Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights



# Toward a Transformative Women, Peace and Security Agenda

The Inaugural "Feminist Roadmap for Sustainable Peace" Workshop

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# **Workshop Participants**

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**Cynthia Enloe** is Research Professor at Clark University. She has published twelve books on the workings of patriarchal cultures and institutions around the world, with a particular interest in women's organizing to challenge myriad forms of militarization.

**Kade Finnoff** is an Assistant Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Boston. Her work focuses primarily on countries emerging from violent conflict and gendered violence. She has been technical consultant for UNDP, UNIFEM and UN Women.

**Paola Foschiatto** has over a decade of experience as a Programme Manager and Gender Specialist working with public institutions, civil society organizations and UN agencies.

**Kyoko Kusakabe** is an Associate Professor at Gender and Development Studies, Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Thailand, and before that, an NGO worker in Cambodia. She researches gender issues in labour migration, women in informal economy and border trade.

**Luz Mendez** took part in the Guatemalan peace negotiations, and was on the National Council for the Implementation of the Peace Accords. She was a member of the UN High Level Advisory Group for the Global Study on the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

**Laura Mitchell** is a senior adviser at the Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre (NOREF) where she works geographically on the Middle East and North Africa (Iraq, the Gulf, Egypt and Libya) and thematically on gender and inclusivity.

**Christina Murray** is a member of the Mediation Support Standby Team in the Mediation Support Unit of the UN's Department of Political Affairs. She is also Professor of Human Rights and Constitutional Law at the University of Cape Town.

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# Introduction

In June 2015, fifteen feminist scholars, policy makers and practitioners met in Oslo, Norway, for the augural workshop of the Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights' project to create a "Feminist Roadmap for Sustainable Peace." Brought together by the Consortium and the Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre (NOREF), the participants hailed from and worked in multiple regions of the world. Some were experts on gender, war and peacebuilding, but others' professional lives were not framed around these issues, focusing instead in areas such as climate disruption, development, disaster risk reduction, urban planning, constitutional law, economics, and women's reproductive health and rights.

The motivator for the workshop, and for the Feminist Roadmap for Sustainable Peace project as a whole, was concern that the so-called Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda, even if it were ever full-implemented, would not achieve the core goal of those who initiated the agenda – the realization of gender-equitable, sustainable peace. There are multiple ways to frame why that would be the case. One would be to note that the WPS agenda does not address root causes. It is not based in an analysis of the intertwined historical, political, economic processes that cause and fuel wars in the first place, and it thus does not address the ways these same political economic processes affect the possibilities for transforming unequal power relations after a war is formally brought to an end.

Another way to see it is that the WPS agenda focuses tremendous energy on trying to ensure that women are at the table, with little attention to the question of what they put on the table; that is, what rights, what mechanisms, what forms of governance will they need to advocate for if they are to achieve their (presumed) goals of greater gender equality in a more sustainably peaceful society? There seems to be a general assumption that they will fight for women's political, economic and social rights, and the rights of other marginalized groups, but insufficient discussion of what would make the realization of those rights possible. If, for example, women at the table sought to guarantee women's right to own land and to inherit property, and if they succeeded in enshrining these rights in a post-war constitution, that would still be very far from enabling women to enjoy those rights, for many reasons: there are local and national factors, from the need for community-level knowledge and acceptance of those rights, to the necessity of creating, institutionalizing and funding real implementation mechanisms (which often doesn't happen, even when land reform is part of the peace settlement). And, equally if not more critically, especially at this historical moment, there are transnational factors, in the form of extractives corporations, agribusiness companies, development banks and international financial interests who, for a variety of reasons, seek access to the land in a series of more or less violent, legal, transparent and coercive ways; the result is that land dispossession is rampant in many post-war countries. In short, while the formal guarantee of women's or indigenous people's land rights is important, unless that broader set of economic relations, decisions about land acquisition laws, resource ownership, management and exploitation are addressed, it will not be enough.

Thus, the premise of the Feminist Roadmap for Sustainable Peace (FRSP) project is that while the WPS Agenda tends to focus on national political processes, it is very often transnational economic actors and processes that have an even greater impact on the lives of people in post-war states, on the structural inequalities that were conflict's drivers, and on the

likelihood that peace can be sustained. The purpose of the FRSP's first workshop was to try to identify the most important transnational actors, processes and dynamics that have shaping effects in post-war countries, and to begin to think-through what women, and men, who seek gender-just, sustainable peace need to know about them, so that if the chain of "ifs" (if we achieve women's political participation, if these women get into positions where they have some amount of influence, if they want to use that influence for the purpose of transforming unequal gendered power relations) were to become a chain of actual events, they would be better able to achieve their goals.

# Our Approach

The workshop, which took place over three days of presentations, brainstorming discussions and structured exercises, generated rich analyses and pathways forward. The richness, we are convinced, resulted from our specific theoretical and methodological approach:

**Feminist political economy approach.** We made a conscious effort to ground our analyses in the material realities of women's lives, and how their life chances are determined by intertwining political and economic processes and decisions.

Collaborative cross-sectoral co-design. The complexity, scales and diversity of interests and analysis required for bringing about gender-equitable sustainable peace indicate the need for new ways of producing knowledge and innovative policy alternatives. Our methodology was based on the assumption that when you bring people together from academic, practitioner and policy worlds, with diverse areas of expertise and different country-specific experience, you not only get new perspectives, but you generate new multidimensional understandings and engender creative solutions to problems.

Indeed, one outcome of our approach was that a wide range of topics not normally on the agenda in WPS discussions came to the fore as centrally important to gender-equitable sustainable peacebuilding; these included macroeconomic policy and public finance mechanisms, the breakdown of the climate, the financialization of international development, natural resource management, land accession policy and agricultural practices, and urban and community planning. Not only were the topics broader than the WPS norm, but cross-cutting areas of expertise and conceptual approaches were brought to bear on each of them. Most rewardingly, new insights resulted from the conversations, debates and exchanges that transpired; the approach was catalytic in generating innovative frameworks for thinking about and achieving gender-equitable sustainable peace.

This workshop report, for reasons of space, will not address the entire range of topics and issues covered during the three days; instead, it highlights just two areas of our discussion, the rebuilding of physical infrastructure and the deepening of extractivism. It also draws out two of the themes that ran through both, and through much of the rest of the workshop: the sidelining of the state and the impact of and on climate change. The report thus both conveys new insights into how to create a gender-equitable sustainable peace and demonstrates the value of our theoretical and methodological approach.

# **Rebuilding of Physical Infrastructure**

Infrastructure is often categorized as "hard" (e.g., transportation, energy, water) or "soft" (e.g., healthcare, education, housing). Our focus in the workshop was on the rebuilding of 'hard,' physical infrastructure after war. Partly this is because its importance has been far less analyzed and emphasized within the women's rights and WPS communities than soft infrastructure; additionally, soft infrastructure itself cannot be accessed without it (e.g., women cannot get their children to school or themselves to health clinics without roads and public transportation). But equally if not more importantly, we chose hard infrastructure because it is one of those central aspects of post-war reconstruction which is typically framed as technical, gender neutral, and urgent; something that has to be done *before* you start addressing "women's" or "gender" issues – but it is actually deeply gendered in its drivers and impacts, and can easily cement gendered inequalities into place before gender even gets onto the agenda.

As outlined above, our participants were not chosen on the basis of having expertise on infrastructure, although infrastructure was a part of what several addressed in their work. But we thought that if the multidimensional experience and perspectives brought by the very diverse experts in the room was brought to bear on the issue, we might learn new things about what people in post-war settings need from infrastructure and about the impacts of the ways infrastructure is currently planned, financed and built.

If women are to be able to participate in post-war social, political and economic life, they need, at a minimum, safe, affordable, reliable and environmentally-sustainable means of travel – not only to access schools and healthcare facilities, but also to get their goods to market, to access other forms of livelihoods, to access justice and governance institutions. They also need safe, affordable, reliable and environmentally-sustainable energy and water supplies, so that they are not spending the majority of hours every day collecting firewood or water.<sup>1</sup>

The contributions of workshop participants indicated how far short of these goals we currently fall. The typical emphasis in post-war reconstruction is on major highways aimed at facilitating the movement of goods to ports and airports for export. Highways and railways are "corridors of extraction," aimed at facilitating growth of GDP and profit generation, rather than meeting local people's needs.<sup>2</sup> Another aim of roadbuilding in some post-war countries is to make it easier for state militaries to pacify or suppress rebellion. This may or may not be beneficial for women and other civilians but, either way, women's needs are not what is driving infrastructure development.

Indeed, the focus on major highways can undermine women's livelihoods, such as when their traditional routes are blocked and their communities made less safe. One of the biggest hurdles facing girls getting to school in post-war Guatemala, for example, was unsafe rivers, but rural roads and bridges were not prioritised in the country's post-war reconstruction. The

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> These points are recognized by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Gender is mentioned in one of the targets of SDG 11, which aims to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Women's and girls' needs for safe, affordable water and energy are addressed in goals 6 and 7. And that infrastructures should be sustainable is recognized in SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation. See <a href="http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-and-the-sdgs">http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-and-the-sdgs</a>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See http://www.thecornerhouse.org.uk/resource/how-infrastructure-shaping-world

failure to prioritize safe rural transportation limited women's political and economic lives as well; the lack of passable roads and safe ways to cross rivers made it more difficult for women in rural villages to mobilize, or participate in or advocate in regional or national political processes or to access livelihoods. Workshop participants added examples from other areas of the world. New superhighways in areas of Pakistan block the routes that women had used to access markets, so now it takes them four times as long to get to the market and back. And new flyovers do not allow donkey carts or motor bikes – the forms of transportation used by non-elites. In post-war areas of Sub-Saharan Africa, many women want better roads, as they want to be able to trade crops and live their lives in safety, but they tend to want paved rural feeder roads, not a highway to the capital city designed for monocropping agribusinesses to export their goods.

Giant hydroelectric projects were also scrutinized by workshop participants, who noted that these projects are typically designed to power industry and facilitate resource extraction, and usually offer nothing in the way of household energy supply. The aim of the massive infrastructure projects that attract private foreign investment is not to bring light and water to communities that lack them, but rather to ensure accelerated extraction, production, consumption and export. As with transport, when the starting point is "what do we need for economic growth?" rather than "what do people need?", women and girls tend to be disadvantaged. The lack of household energy supply has a tremendous impact on women's and girls' time and care burdens, as well as their health and safety; its provision could thus greatly enhance their potential to participate in social, political and economic life.

The priority given to massive infrastructure projects such as dams, similar to that given to highways, is often detrimental to women's livelihoods. The displacement of communities for massive infrastructure projects has been well-documented since the 1960s and 70s, but it continues to happen. In response to protests, multilateral development banks insist they have "safeguards" or compensation packages which ensure those people who are dislocated can maintain the same level of livelihood. In practice, though, there are a number of problems:

- the compensation packages are rarely fully implemented
- the "safeguard" only applies to people who are dislocated, neglecting secondary impacts, such as, in the example of dams, those who are not displaced but who live downstream of the river
- when people get displaced to another village area, it can create tension and/or exacerbate work burdens, and destroy social networks
- compensation does not address the environmental damage caused by such major infrastructure projects

Crucially for the WPS agenda, the displacement of communities has particular yet rarely-acknowledged impacts on women:

- women's livelihoods are more connected to upland and forests, so when dislocation happens the impact on women is larger
- relatedly, the relocation is normally treats the household as a unit, but when all the compensation is given to "the household," women are often disadvantaged

Nor is the widespread displacement and destruction of livelihoods ameliorated by new employment. Participants noted that few major infrastructure projects hire local staff, and if they do, it is rarely women. Although the International Labor Organization (ILO) has been trying, through employment guarantee programs, to ensure that a certain percentage of jobs on infrastructure projects must go to women, they have found it hard for a number of reasons, including cultural norms and gendered responsibilities of care. Meanwhile, these projects can threaten women's security in many contexts, as the sudden influx of male workers leads to spikes in gender-based violence against women.

Environmentally, not only do major infrastructure projects lead to massive environmental degradation at the site, but the building of these corridors of extraction means long-term locking-in of the current extractivist development model, with all that means for climate breakdown

Infrastructure projects today are increasingly funded through private finance and public-private partnerships (PPPs). Recent research shows that the major infrastructure sector is "experiencing the 'biggest investment boom in human history', with some \$6-9 trillion annually (8 per cent of global GDP) devoted to mega, giga and tera (million, billion, and trillion) dollar projects." These massive infrastructure projects are seen as a major engine of global economic growth, as well as a huge profit-making opportunity. So we are increasingly witnessing the financialization of infrastructure funding, with PPPs being pushed as a key mechanism. The public contribution comes from to pension, insurance and sovereign wealth funds. This is a funding model which socialises the risk whilst privatizing the gains. Risks are transferred to the pensioners of the global north, and, given the potential for huge debt burdens, onto the governments of post-war countries. Profits, thanks to the guarantees offered to private firms in order to get them to invest, accumulate in the coffers of the already-rich.

Participants noted in addition that we cannot discount the role of dominant ideals of masculinity in driving the return to extreme infrastructure, given the scale, profit-generating potential and geographical engineering at play. Working on massive physical infrastructure offers technological challenges and an enormous concentration of power that are exciting for some, in much the same way as working on nuclear weapons appears to be.

Given this look at post-war reconstruction of physical infrastructure – one based in a feminist political economy approach that crosses academic/practitioner siloes as well as academic disciplines –what sort of ideas could women bring to the table in order that things could be done differently? Participants made several suggestions.

- Involve women in infrastructure planning, and strengthen women's groups to participate more effectively, from the Post-Conflict Needs Assessment stage onwards.
- Ensure that government at all levels engages in gender-responsive analysis, planning and budgeting, in general and regarding infrastructure. States should be charged with planning and delivering infrastructure, rather than letting corporations influence

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>Alexander, Nancy. "The World Bank: In the Vanguard of an Infrastructure Boom." Heinrich Böll Stiftung, 2015. https://us.boell.org/2015/02/03/world-bank-vanguard-infrastructure-boom.

- decisions about what is needed, where and when, but states must be required to carry out gender analysis, planning and budgeting first.
- Physical infrastructure should be funded by the state, to avoid the distorting influence
  of private corporations who will always privilege their profit over people's needs.
  Resources can be found through addressing capital flight, cancelling odious debts, and
  instituting tax regimes which are both more lucrative and just, including taxing the
  international community, and adding financial transaction taxes and other
  redistributive measures.
- Meaningful Gender Impact Assessments should be conducted on all infrastructure projects. By meaningful, they should go beyond simple box-ticking requirements such as jobs for women or obvious impacts on women and raise the issues discussed here: does the infrastructure help women and other marginalised groups to participate in social, political and economic life?
- Meaningful Environmental Impact Assessments should also be conducted on all infrastructure projects. Questions must include whether the project contributes to or helps avoid climate breakdown.

## Extractivism

One of the workshop participants, Luz Mendez, participated in the Guatemalan peace negotiations as a member of the Political-Diplomatic Team of the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity. She described what took place in Guatemala after the signing of the peace agreement: the rapid advance of land expropriation and the installation of mega mining projects, open-pit mining, and monoculture for agro-exportation. For the post-war state, the extraction and export of natural resources is seen as significant source of revenue; for donors, it is a central way of stabilizing the economic system; and for multinational and transnational corporations (MNCs and TNCs), obviously, a chief source of profit. Many scholars have documented the harm that extractive industries have caused to people and land, in Latin America<sup>4</sup> and beyond<sup>5</sup>. Participants in the workshop highlighted neglected pieces of the story.

Luz highlighted the role that sexual violence played in clearing the land for extractivism in post-war Guatemala. In 2007, hundreds of private guards of the Guatemalan Nickel Company, a subsidiary of the Canadian Hudbay Minerals, together with officers of the police and the army, violently evicted an indigenous peasant community, Lote Ocho, in the North East of Guatemala. They burned houses and crops and brutally gang-raped all the women in multiple ways, often in front of their children; many of them became pregnant. Luz's account demonstrated how the imposition of nickel extraction by means of violence and militarized eviction has generated serious human rights violations and sexual crimes and exacerbated the marginalization of women.

Participants debated the extent to which post-war reconstruction resembles the old "Banana Republic" model of state development in Latin America. A historical perspective reminds us that land grabbing, expulsion of indigenous people through terror including sexual violence,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Galeano, Eduardo. *Open veins of Latin America: Five centuries of the pillage of a continent.* NYU Press, 1997; Veltmeyer, Henry, and James F. Petras. *The new extractivism: a post-neoliberal development model or imperialism of the twenty-first century?* Zed Books, 2014.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Engels, Bettina, and Kristina Dietz, eds. *Contested extractivism, society and the state: Struggles over mining and land.* Springer, 2017.

and the privileging of profit over people's livelihoods and environment are not new. That said, some things have changed in post-peace agreement Guatemala and in other Latin American post-war states. Participants suggested we are witnessing an intensification or deepening of the extractive model; it is no longer one corporation from the USA dictating development, but many from many countries, and rather than one or two key resources, TNCs are looking to exploit multiple high-value resources, and to gain from hydroelectric and other major infrastructure projects.

The intensification of extractivism exacerbates environmental destruction. War and post-war reconstruction, it seems, tends to move land down the ecological ladder, as the land changes from a multi-use, diverse, regenerating environment, to a single-use degraded environment. This degradation of the land hits women particularly hard because of the ways they rely on both cultivating and gathering resources from the land to carry out the caring and provisioning roles they are assigned.

Another feature perhaps particular to today's extractivism in Latin America, in comparison to the 1950s Banana Republic model, is the role of drug trafficking and transnational criminal groups. As before, the state is facilitating corporations' ability to make profits at the expense of the land and people, but the state is now also facilitating the underground criminal economy. The growth of the criminal economy also has profound impacts on women's bodies and lives, including through increases in human trafficking as well as in domestic and community violence.<sup>6</sup>

Even if states would like to regulate corporations, to increase the revenue of the state and to mitigate environmental harms, they find it hard to so. TNCs have so much more power than states emerging from war. Government ministries in the Global South, who are supposed to be regulating extractive corporations, can even find they have to ask to use the corporations' helicopters order to travel to inspect the extractive sites. Enormous pressure can be put on states to change legislation and to relax their regulatory regimes, often by International Financial Institutions as well as TNCs themselves.

TNCs show signs of increasing sophistication in their efforts to acquire land for extractive activities. Where international organizations have secured laws to ensure land concessions should only be given where the land is degraded, corporations themselves degrade the land. Rubber corporations operating in southeast Asia, for example, have cleared the indigenous forest in order to then claim it is degraded and thus ripe for commercial plantation. Another strategy TNCs deploy, in countries where they are only allowed to buy land that is unused, is to categorize as "unused" land which is very much in use by local communities, but which has been left fallow for a period, as is customary in many forms of indigenous agriculture. Even when there are efforts to compensate communities for their loss of land, there can be unintended consequences. The returned land can be given to the men or to the community, when it originally belonged to the women. This was the fate of women in a matrilineal indigenous community in Cambodia, where land is passed from mothers to daughters; when the community was compensated for the land grabbed for extractive TNCs, it was "returned" to married couples, thereby effectively giving the men much more control.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> See y de los Rios, Marcela Lagarde, and Mercedes Olivera. *Terrorizing women: Feminicide in the Americas*. Duke University Press, 2009.

A feature which is not necessarily new, but which is under-explored, is the complicity of citizens in the global north in the extractivism which takes place in the global south. Individual Canadian households, for example, are invested through pension plans and national pride in these transnational mining corporations. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) promotes Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), requiring corporations provide employment opportunities and services for local communities; in practice this means buying-off locals with promises of jobs, amenities, and services. The corporations then justify the low level of taxes they pay the state by claiming that the community is on board.

In Guatemala, some of the survivors of sexual violence have taken Hudbay Minerals to court in Canada, a case that breaks ground in that Canadian courts have accepted jurisdiction over Canadian-based corporation's violations of human rights in another county. There is thus a sense in which the violence done to Guatemalan women has had a positive politicizing effect, with women playing increasingly important roles in the growing movement of indigenous peace and human rights organizations. At the same time, corporations and their local subsidiaries negotiate with men in the community to persuade the women to back down from their campaigns for justice, often successfully, undermining the women's campaign and reinforcing their subordination in the household. This an effective strategy in many contexts where women are financially and socially dependent on marital harmony. Powerful men press the husbands of activists to pressure their wives to back down from their activism. Thus, relations between men of different classes, combined with patriarchal household dynamics, can facilitate extractivism, and, in turn, extractivism can reinforce those patriarchal household relations, further entrenching gender inequalities.

The discussion prompted by Luz's account of the Guatemalan experience of post-war recovery made clear that you need a feminist political economy approach, one that attempts to cross academic/practitioner siloes as well as academic disciplines, in order to grasp the dynamics that are currently undermining progress towards a gender-equitable sustainable peace. What could be done differently? Participants made several suggestions that women participating in peace negotiations and other WPS-advocates could use.

- Natural resources, land ownership and land concessions should be discussed from the
  very outset of peace talks, at the agenda-setting or pre-negotiation phase. (Prenegotiation talks begin to set and circumscribe the agenda for substantive peace
  agreement issues;<sup>8</sup> it is therefore crucial that issues of land and natural resources are
  on the table, *and* that women can participate *at this stage*.)
- Where broad consultative processes are convened, such as national conversations or constitutional conventions, questions about natural resource extraction and land ownership should be part of the discussion.
- Natural resources should be seen as natural assets/public goods, not commodities.
- A certain percentage of land should be protected and preserved as common land

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/hudbay-minerals-lawsuits-re-guatemala-0

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> For stages of peace processes, see Bell, Christine. "Women and peace processes, negotiations, and agreements: operational opportunities and challenges." *Oslo: NOREF* (2013).

- Land on which indigenous people live should be legally protected as their territory, and indigenous peoples should give free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) before any extraction of natural resources
- As with infrastructure, Environmental Impact Assessments and Gender Impact Assessments should be meaningful. Although currently, in many instances, EIAs and GIAs are carried out on the implementation of specific projects, the framework for such projects is determined in forums dominated by TNCs and where local communities have no voice. The overarching framework, the economic development strategy of the post-war state, is what needs to be examined through EIAs and GIAs. Resources should be made available for this to happen.
- If natural resources are extracted, post-war states should make use of instruments such as sovereign wealth funds, along the lines of Norway's where: only the interest can be drawn; spending is ring-fenced for health and education; there is women's representation in the management; and gender-analysis is applied to the investments that the sovereign wealth fund is going to make.
- Ideas and principles along these lines should be written into the constitution, and there must be stronger implementation and enforcement measures to ensure the constitutional provisions are meaningful.

### Conclusion

In most WPS discussions, the rebuilding of physical infrastructure is rarely mentioned. In gender and development contexts, where it is sometimes discussed, the focus tends to be on the need for infrastructure to meet women's needs: for clean water, safe cook stoves and public transport. Discussions might also touch upon the dearth of employment opportunities for women and how to ameliorate that situation. This workshop cast a wider net and revealed a broader range of concerns. Drawing upon the experience and perspectives brought by the wide range of expertise in the room, it became clear that the problems go beyond the absence of infrastructure that meets women's needs or projects which employ women, to include a range of issues related to the shaping of how, where and why infrastructure gets constructed, its frequent impacts on deepening the inequalities underlying war, and its role creating new ones.

The emphasis in post-war reconstruction, as we saw, is on major highways, railways, and ports aimed at facilitating the movement of resources and goods out of the country, and on massive hydro projects typically generating energy for export and industry rather than households. In sum, infrastructure is aimed at facilitating the growth of GDP and profit generation, rather than meeting local people's needs. Indeed, the way physical infrastructure is designed and built often undermines pre-existing subsistence livelihoods, rather than strengthening them, when we consider the physical barriers, environmental degradation, and displacement outlined above.

Likewise, WPS agendas rarely consider the role of extractive corporations in post-war contexts. When the nexus of gender and extractive industries is debated, the concern tends to be restricted to the scarcity of employment opportunities and the social and environmental impacts around the site of development. Participants in this workshop broadened and deepened the analysis to consider the gendered causes and consequences of the central role the extraction and export of natural resources plays in post-war reconstruction.

There are clear connections between the workshop's analyses of these two sample elements of post-war reconstruction. Two cross-cutting themes in particular stand out. One is the simultaneous neoliberal defunding and "de-capacitizing" of the state. This de-capacitizing of the state, combined with the hungry global expansion of finance capital looking for new investment opportunities, has resulted in a transition in the very idea of physical infrastructure from a development project or even obligation to an investment opportunity. It has made monitoring and regulating extractive TNCs practically impossible, thus stymying potential debates as to how natural resources could benefit people and planet. An overarching lesson from the workshop was that the state needs to be involved directing and regulating the economy if we are to achieve gender-equitable sustainable peace.

The second cross-cutting theme was the need to center environmental concerns in every aspect of post-war reconstruction. Climate change is too often treated as a separate issue, not discussed as part of peacebuilding, but the workshop made clear the ways that post-war reconstruction has to consider how to deal with the effects of climate disruption and the effects of post-war rebuilding on climate disruption, and on citizen's resources to cope with it. Current approaches to the rebuilding of physical infrastructure and the extraction of high-value resources do not come close to doing this. The building of these "corridors of extraction" means the long-term locking-in of the current extractivist development model, with all its implications for climate breakdown and the rise human insecurity and inequality that will surely follow.

The rich discussions of the workshop – of which only a sample is provided in this report – convey a far fuller account of gender and post-war reconstruction than that which usually emerges when these issues are discussed (on the rare occasions that WPS discussions move beyond protection and participation). And thus they point to different solutions and priorities. Suggestions are included in the report above, but the overall lesson is perhaps that the solutions cannot be sectoral, but must be holistic. The connections between the challenges of the risk of renewed violence, the entrenchment of inequalities, and the breakdown of the climate demands an overarching approach that tackles the neoliberal capitalism system that drives all three. Translating that holistic approach into implementable policies requires the kind of collaborative, creative, cross-sectoral approach, based on feminist political economy analysis, pioneered in this workshop.