

Building Holistic Security

Addressing Security Risks of Women Peacebuilders Through Partnerships

CASE STUDY: TANZANIA

Highlighting how recognition and common vision can help mitigate security risks to women peacebuilders

This case study is part of the Building Holistic Security: Addressing Security Risks of Women Peacebuilders Through Partnerships report created by the Women PeaceMakers program.

Addressing the risks women peacebuilders face

Women peacebuilders inevitably face risks and insecurity in their daily work. International partners have an important role to play in supporting their safety and protection. Understanding women peacebuilders' roles and the types of risks they face is the first step in ensuring an adequate response. This case study forms part of the [Building Holistic Security: Addressing Security Risks of Women Peacebuilders Through Partnerships](#) report, focused on how international partners can better partner with women peacebuilders to address the risks and insecurity they face in the different facets of their work.

The report addresses how international partners who wish to work with women peacebuilders and support them in addressing the risks and insecurity they face need to recognize the scope and nature of peacebuilding work, which is often cross-cutting, overlapping with humanitarian response and development work. Understanding the nuances and breadth of women peacebuilders' work is crucial to identifying the risks they face and providing them with effective legal, political and financial protection — and is thereby essential to creating partnerships that mitigate and address these risks.

This report is co-created as part of the Women PeaceMakers Fellowship, led by the voices and perspectives of the 2020-2021 Women PeaceMakers Fellows. This report provides both a global analysis and context-specific case studies.

Since 2002, the Kroc IPJ has hosted the Women PeaceMakers Fellowship program. The Fellowship offers a unique opportunity for women peacebuilders to engage in a cycle of learning, practice, research and participation that strengthens peacebuilding partnerships. The Women PeaceMakers Fellowship facilitates impactful collaborations between women peacebuilders from conflict-affected communities and international partner organizations. The Fellows also co-create research intended to shape the peacebuilding field and highlight good practices for peacebuilding design and implementation. This case study was created as part of this process and is also featured in the full [Building Holistic Security: Addressing Security Risks of Women Peacebuilders Through Partnerships](#) report.



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Tanzania

Case Study: Strengthening participatory approaches in partnerships

CASE STUDY

By Ambassador Liberata Mulamula and Tatu Mkiwa Nyange

Highlighting how recognition and common vision can help mitigate security risks to women peacebuilders



Context

Tanzania is considered one of the most peaceful countries in Africa. According to the 2022 Global Peace Index, Tanzania ranks 91st out of 163 countries globally.¹ Tanzania has historically occupied a leadership position in promoting regional cohesion, peace and security in eastern and southern Africa, the Great Lakes Region and beyond.² The country is the 13th-largest and 7th-largest contributor to UN³ and African Union (AU) peacekeeping, respectively, including stationing women at the forefront.⁴

The global Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda recognizes that international peace and security are inextricably linked to gender equality and women's leadership.⁵ In 2020, Tanzania launched a development process to create a Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan (NAP) to enhance inclusion of women in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.⁶ The process of developing the National Action Plan on WPS is in progress, under the collaborative leadership of the Government of Tanzania and the Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation (MNF) with UN Women and support from different stakeholders,⁷ including the embassies of Denmark, Canada and Finland.

Peacebuilding in the Tanzanian context includes peacefully resolving conflicts and differences at family and community levels. It also involves addressing land-use and resource-related conflicts (particularly around water and mining), which regularly result in violence, abuse, trespassing, killing of livestock and loss of property. Clashes between farmers and pastoralists over land and water are an ever-growing problem in Tanzania and the region.⁸ Inspired by their deep understanding of local realities, local women peacebuilders in Tanzania engage, frequently independently, in conflict resolution and peacebuilding at local levels. However, they rarely recognize their own skills and capacities and are often neither recognized nor honored for their work in this field. They face challenges and risks, including violence, harassment and rejection by their own communities.



Key findings

“We believe that peace begins at home and that global peace cannot be achieved without advocating peace in the family, where the lawyers, farmers, teachers and presidents are born. Learning about the value of peacemaking at an early age will make peacebuilders in the future.” — Woman peacebuilder, Global Peace Foundation, Dar es Salaam⁹

Women in Tanzania contribute to peacebuilding at all levels of society, but the term “women peacebuilders” is rarely used and little known. Local women peacebuilders are those who work to promote peace at the household level, with their families, as well as at the community, national and sometimes international levels. Like other women in Tanzania, they face multiple challenges, including gender stereotyping, inequality, abusive language and aggression from their male counterparts, and isolation from their peers. At the same time, women peacebuilders are able to use their place in their communities and culture to influence situations, as noted by this representative of the Tanzania National Committee for Prevention of Genocide:

Women peacebuilders are actually very powerful. In some cultures, we tend to think that women “have no voice.” But they have some best practice. For example, in a Maasai community where the women group turned the otherwise tense situation into a peaceful meeting. It was a fact-finding mission into what led to a violent conflict with loss of lives and properties. The Maasai youths were accused of taking part, and they were very defensive. During the meeting they came prepared for violence. Just then, a women group arrived in a kind of peaceful demonstration. The youths gave way for the women to sit; and when the meeting was getting hot, with the youths threatening to start chaos, the women will just stand up and do some sign known to their culture and all the youths go back to their place.¹⁰

The importance of partnerships

The role local women peacebuilders attribute to their work in Tanzania is to stand up and act to reconcile families and communities. At the same time, peacebuilding involves ongoing awareness-raising with victims of violence and perpetrators of different forms of Gender-Based Violence (GBV). However, women peacebuilders noted in interviews that they generally lack even enough funds to purchase smartphones that would enable them to use social media and share the process and results of their work, hence remaining invisible and vulnerable.¹¹ They also find that access to existing funding is challenging. The peacebuilders highlighted how they are invited to participate in meetings and events organized by national or international organizations and are asked to speak up and share their opinions, but they rarely manage to tap directly into funding. A representative of Women Fund Tanzania (WFT) noted, “National organizations and local women peacebuilders don’t know how to articulate their agenda, according to funders, and sometimes their [funders’] priorities do not align with realities on the ground.¹²”

Some participants in this study feel excluded from funding processes, as funds are channeled through third parties that have a reputation for knowing how to handle larger funds, such as UN Women and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs).¹³ Funds rarely trickle down. One interviewee said, “Funders tend to work with the same national organizations, while individual peacebuilders and smaller organizations find it hard to survive. When women peacebuilders try to fit donor objectives, this often leads to competition between them rather than competency, reducing efficiency and impact of their work.”¹⁴ Conversely, participants from larger organizations consider that calls for proposals are transparent and sufficiently accessible to all.

When the government offices or organizations need local peacebuilders’ support, they ask village leaders or the Local Government Authority (LGA) for advice, and women are often not represented in those offices. The criteria for identifying partnerships with local peacebuilders depend on local customs and authorities. Only when women become members of the Ward Reconciliation Committee, for example, can they obtain a peacebuilder’s profile and participate in national or international peacebuilding dialogues, forums or village meetings. Tanzanian women paralegals become visible when acting as human rights defenders for those whose rights have been violated, helping the survivors to seek justice from court or gender desk offices.

Creating strong partnerships bolsters the effectiveness of peacebuilding work and unifies solidarity and institutional support. Partnerships entail mutual learning, empowering rather than undermining internal actors, and capitalizing on local knowledge and skills.¹⁵ One participant stated, “Effective partnership models occur when there is good tripartite relationship between the local and international organization and the government,”¹⁶ mutual understanding and equal relationship between the parties.

However, few local women peacebuilders reported being able to establish partnerships with international organizations, and, when partnerships exist, they feel that the relationship is not balanced. One noted, “I see a gap between us, we are not equal in partnership. We have more knowledge compared to them.”¹⁷ Yet, representatives of larger organizations expressed the opinion that “they do try to make partners own processes, involve them in the decision-making and implementation and encourage local actors to share views.”¹⁸ Partnerships and international support generate positive impacts, legal aid, training, equipment, increased security and better visibility for the work of peacebuilders, so creating transparent and mutually beneficial partnerships is critical.

“Effective partnership requires both partners to have existing trust and transparency; ownership and commitment; a shared sense of purpose and vision with a common understanding of mutual benefit and existence of trust environment in which partners can share successes, failures and challenges.” — Woman representative, Global Peace Foundation (GPF)¹⁹



Conclusions and recommendations

The way forward to improve engagement with local women peacebuilders, facilitate safety and security and support the efficiency and impact of their work is to promote a more participatory approach, create both bottom-up and top-down consortia and strengthen networking with national (such as the Tanzania Media Women Association [TAMWA], the Tanzania Gender Network Program [TGNP] and Women Fund Tanzania [WFT]) and international organizations. Local women peacebuilders should be supported as they work to place themselves “on the map,” become more visible, and gain direct access to financial and technical assistance from international organizations. International organizations should contextualize their priorities to improve the equality of partnerships and plan their activities in direct alignment with women peacebuilders at the grassroots level.

In light of this case study’s findings, international partners should:

- Prioritize equal partnerships with local peacebuilders and provide technical and financial assistance with managing funds and writing reports.
- Fund grassroots organizations directly rather than channeling their funding through third parties.
- Provide capacity strengthening to local women peacebuilders to improve their networking skills with national and international stakeholders and to place themselves “on the map.”
- Ensure that partnerships are equal and that programming priorities are created in collaboration with local women peace leaders.
- Share activities, experiences and lessons learned with local women peacebuilders.

Endnotes

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- 11 Interview with woman representative of Tanzania Building Future Organization (TABUFO), Mtwara, Tanzania, November 26, 2021.
- 12 Interview with woman representative of Women Fund Tanzania, Dar es Salaam, November 15, 2021.
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- 16 Interview with woman representative of UN Women, Dar es Salaam, November 19, 2021.
- 17 Interview with woman representative of Women Fund Tanzania, Dar es Salaam, November 15, 2021.
- 18 Interview with woman representative of the Tanzania National Committee for Prevention of Genocide, Dar es Salaam, December 10, 2021.
- 19 Interview with woman representative of the Global Peace Foundation, Dar es Salaam, November 6, 2021.





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