gender equality.

Women organizations of, Sudan and Ukraine, are working hard to gain more influence and strength, fighting to be seen mainly as proactive actors of peace talks instead of as mere victims of the conflict, or of being typecast simply as mothers. Through, activism and public campaigns, women are coming out from passivity, and pushing to be included in political and executive positions, trying to break free from the global images which limit their contributions and as active peacebuilders, shadow their values as political decision making leaders.

¹ <https://law.mak.ac.ug/public-dialogue-on-women-in-peace-building/>
² <https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1t/k1t551ac2p>

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Undoubtedly, in Sudan and Ukraine, as in most of the world, women are still facing plenty of difficulties and we are far from talking about success in terms of gender balance in peace processes. However, their positive impact on mediations and negotiations operations is proving to male executive powers, that equal gender power is crucial for a lasting peace.

Ukrainian and Sudanese conflicts are different wars that cannot be equalized, just as the history of their women movements and their democratic evolution. Nevertheless, the suffering of the civilian population is alike; in both cases civilians are crushed by the military's powers, and people's wills count for little, while even less weights women's opinions.

In the case of Ukraine, the role of international and national institutions is very much centered on supporting the military actions of the Ukrainian government. As the entire international community is focusing and the military invasion of Russian in Ukraine; hence, the international support focuses on arming the Ukrainian government to fight back against the Russians. Consequently, Ukrainian women's movements do not have strong encouragement for peaceful actions and, even less for dialog opening with Russian civil organizations. On the contrary, each peacebuilding initiative is discredited, and peaceful leaders are persecuted, such is the case of the women in black's movement. These women once a week stand outside the government's building, in silence, to request peace and to claim the return home of their siblings fighting at border. Very few European feminist social movements' support their peace campaigns, and ensure some press coverage, reporting cross border some of their claims. Unfortunately, most of the time, the Ukrainian government suppresses these manifestations by force, sending Special Forces to disperse the women.

The case of Sudan is different, it is a civil war or so called "internal war", so when it comes to the position of the international institutions; for example, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), they have key role promoting the peace process and also they advocate for gender balance at negotiations table. IGAD helps women's movements to have leverage within national institutions and transitional government. On another good note, UNWOMEN, and other UN bodies, collaborate, hands in hands, with Sudanese pacifist women's movements. Despite of this strong international commitment to a peaceful solution, the Sudanese conflict receives poor international media coverage, leaving activists women in isolation, lacking strategic alliances with women organizations worldwide that could improve their financial and operational capacity.

Nonetheless, in both countries, Ukraine and Sudan, there are lessons and good practices that women leaders can share, helping each other's using peer experience. Actually, Ukrainian conflict has received plenty of international media visibility and a considerable financial support to face the humanitarian crisis in the last two years, we are talking of thousands of millions of euros. At the opposite, Sudan is a forgotten conflict, so working in partnership with Ukrainian women, helped Sudanese peace movement to create some international awareness and world's interest about the Sudanese women struggles to lead peace initiatives.

Theoretical Underpinnings (1000words)

WELP theoretical underpinnings, basic principles, and core methods of implementation, aim at conflict using women solidarity as tactic/tool to create a social change to promote women's role in peacebuilding.

In this specific initiative, a participative approach was used, and six women organizations were selected and involved to in the elaboration of this initiative. The women organizations that participated to these exchanges embraced the situational differences and opened their selves to new learning, adopting a positive attitudes, values, beliefs, and interests.

The approach is rooted in social cognitive theory where women leaders from a country in war promote also the cause of women suffering somewhere else in similar conditions, shifting from country-individual issues to collective matters (e.g. Ukrainian women creating awareness about Sudanese conflict and vice versa).

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The WELP initiative approach also relies on transformative learning theory (e.g., women challenging women's habits of mind and points of view), and on the intentional change theory (e.g., women leaders help other women realize their ideal self and vision for the future); and final on transformational leadership (e.g., women leaders motivate and empower other women to transcend self-interests to maximize their potential and achieve shared goals). These theoretical perspectives can be distilled into three basic principles, which include: facilitating women leaders' acquisition and mastery of key tools, enhancing participation in the peace process, and gaining skills for learning and discovery, and promoting women's cause internationally.

Women leaders accomplish these goals by establishing a shared vision for a cause, providing modeling and mastery experiences, challenging, and encouraging each other, personalizing attention and feedback, creating experiential lessons that transcend the boundaries of nationalism, and promoting ample opportunities for reflection. These methods are synergistically related and, when used together, maximize women's potential for mutual empathy and solidarity growth.

The Theory of Change and how it was applied: (700 words)

The theory of change pointed out that, the achievement of gender balance in peace processes is far from becoming a reality in both countries.

As mentioned, even if Ukrainian and Sudanese realities are different, as confirmed by their discrepancy in the Human Development Index; where, Ukraine is rated quite higher up, reaching 0.773 in 2021, having slightly decreased from the previous measurement because of the war, and Sudan is rated 0.508, just before the civil war in 2021, and nowadays, following the war, unfortunately it is dropped further down.

Anyway, as we have seen in previous paragraphs, these two countries also present a lot of similarities; above all, Ukrainians and Sudanese women are equally marginalized, when it comes to the participation in their country peace process. Moreover, they also have plenty of similarities with regards to low degree of women's rights implementation, and gender balance in the political decision-making process.

Based on these considerations, WELP initiative adopted the theory that merging efforts based on women's solidarity and empathy among women living in war, could help to bring joint revendications and appeals for equal participation in peace processes, and giving to it more force to appeal for immediate ceasefires.

The theory of change of this initiative underscored the deeply interlinked nature and similarities of Sudanese and Ukrainian women associations peacebuilding actions. Women associations in both countries are working towards comparable outcomes intended to improve women's equality in their peace process. They work at targeted operational actions; such as to build trust among women, give clear directions to decision making political institutions, and requesting accountability, organizing and attend peace rally, pushing the civil society public appeals, promote a non-violent culture, and advocate against any used of weapons as conflict resolutions etc. All these actions are implemented by Ukrainians and Sudanese with an incredible perseverance and resilience despite they live in war zones.

Our theory of change is summarized in the form of a pyramid, please see the figure below. We named a range of operational actions (support actions) that were implemented in the framework of this initiative, by the six women peace-building activists from Ukraine and Sudan.

Maximizing the international solidarity among women living in similar war contexts was the base of several designed actions which aimed at creating an international dialog, and exchanges of peacebuilding good practices, between women of these two countries. The exchanges of experiences were spontaneous, Sudanese, and Ukrainian peacebuilding leaders chose their selves the subject of their conversations, and what and how, to benefit from these mutual exchanges. Sharing of their peacebuilding efforts and good practices, helped them to find comfort in each other and energy to continue to believe in a possible peace.

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Finally, they also merged forces to discuss once more the challenges of the current norms, promoting gender equality in peace processes, with special reference to the Resolution of the United Nations 1325, and they reflected together upon its poor implementation.

Theory of Change Pyramid

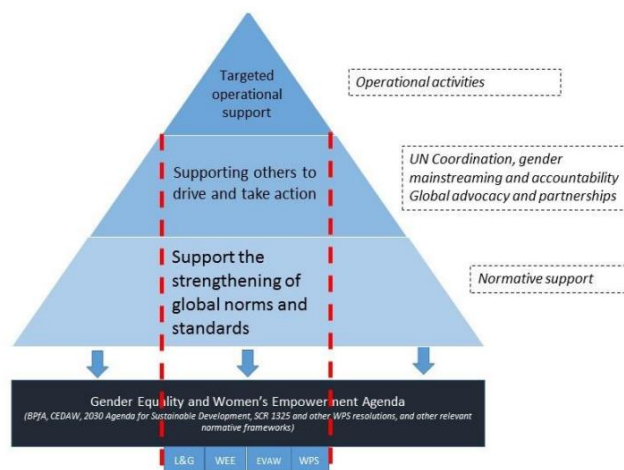
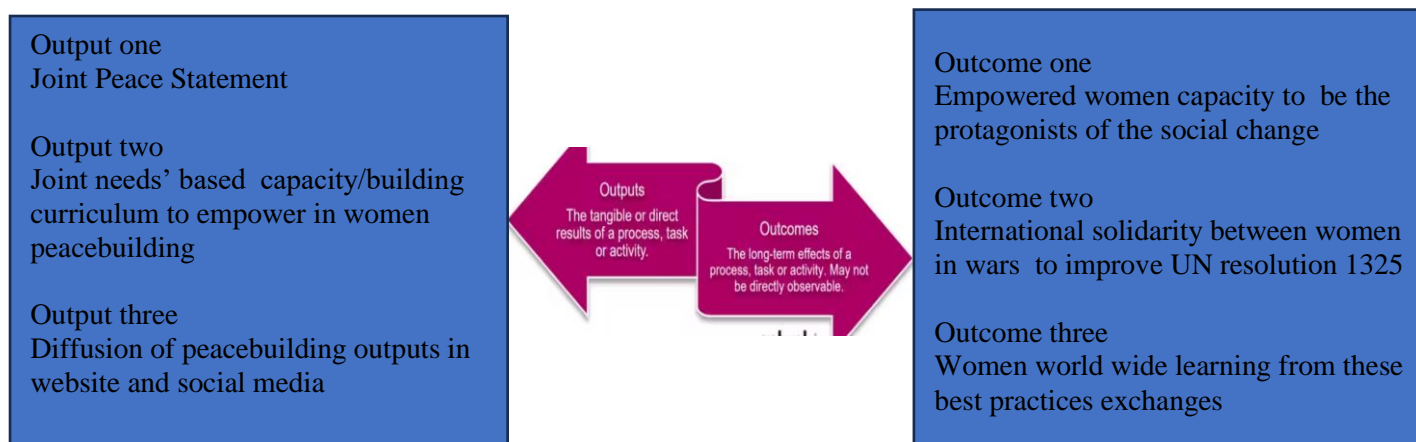


Figure 1

In terms of theory of change's flow; this initiative has been designed based on three main outputs associated with specific outcomes to strengthen Gender Equality and Women Empowerment for Lasting Peace.



During their meetings and exchanges, the leaders representing the women organizations, discussed the tools, and the actions needed to support each-others; they prioritized the elaboration of a joint peace-statement addressed to the international community (first output). The joint peace-statement contains their frustration for these endless wars, and denounce the law implementation of the UN Resolution 1325, and appeals to new mediations efforts at least to achieve an immediate ceasefire. The joint-peace statement is available on the www.genderandpeace.org WELP dedicated pages.

The first output of WELP's theory of change was the elaborated taking into consideration the reality women's living in wars, globally, as well as, in the specific conditions of women's in Ukraine and Sudan; a few actions were associated to this output, and all actions were identified by the women organizations.

The joint peace-statement had as outcome, to show the armed forces in their countries, and to the international community, women strong interest to be officially part of peace negotiations from "day one" .

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The second output was about an on-line debate to design a joint training-curriculum, including a range of technical needs, to train women as peace-builders and mediators. The outcome of this joint curriculum is expected to create more understanding among WELP's women organizations, relative to the current norms and legislations of gender equality Resolutions.

The standard training curriculum will be used by the women leaders to train other women organizations in their country, creating a catalyzing effect that will empower women to push stronger to push for UN 1325 Resolution implementation.

This theory of change also includes an advocacy output, which is mainly around diffusing, and promoting the WELP's initiative through the hosting website of the *Scintille the Association for Gender and Peace* (www.genderandpeace.org).

Apart from this website, the information about WELP has been diffused also thanks to the websites of the beneficiaries' organizations, and by women leaders linked profiles and networks, including Facebook, and Twitter. Besides, WELP's initiative has been published in a few newspapers and magazine, aiming to reach an international public.

Overall, the diffusion of information about the Women in Equality for Lasting Peace has got many outcomes, among them, to inform the female public about the Sudanese and Ukrainian women's struggle and to gain growing empathy for the conflict's victims, hoping to find sponsors to support future peacebuilding actions. For example, the visibility and solidarity achieved within Rotary and the Rotary Peace Foundations deserve special mention.

In fact, the Italian and German Rotary districts expressed their interest to be involved in a fundraising campaign to continue the WELP's initiative, presenting a project proposal to Rotary Foundation Global Grant.

Methods and Design: (800words)

By cross-referencing strategies and focuses across outcomes, the results framework of a WELP's Strategic Plan enables an integrated approach. Also, our strategic plan was designed in partnership with women's organizations. It was designed in five steps, as represented in the pyramid below.

First, during our meetings Ukrainian and Sudanese leaders agreed on a common vision for this initiative. Then based on this vision, together, they selected some priorities and objectives associated with dynamics and tactics; finally, we agreed on how to manage, measure and evaluate this initiative.

The pyramid below shows how we connected the different parts of the Strategic Plan, starting from the vision and ending with evaluation, results, and impacts.

The Pyramid charts of the WELP initiative consists of a triangular chart broken up into horizontal pieces. In this pyramid chart below, the data point with the lowest value (management/evaluation) is represented by the broad base of the pyramid, while the data point with the greatest value (our vision) is represented by the narrowing apex.

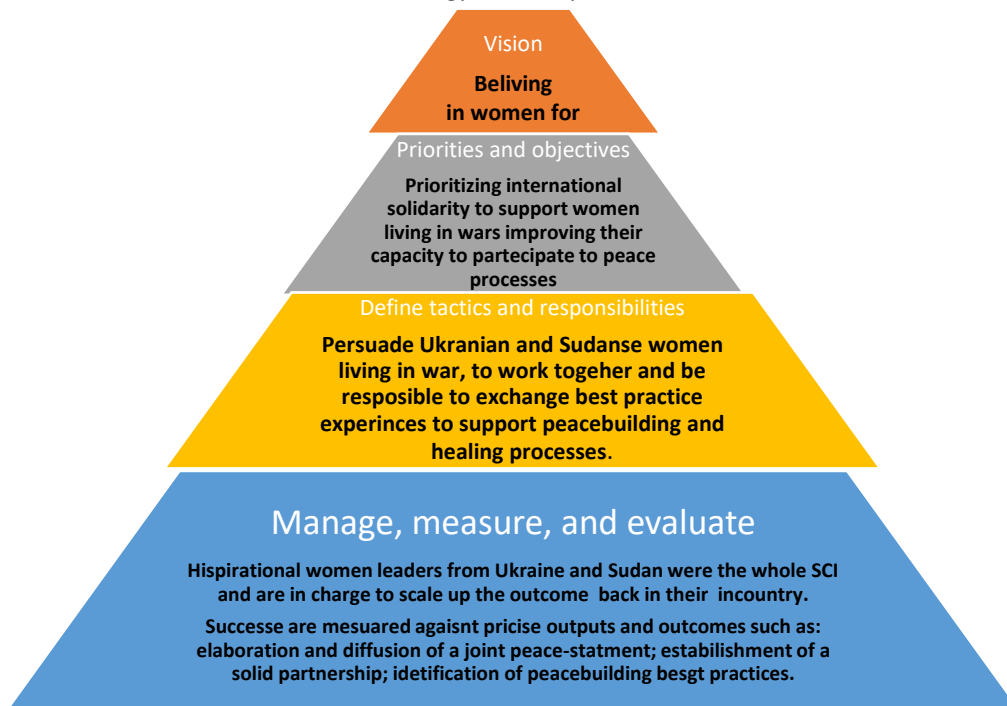
The Pyramid charts present points or steps in ascending order, perfectly aligning with the inherent nature of the process at hand.

In the definition of Pyramid parameters, we ensured that our vision, objectives etc. are attainable within a certain time frame. Moreover, the Pyramid parameters are SMART, meaning Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound. So that we can help identify areas for improvement, measure the effectiveness of interventions, and inform decision-making throughout the period of the initiative .

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Strategy Plan Pyramid



Design:

Methodologically, for the design of this initiative, a literature review desk study was adopted in the first instance. In essence, data from already existing resources such as documents, reports, interviews, statements, etc. were collected to obtain information about the current situation of women and peacebuilding in Ukraine and Sudan.

Secondly, a few field trips and in person interviews with women in Ukraine and Sudanese took place, travelling Ukraine and Uganda (where most of Sudanese leaders are living in exile), to capture their testimonials and views on the current involvement of women in peace processes.

This initiative's programmatic design is based on a bottom-up approach, meaning that the beneficiaries were consulted to define objectives, activities, and results. Also, beneficiaries reviewed fundings and helped with recommendations, which became the initiative milestones.

We represent the initiative's design as three wheels, each wheel refers to moments of the implementation cycle. In the graphic below we reported visually the design of the initiative.

First, there is the "wheel of activities" that pushes the "wheel of results", that in turn pushes the "wheel of the objectives", thus helping the whole mechanism to move forward. While evaluation and monitoring tools, represented by the light blue arrows in the graphic below, they accompany the three cycles of the initiative.

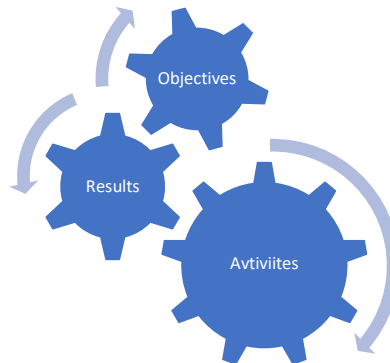
The objectives were designed by splitting them into short-term and long-term objectives. The short-term objectives were established by Sudanese and Ukrainians women peace activists in during their first virtual

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seminars and encounters. The WELP initiative's long-term goal was, instead based on Rotary values of international solidarity as an innovative tool to enhance the capacity of women's leadership in peacebuilding.

Graphic of the initiative's design.



The design of the results is directly linked to the objectives above, aiming to create a durable partnership between the women of Sudan and Ukraine, based on long-term experiences exchanges. More into specific, the women leaders of these two countries are becoming game changers, playing as “influencers” to strengthen women’s participation in peace processes in war contexts.

Finally, the activities were designed taking into consideration all the challenges, and obstacles that need to be overcome when working with organizations operating in war zones. Hence, most of the activities were designed in a virtual format, which would avoid the risk of exposing the women to unnecessary travel, and equally would allow them to meet in a safer space.

The evaluation design of this initiative is determined by the consistency of its fundings and the measurable impacts of its outcomes. Applying these two concepts, the evaluation of this initiative has been positive based on the positive feedback from the beneficiaries; actually, the women leaders of both countries not only agreed on issuing joint peace-statements, and getting standard curriculum for women leadership training, but expressed the desire to continue this initiative after the end of the Fellowship program, and they are ready to engage in fundraising for the second phase of the initiative.

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CHAPTER THREE

Interventions and Activities: (1200 words)

Two kinds of different interventions characterized this initiative; namely, the interventions in meetings and seminars by the select women organizations from Ukraine and Sudan, and secondly the interventions of the Peace Follower at international conferences and at the initiative's seminars.

The nature of women's organizations in Ukraine and Sudan largely influenced their interventions. The organizations that were called to be part of this initiative were selected based on some qualitative and quantitative criteria, ensuring that the groups selected, were the most pertinent to the goal of the Women in Equality for Lasting Peace initiative. Finally, each organization designated a leader to represent their organization. The leaders were designed freely by the organization it-self; the only condition we put was for the leader to be a fluent English speaker, because of communication purposes.

- As qualitative criteria for local organization to be included in this initiative, the organization must have demonstrated trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, reflexivity, and ethics.
- Concerning quantitative criteria, the local organization needed to have a sufficient size to represent women of various regions, ethnic groups, and interests; additionally, they need to being a national “influencer” with a considerable degree of political power, and having a national scale capacity of operations, if not international.

Furthermore, for the identification of the organizations, we identified three programmatic expertise that women organizations needed to have, to be part of this initiative. Capacity of advocating and reporting on human rights, with a special concern for GBV rights. Secondly, proved capacity building, and training skills to transfer know-how to the grassroots organizations, especially, women living in exile, refugees, and remote communities. Finally, leadership capacity, it was a must for women organization to be already part of policy decision-making mechanisms in a war zone, as e.g. ceasefire mechanisms, round tables for peace negotiations, international mediators, human rights investigators etc.

The following organizations were selected based on the above criteria:

for Ukraine, the Centre of Public Initiatives “Ideas for Change” (IfC) represented by Natali Novikova, Dom4828 represented by Natalya, and Olena Sulsova represented by Anastasia Nenka and Olena Suslova herself (funder of the organization).

The Sudanese team included: Women Against the War, represented by Samia Argawi, Sit Sitita NGO represented by Rabab Baldo, and Aliya Abdullah, Sudanese alumni of the Rotary Foundations (and Ex-Followers).

- **The Centre of Public Initiatives “Ideas for Change” (IfC)** is an NGO founded in November 2015, focused on developing innovative ideas for conflict transformation in Ukraine. This organization has intervened bringing considerable experience in the civil sector, think tanks, international organizations, and public institutions. IfC brought to the initiative and to the other women a new form of valuing women's participation as a “think & act & change tank.” For the “Women in Equality for Lasting Peace” IfC's focus on conflict transformation and regulation, sharing Ukraine's foreign policy, state decisions, development of public policies, support for the implementation of reforms, sustainable development of local communities, cultural diplomacy, gender equality, and support for leaders of change.

IfC is one of the co-initiators of the creation of a permanent platform for transnational and cross-contact line dialogue known as “Women’s Initiatives for Sustainable Peace, Dialogue, and Democracy”, which aims to rebuild trust through intensive dialogue and foster joint action on

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problem-solving. IfC helps WELP train women to become change agents for peace, inspiring others within their communities to actively engage in lasting peaceful coexistence.

The WELP benefits from the fact that IfC, in 2018, was recognized in the top 10 OSCE list of Ukrainian dialogues and the top 5 list of cross-contact line dialogues in the Donbas.

- **Olena Sulsova organization:** This organization helped with the joint statement publication on women's human rights and gender equality, thanks to their long experience in human rights activism. The WELP initiative also benefits from their experience within the CEDAW governmental and alternative reporting. Also, help to diffuse the initiative within their international network of women's organizations in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Burma, Georgia, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan; finally, Sulova organization is also part of the global peace network PeaceWomen Across the Globe – WikiPeaceWomen, to whom it has already been asked to publish the joint peace statement.
- **D.O.M.4824 organization,** is another partner of great value for the initiative. Based in the Western Ukrainian city they have been they provide to the WELP, knowledge sharing of their experience in assistance to IDPs. Dom 4828 has worked on this subject since Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea and backing of separatists in the eastern regions of Donetsk and Luhansk forced hundreds of thousands from their homes. They opened a shelter on February 24th and are happy to share with their colleague how they did it and used volunteers to organize fun activities for children living in the shelter. Additionally, they share their networking capacity to organize events for the adults to help them make connections in the local community, find jobs, and access other services.
- **Women Against War in Sudan** is a social peacebuilding organization comprised of Sudanese women from different parts of the world who share a common cause. WAW supports the initiative of its commitment to reject war and violence and to believe in unity in the efforts of women to achieve a peaceful society.
The intervention motivated their colleagues at WELP to recognize the importance and strength of women's role and their national responsibility to fight for peace. WAW helps the members of the WELP to design and advocate revendication for all citizens stressing the rights to live a decent life in a free and democratic homeland, declaring their rejection of the shameful war that kills daughters and sons, destroying honorable homeland, and condemn all the parties seeking to continue it.
Since the outbreak of fighting between the Sudanese army and the Rapid Support Forces, WAW denounced the human rights violations against civilians. They might share with the Ukrainian leaders, tips on compiling reports on the terrible deterioration in the health situation and the increased suffering of citizen's victims of the war inside their own homes or outside, while searching for help. Samia Arawi, the leader of the WAW organization, lives in exile in Uganda, where she participated in a seminar with Ukrainian colleagues, helping in the definition of the joint statement by diffuse among the international community and its international institutions, using her power and influence to seek an end to this war and provide relief to those affected.

Sit Sitita Sudanese NGO, is equally engaged in peacebuilding for Sudan, playing a major role in supporting the Sudanese refugees in Cairo, and her leader Rabab Baldo. Rabab is operating from Egypt together with the other colleagues. Sit Sitita's contribution to this initiative focuses especially on being a motivational leader advocating for the protection of civilians, especially women from SGBV. She is contributing to helping the WELP initiative to reach out to AU, LAS, and IGAD. WELP has merged an effort to support their appeal to advocate for a ceasefire in Sudan. The organization is also involved in the mediation and conflict resolution process, and we wish that in the in-person upcoming seminar, they will be our main trainer to ensure Sudanese and Ukrainian women's effective participation in gender provision in the Peace Processes.

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- **Sudanese Rotary Peace Foundation Alumni** Alia Abdalla Mohamed. - Alia's contribution to the Women in Equality for Lasting Peace initiative sits in her support of the Sudanese women living in settlement camps in Uganda. Alia works helping them to look for job opportunities, scholarships, etc. in a way to improve their economy and education so that will be easier for them to be involved in peacebuilding and conflict transformation. Alia brings to this initiative her commitment to the Rotary Positive Peace and helps to diffuse these values in the group.

Activities to implement the above-described interventions:

1. Online seminars Capacity Strengthen:

- i. Two online seminars have been organized. The first happened in December 2023 and the second in January 2024, three representatives from Ukraine and three from Sudan discuss the challenges of women in peacebuilding; including economic obstacles, low access to war political information, and male hostility to female involvement in decision-making processes.
- ii. Following this conversation, women agreed to present a joint statement at the Rotary Fellowship Capstone Conference on February 18th, 2024. The joint statement that will then be published on www.genderanspeace.com focuses on the frustration of Sudanese and Ukrainians for these endless wars and the weak engagement of the UN, and the international community to advocate for an immediate ceasefire.

Two field missions, one in Ukraine, and one in Uganda (to meet Sudanese women refugees) .

i. Filed mission in Ukraine.

In October, a field trip of 10 days was organized in Ukraine to familiarize myself with Ukrainian reality and to get to know in person the Ukrainian selected organizations. Several introductory meetings were held also with local stakeholders, such as UNWOMEN and the German Bell Foundation (Ukrainian Branch) NGO forum in Ukraine, to disseminate this initiative and connect it with current activities in the country.

ii. Filed mission in Uganda.

In February, a field trip of 10 days is planned in Uganda to familiarize with Sudanese women's reality and to get to know in person some of the Sudanese selected organizations. During this meeting in February, there will be a participation of Ukrainian leaders to share their experience relative to security protocol mandatory to women leaders to ensure their safety. Additionally, to that this meeting will be used to finalize the peace joint statement. Finally, several follow-up meetings will be held also with local stakeholders, such as UNWOMEN Uganda and NGOs, etc. to disseminate this initiative and connect it with current activities in the country.

2. The interventions of the Peace Follower at international conferences and to the initiative's seminars.

During these nine months, the Peace Follower has been working actively to promote the Women in Equality for Lasting Peace Initiative. Apart from the role of coordinator, intervening in all range of activities above mentioned, the Peace Follower also participated in following international events to promote the initiative.

- i. Promotion of the initiative through participation in three international peacebuilding events.

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- The Rome Institute Forum on the Conflict in the Mediterranean, organized by the Rotary Peace Foundation.
 - The Conference of the Global Rotaract (the youth branch of Rotary), on the simulating United Nations Model practicing the modus operandi of the Security Council, hold in Salerno, Italy in September 2023.
 - Finally, the Peace follower was also a speaker of honors at the Annual Conference of Rotary Districts, in Naples, Italy, in June 2023.
- ii. Promotion of this initiative through the diffusion of the WELPS's initiative in social media. The establishment of WELP's website pages hosted by the association Scintille, Gender and Peace Security, promoting the information about the women exchanges.
- Publication of the academic article on the Sudanese and Ukrainian women's struggle consequences of these bloody conflicts in various websites and other social Medias.
 - <https://www.genderandpeace.com/research-exploring-the-role-of-women-in-peace-processes-lesson-learned-from-ukraine-and-sudan/>.
 - Publication in social media and website of the Women Sudanese peace appeal statement for ceasefire (<https://www.genderandpeace.com/sudanese-women-peace-statement-to-igad/>).
 - Publication in social media and website Women Ukrainian peace appeal statement for ceasefire (<https://www.genderandpeace.com/ukriane-women-peace-statement/>).
 - Diffuse the Note on the Forum on the conflict in the Mediterranean, impacts of Ukrainian and Sudanese Refugees.
 - Publication in social media and website of the joint peace-statement

Key findings and impact: (800words)

Created awareness among the women organization of the WELP-

Established partnership between Olena Sulsova, Dom 4828, Women Against War, Sit Sitita, and Ideas for Change; nowadays, these organizations work together and contact each other for advisory purposes without the need of the Peace Fellow to coordinate. The partners are working together at possibility to create an own website for this initiative, which will be maintained by Ukrainian and Sudanese women organizations their selves.

Create awareness about women role in Sudan and Ukrainian conflict within European Rotarian community- Thanks participation of the Follower at the Rome Institute, in the Mediterranean Forum of the Rotary Peace Foundation in September 2023. It was possible to transborder the suffering Sudan and Ukraine women and their struggle in the international Forum. The whole public was touched and showed interest to support financially, future activities of the WELP initiative. Additionally, some of the organizations present at the Forum were happy to share on their website information about women struggles.

Furthermore, the Peace Follower has been invited to attend the Rotary and Unesco event on Peace and Environment in Paris next May 2024, all focused on positive peace. Plus, several Italian Rotary Clubs said, there would be interested to sponsor the WELP initiative for an in-person seminar in Italy, and they agreed to engage in a fundraising campaign to create a dedicate bank account for the Rotary to transform this initiative in longer term project.

Awareness created among the Rotarians of European Countries-

Following the Roma Institute Forum on the conflict in the Mediterranean Sea, several participants to the conference were interested keep following this imitative, an email list was created to share periodically updates on the initiative.

To add on the general awareness raising impacts, the Italian Ambassador in Uganda has been invited to the final event of the Peace Fellowship in Uganda, the Capstone event. Equally, colleagues of the Rotary district

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2101 have been sensitized presented the event in their next annual congress in June 2024. Furthermore, a few events and seminars to promote this initiative have been organized for November 2024 by the same Rotary District.

Connections with the Rotary Peace Foundation at Global level-

Thanks to the participation at international peace conferences, the initiative also received a discrete diffusion among the colleagues of the Rotary headquarters and received an invitation to apply for the Rotatory global grant to continue this initiative.

Sudanese and Ukraine women organizations are now aware of the Rotary's commitments with Peace and women leaders while promoting the Women in Equality for Lasting Peace initiative, also diffuse Rotary core values on Peace.

Impacts on the Makerere Peace Center-

The University of Makerere and the Peace Center remains one of the main stakeholders of this initiative.

This initiative is a great opportunity for the University to be exposed to the Ukrainian conflict and reflect on the connections between the African conflicts and the European ones. Hopefully, in the future there will be more Social Change Initiative that are creating connection between conflict happening in different countries and exchanges Globally Positive best practices based on Rotary values and approaches. An even more important, this is the first time that with in the international Rotary community we have created synergies and connection promoting the causes of women in countries in wars, through international solidarity.

Finally, this initiative sees collaboration between two Peace Followers from two different cohorts; Alia Abdulla, the Sudanese Peace Follower from Cohort 4, is playing a key role in supporting this Social Change Initiative of Sara Formisano, helping the Sudanese women refugees in Uganda participating to the initiatives, adding to her own involvement.

Therefore, the WELP initiative has got impacts in many directions, all these different collaborations, between women of different countries, Rotarian around the world, institutions, associations, and peace Followers etc. express the highest core values of the Rotary operationalizing the mission:

“We believe that individual efforts focus on individual needs, but combined efforts serve humanity”.

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CHAPTER FOUR

General Conclusion (300words)

This initiative has had the merit to show that, despite the systematic discrimination of women's contribution to peacebuilding, around the world, women believe in women, and trust that equal power for lasting peace is the major solution to stop the massive killing of civilians in the short- and long-term future.

During these months, we have been working in hard conditions, just to share a few examples, during our calls with Ukrainian ladies, airstrike alarms have been going in Ukraine, and we had to stop our calls to allow our colleagues to repair in bunkers. However, once the alarm finished, even more motivated than before the Ukrainian women would reschedule the calls, and start again with the same energy.

This initiative showed that the resilience of Sudanese women is equally strong than the one of the Ukrainian colleagues and their commitment to peacebuilding goes beyond any expectation. Most Sudanese women peace activists are refugees or exiled in Egypt and Uganda; despite that, they made huge remarkable efforts to be part of our meetings, sharing their ideas and give a free contribution, looking forward to elaborate a joint peace-statements, even when Sudanese war is escalating almost everywhere in country and hope for peace is brushed away by the constant shillings.

We also need to conclude that, by working together on peace statements; women from Sudan and Ukraine have given each other plenty of strength and energy. They promoted this collaboration in their own countries, reaching a national public and equally, international organizations, which would have been left out otherwise.

It can be said that this initiative pushed the limits of what we believed possible and so far, its results have been above expectations.

Ukrainians and Sudanese women are using the WELP's initiative to create awareness about their frustrations as women in wars, and to offer a range of solutions on conflicts impasses, showing that women empathy, solidarity, and resilience can play a role in peacebuilding initiatives, reanimating the concepts of gender balance in peace process for reconciliation, trauma management and healing processes.

Recommendations / implications for Policy: (500 words)

- Transform this initiative into a Global Grant project – Quoting Rotary values “*Working for human rights and international development inherently means being a part of something bigger than oneself*”. This initiative had the merit to show us that there are plenty of women whose sense of purpose is concentrated on helping others to live better lives, using their professional skills to make changes happen.

Even if these associations might be unaware of Rotarians' values, they operating as Rotarians implementing the concept of “*Serving above self*” a life standard. They are inspirational figures who deserve to be supported, both professionally and individually. This is one of the reasons why I strongly recommend this initiative be transformed into a project, and I appeal to the Rotarian Clubs to support us to present it for a Global Grant.

- Since the Rotary Foundation and the Uganda Makerere University spouse the “Service above self-ideal”, they should be delighted to continue advocate for international women solidarity with women in wars. Ukraine and Sudan are just two of the many countries currently suffering from cruel wars. Luckily, they have a leadership of women that despite all stand up and make the difference. I believe it a must to continue supporting them, also including them in the Peace Fellowship Program; additionally, I would recommend inviting some of the WELP's women (especially, Dott. Rabab Baldo, from Sudan, and Olena Sulsova, from Ukraine), to attend as testimonials the future Fellowships' Cohorts.

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Sustainability plan: (800words)

This initiative is people-based, and its sustainability plan is based on the need for women, in Sudan and Ukraine, to be part of their peace processes and play a role in conflicts transformation; therefore, women leaders' will is the main sustainable resources and the only sustainability plan of this initiative.

These women leaders firmly believe in the possibility that through their commitments, they can transform the conflict culture in their own countries, impacting women's involvement in peace processes. Additionally, they believe international solidarity among women could be an innovative tool to help other women in similar contexts elsewhere in the world.

**Women's organizations motivation as Sustainability approach-**

Ukrainian and Sudanese are motivated to work as game changers in their own countries; their motivation is a cornerstone of successful exchanges of experiences and the base of dialogues and discussions to explore new ways to overcome gender balance challenges caused by cruel wars.

Once again, motivation for change is reason why the partnership between the Sudanese and Ukrainian women is a sustainable long-term relationship, which will continue even after the end of this initiative.

Through this partnership, Ukrainian and Sudanese women are expecting that more women associations worldwide will learn from this experience and will scale-up gender international solidarity as peacebuilding good-practices to gain more power in political decision-making peace institutions.

Sustainability is ensured by the involvement of youth as “peace influencers”-

Some of the long-term goal of this initiative is to bring more women and younger leaders to conflict transformation, moving away from the traditional culture that impedes advancing with gender in peacebuilding initiatives. WELP promotes dialogue and discussion, and encourages women participants to create a synergistic effect for individuals and communities to spillover peacebuilding activities in surrounding communities even in remote zones.

The idea is to generate an interest, with a catalytic effect, in young girls generations of, who are part of girl worldwide that this initiative will relate to many other, international initiatives, including the Rotary Initiative Live no Girl Behind, creating opportunities for girls has the power to transform their futures.

Strategic relations with stakeholders to the sustainability of the initiative-

The sustainability of this initiative is also based on the incredible number of stakeholders supporting it. To start with each of the women's organization part of this initiative, have its network of stakeholders and a solid background on actions for the empowerment of women in peacebuilding. Oleana, Sulsva, Dom 4828, Ideas for Change, Sit Sitita, and Women Against the War, all collaborate with UNWOMEN and are already part of the advisory committees responsible for the Annual National Plan of Women Peace Security, in their respective countries.

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This allows this initiative to continue to gain visibility even after the official end of this project. Just to give some brief examples in the coming months the results of initiatives, in particular the peace statement will be diffused in the Rotary and UNESCO event in Paris on positive peace that will take place in May 2024.

Unique Implementation stakeholder of the Association for Gender and Peace Security

Moreover, this initiative is hosted and continues to be hosted by Scintille, the association for Gender and Peace Security, whose mission is to promote conditions to enable the resolution of conflict, reduce violence, and contribute to a durable.

Scintille occupies a unique role in this initiative as an implementer stakeholder: all activities on the Women in Equality for Lasting Peace are diffused in their webpages; so that the relevant topics of this initiative, can be shared online and be accessible to other organizations of women worldwide.

Additionally, Scintille has got a range of agencies and institutions, with whom the association collaborates, which are periodically informed on the achievement of this initiative. project.

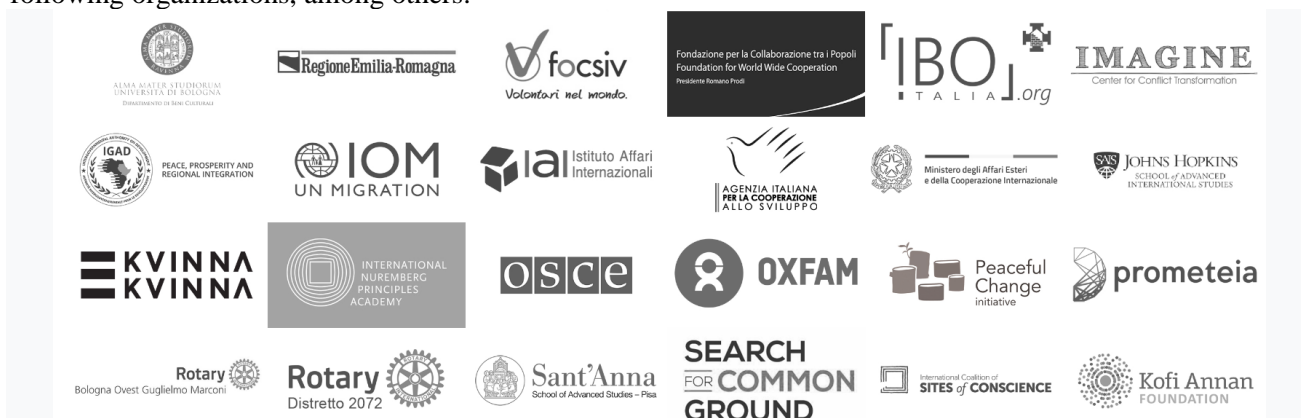
Sustainability, thinking on a second phase-

Additionally, there are a few ideas of possible fundraising that have been identified, to eventually transform the Initiative Women in Equality for Lasting Peace into an initiative, the first one concerns the possibility of applying to the Global Grant Call of the Rotary Foundation. In this regard, together with some clubs of the Italian Rotary District 2101, a fundraising campaign is taking place to host an in-person seminar in Italy, to bring together the leaders of the Sudanese and Ukrainian organizations to discuss the baseline and priority of a possible two years project focused on positive peace and women participation in conflict prevention.

Secondly, there is a plan to enter in touch with the Peace Agency organization, a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote conditions to enable the resolution of conflict, reduce violence and contribute to a durable peace across Europe, and the world.

The idea partner with this powerful Agency, which works

with several partners –from specialized agencies within the government to think tanks and NGOs– and ask for their support to promote Women in Equality for Lasting Peace. The range of partners and supports of this agency makes it an important key stakeholder in this initiative. Namely, the Peace Agency works with the following organizations, among others:



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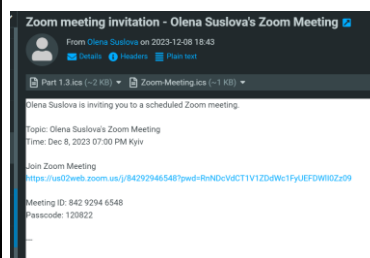
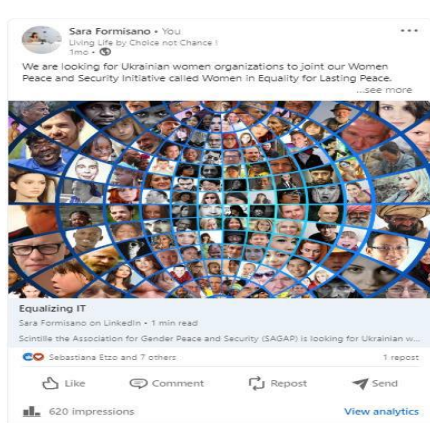
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APPENDICES

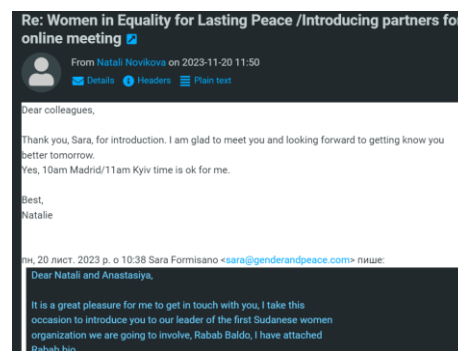
Evidences WELP initiative activities:

Evidence of Seminars and Capacity Building sections:

Following, from left to the right; Call for participations of Ukrainian NGOs to the WELP initiative in linked 620 visualizations. Second seminars January 16 -2024, with Peace Follower, Sudanese and Ukrainian leaders.



Emails exchange between Ukrainian and Sudanese organizations



El 2024-01-27 17:37, Anastasiya Nenka escribió:

Dear all,

Thanks for the great slogans!

Among those that we really liked:

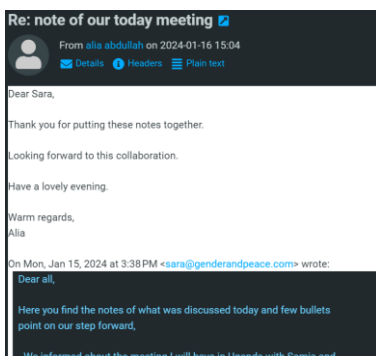
- "United Voices, Lasting Peace: Sudanese and Ukrainian Women Unite for Global Harmony"
- Harmony Unites: Sudanese and Ukrainian Women Paving the Path to Global Peace.
- Slogan: "Sisterhood for Peace: Sudanese and Ukrainian Women Unite Globally."
- Catchphrase: "From Our Hearts to the World: Peace Knows No Borders!"

We also provide information in two directions below:

The Beijing Platform (1985), the UNSCR 1325 (2000) gave us hope then, but today, after years of struggle and effort, we see that the global, security system is unable to restore peace and build lasting peace. We, women's groups around the world have done a lot to get these important global documents adopted, but our involvement in peace processes is still clearly insufficient today. Our frustration with the effectiveness of global tools for peace calls us to look for other ways, other partnerships, other actions. Women as peacebuilders, as peacekeepers, as mediators must be re-indicated, re-recognized, re-opened.

Warmly,

Anastasiya



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International Events to Promote WELP:

Participation to the Rotary Rome Institute Forum in September 2023, and to the Rotary International MUN hold in Salerno in September 2023. Meetings results posted in Linked in with more than 1000 visualizations.



FOSTER PEACE PROCESSES THROUGH THE MOTIVATION AND INVOLVEMENT OF WOMEN

Sara Formisano, Rotary Foundation Peace Fellow



INTRODUCTION - WOMEN ON EQUALITY FOR LASTING PEACE
Equal power between all genders is crucial to contributing to lasting peace. Since 2000, United Nations Resolution 1325 has required women to participate on an equal footing with men in peacebuilding. Despite all this, States still fail to implement the national agendas for peace and women's security necessary to achieve gender equality in peacebuilding. However, there are some positive experiences, which deserve to be recognized, focused on building trust in women's ability to make peace rather than strengthening it through military means.

GOALS

The idea of the initiative is that trained women can empower and motivate their local communities to join peace initiatives and social actions by transcending individual political, ethical and cultural differences, in favor of peaceful dialogues.

It's an opportunity to amplify and spread the success of women. From themselves to communities and beyond, women build empathy and create mutual understanding and solidarity among people in conflict.

RESULTS

This initiative aims to bring concrete results such that the women supported by WELP, in particular the six selected leaders, are included in peace processes and occupy decision-making positions in their field of experience in their own countries.

Furthermore, these women leaders in their countries will support local organizations, training new young leaders for positions within governments, non-state entities, political parties, etc. transferring their know-how into diplomacy and mediation.

WELP COLLABORATORS AND STAKEHOLDERS

The media and in particular the radio are the main external collaborators of the Women in Equality for Lasting Peace initiatives.

In Africa, to promote the joint work of Sudanese and Ukrainian women's organizations we intend to establish a partnership with Radio Tamazui, Radio Miraya and Radio Vision. In Europe we foresee a collaboration with Copy Mad, Radio 3 and Radio Vaticano.

CONCLUSIONS

The ancient Romans said:

"If you want Peace, prepare for War"

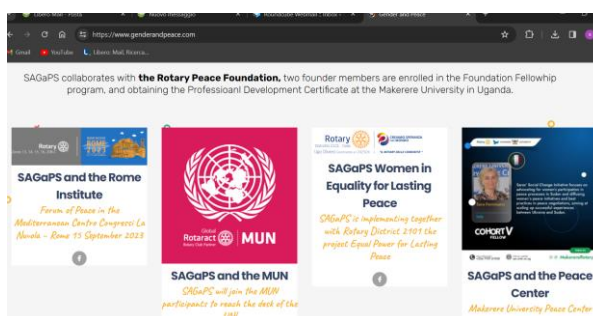
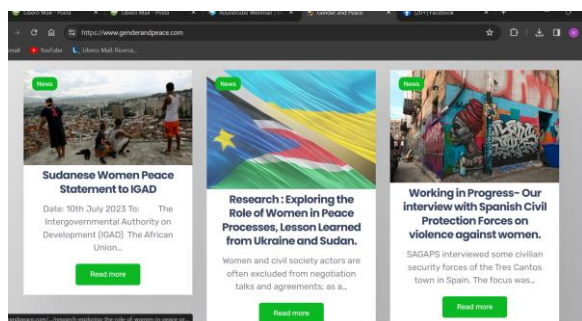
but today we all say together:

"If you really want Peace, prepare Peace"



Conclusions of the Forum. Group photo with some of the participants.

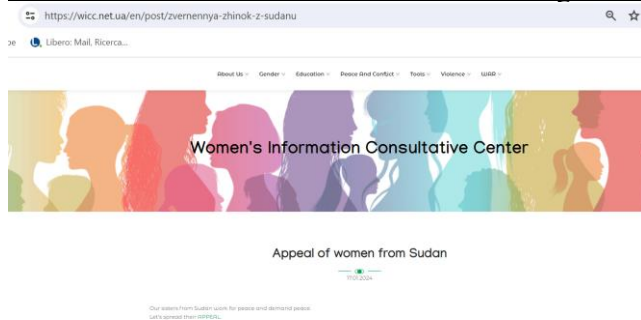
Evidences of publication of Sudan-Ukraine best practices exchanges published on the website. (www.genderandpeace.org).



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Evidence of Ukrainian Women Website hosting Sudanese peace-statements.



Women Leader Participants skills evidences

Biographies of the Ukrainian and Sudanese women leaders participating to this initiative. And copies of the official invitations and events happenings. The organization involved are for Ukraine Olvena Sulsova org., Women Dogma 4824 and Ukraine Women Initiative. Below some copies of the messages and email exchanged.

Rabab Baldo Bio;

Biographical data of Ms. Olvena Sulsova
Candidate from Ukraine to CEDAW

Name and first name: SOLOVIA Olvena

Date and place of birth: 22 April 1978, Odesa, Russia

Working languages: Ukrainian, English, Russian, Spanish, German

Current position/positions:
Gender Activity Coordinator (2007 to date) Partnership Development Project (Oslo State University)
Founder, Chair Board (1997 to date) Women's Information Consultative Center (Ukraine)

Main professional activities:
The main activities of Ms. Sulsova's work about 20 years address women's human rights advocacy, training on gender sensitivity and gender mainstreaming, gender analysis of legislation, consultation on individual cases of gender discrimination, preparing publications on women's human rights and gender equality. Human rights activist since 1990s. Contributed to the CEDAW government and legislative reporting. Member of the Advisory Council on the Parliament Committee on Human Rights. Experienced in international training: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Burma, Georgia, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan. Initiated the Empowering Education project – Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Girls and Boys (gender education) were expanding. Author and editor of more 70 articles, manuals and other publications.

Educational background:
Ukrainian Academy of International Trade, Master Degree on International Law (Master work thesis is on UN Peace-keeping Operations), 2003
National University of Kyiv – Mykhailo Andriyenko in collaboration with Tempus – Tacis Program, Research in Social Work and Social Policy Centre, 1999
CEU Institute University, Conflict Transformation, Transversal Approach Course, 1999
Odesa Polytechnic Institute, Civil Engineer Degree, 1979

Other main activities in the field relevant to the mandate of the treaty body concerned:
Expert, UNDP, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2009 on gender mainstreaming, training, consultation, Coordinator of about 30 research, advocacy, informational projects of the Women's Information Consultative Center (1997 – 2012). Leader of the team on Equal Opportunity Law comment, The Gender Strategy, Platform, Coordinator, Author of training on the CEDAW and OP CEDAW implementation and monitoring. Member of the Expert Commission on Gender Discrimination at the Ministry of the Affairs of Family and Youth.

List of most recent publications in the field:
Protecting women and children by judicial and law enforcement bodies in Ukraine, (co-author), Co-TRIS Project – 2010
Equal Opportunities Law – comment (co-author), UNDP, 2009.

Rabab Baldo is a prominent figure in Sudan, who worked for gender and inclusivity at a very early age, when she led the engendering peace process in Sudan in 1990s, where she and other Sudanese women pioneers worked to bring women's voice, needs, and inspiration in the Sudan peace processes (Comprehensive Peace Agreement that dealt with North-South Conflict, Darfur Peace Agreement both Abuja and Doha that focused with Darfur conflict, and East Sudan Peace Agreement in Kuwait that focused on East Sudan Conflict)

Ms. Baldo worked with various UN agencies in more than 15 countries in 3 regions Africa, Asia and the Middle East. She worked as a Senior Gender & Inclusivity Advisor in the Office of the IGAD Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan. She is a prominent figure in mediation and conflict resolution process, through this position she pushed and ensure South Sudanese women effective participation that resulted in gender provision in the Revitalized Peace Agreement and in post agreement mediations processes. Recently she supports the Ethiopian women to champion WPS agenda in Ethiopia and strengthen them to participate in the peace process.

Dr. Rabab is one of the vocal voices that always prefer to play critical role behind that scene, to make things work. She is a strong advocate for equality in peace processes especially in amplifying women voices and participations in conflict resolution structures and processes.

Dr. Rabab is a member of FEMWISE - The Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation, officially referred to as FemWise-Africa, she established the Sudan FEMWISE Chapter. She is also a member of various peace, WPS and mediations network at national, regional and globally.

Dr. Rabab has been active in solving the recent conflict in her country Sudan, she is advocating for the protection of civilian specially women from SGBV. She reached out to AU, LAS and IGAD to advocate for ceasefire in Sudan. Dr. Rabab played da major role in supporting the Sudanese refugees in Cairo.

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¹ It should be noted that membership in the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women requires participation in two two annual sessions of three weeks duration, plus participation (on a rotating basis) in a year-session working group of one week in respect of each session.