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Women's Advocacy in Postwar Bosnia and Herzegovina. Implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security

By Jagoda Rošul-Gajić¹

Abstract

In this paper, I address the question of how Bosnian women's NGOs have contributed to the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) on Women, Peace and Security in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). What instruments did they use to enforce gender, peace and security norms into state policy and the policy of international actors in the post-conflict internationalized society of BiH? Since national and international actors did not comply with international gender specific norms and standards, I argue that, as norm advocates, Bosnian women's NGOs have been working with a double strategy to influence gender, peace and security policy and enforce change, both by national and international actors. In order to act gender-sensitively, this paper claims – unlike most of the literature on global norm diffusion – it is not only the national actors who need to be socialized to comply with international norms and standards, but also the international political elite. Hence, it not only looks at the process of norm implementation into domestic policies, but also in the policies of international actors in post conflict countries.

The methodology followed is a descriptive one wherein the analyses is conducted on information resulting from interviews and published secondary data.

Keywords: UNSCR 1325, women's NGOs, gender norms, post-conflict settings, postwar Bosnia and Herzegovina

Introduction

The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina attracted great international attention. It was marked by intense sexualized violence on women and girls which was used as a weapon of war to terrorize civil population, instill fear, break up families, destroy communities and for ethnic cleansing. Furthermore, BiH is an example of the neglect of gender issues in post-war reconstruction. After the war sexualized violence against women in forms of trafficking of human beings (mainly women and girls) by criminal groups, but also by local police, international soldiers and peacekeepers continued (Bolkovac 2010; Rees 2002; Human Rights Watch 2002; True 2012: 141-142). A growing numbers of peacekeeping officers have been accused of engaging in sexual abuse or sex-trafficking and forcing children into prostitution in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mozambique, Cambodia, East Timor, Liberia, Sierra Leone (Bolkovac 2010; Rees 2002; Human Rights Watch 2002; Murphy 2006; Ndulo 2009; True 2012: 141-142). However, although there is much literature

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on Criminal Misconduct and Sexual Offenses by international personal and peacekeepers in conflict and post conflict situations this phenomenon has largely been ignored by the norm diffusion scholars.

Despite this unfavorable situation in BiH, both national and international actors have taken a number of measures to better protect women and girls from violence, promote equal opportunities and implement the requirements of international women's human rights norms (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); Beijing Platform for Action; UN Resolution 1325). In the past ten years, the Bosnian government adopted and institutionalized a number of women's rights norms and established diverse gender equality instruments (Jenichen, 2013: 203). In July 2010, a significant step was made in the field of peace and security with the adoption of the National Action Plan to implement UNSCR 1325. Furthermore, the international actors in the country have changed their position on gender issues: "[...] from a perception that gender issues are 'less important' to seeing them as 'extremely important'" (Odanović & Stojanović Gajić, 2013: 68). My interview partners claim this success is largely due to the work of Bosnian women's NGOs and their allies, who have been pushing the issue of Women, Peace and Security on both the national and international agenda (Sejmenović, 2013; Zvizdić, 2013).

This article examines the role of Bosnian women's NGOs in the implementation process of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) on Women, Peace and Security in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) in an effort to understand what instruments did they use to enforce women, peace and security norms into the state policy and into the policy of international actors in BiH. Which role did international actors operating in post-war BiH play? Who supported the work of local women's NGOs? These questions have thus far been neglected by research on post-war societies and international women's rights norm diffusion.

I argue that, as norm advocates, Bosnian women's NGOs have been working with a double strategy to influence gender, peace and security policy and enforce change, both by national and international actors. In order to act gender-sensitively, this paper claims – unlike most of the literature on global norm diffusion—it is not only the national actors who need to be socialized to comply with international norms and standards, but also the international political elite. Hence, it not only looks at the process of norm implementation into domestic policies, but also in the policies of international actors in post conflict countries.

This article is divided into four sections. The first section discusses norm diffusion literature and introduce the double strategy model of norm implementation. The second section identifies the violation of women's human rights during and after the conflict in BiH. The following empirical section focuses on the implementation of the UNSCR1325 into the state policy and into the policy of the international actors in BiH. I concentrate on the role of Bosnian women's NGOs as the strongest norm advocates in implementing women, peace and security norms. The fourth section concludes that the double strategy model presented in this paper can better explain the successes and the failures in implementing gender specific norms.

Theorizing norm implementation

From a constructivist point of view, norms are shared collective expectations of appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity, unlike ideas which may be held by each individual (Finnemore, 1996: 22-24; Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998: 891; Locher, 2002: 65-66; Jepperson, Wendt & Katzenstein, 1996: 54; Risse, Jetschke & Schmitz, 2002: 17; Towns, 2010: 42; Risse &

Sikkink, 1999: 7). I use the constructivist definition of norm as a shared collective expectation of appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity and, in line with Wiener (2009), also see norms as a part of international treaties, conventions or agreements. Hence, as a part of the treaties or agreements norms can certainly be advocated. Norm advocates use the existing norms as both instruments and something solid in order to influence policy making and generate new norms. Although I see norms as something tangible and solid, since I argue that existing international norms are used from norm advocates to raise other more specific norms at the international or national level, I also use the term “norms as processes as work in progress” from Krook and True (2010) or “open-ended” from Zwingel (2014). This is especially the case with norm implementation into domestic policies or into processes when new, more specific norms result. One example is the emergence of gender, peace and security norms. Internationally, the participation of women in decision-making, conflict prevention and resolution was first recognized as being essential for establishing lasting peace at the 1995 United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, where the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was passed. 189 UN Member States committed themselves to mainstream a gender perspective throughout all their institutions, policies, planning and decision-making. Furthermore, they agreed action should also be taken to increase the participation of women in conflict resolution and to better protect women in situations of armed conflicts. Consequently, five years later in October 2000, the United Nations Security Council adopted resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. This resolution was the first formal and legal document that required member states to respect women’s rights in conflict and support their participation in peace negotiation, conflict prevention and post conflict reconstruction. The adaption of this resolution was an important step for the international normative framework on Women, Peace and Security, since “the Security Council acknowledged for the first time in its history the norm that women are vital to international peace and security” (Tryggestad, 2010: 159) see also (Irvine, 2013: 20–21). Among the women human rights activists and feminist scholars, the adoption of UNSCR 1325 in 2000 has been seen as a “(...) milestone in the struggle for greater gender equality at all levels of peacekeeping, peacemaking, peace building and post-conflict reconstruction” (Willett, 2010: 142) see also (Braunmühl, 2013).

The universal women’s rights norm enforced a new more specific norm. Women’s rights were included in human rights and women’s human rights and gender perspective was eventually accepted in different settings, including the male dominated peace and security domain. As a result of the work of women’s human rights advocates and existing norms, codified namely in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, a new norm on Women, Peace and Security emerged. Norms are not finished products; they are *work in progress*.

Although the implementation of UNSCR 1325 is particularly important in post-conflict countries, it is also extremely important that the demands and principals of UNSCR 1325 have been perceived and implemented into the policies of international actors operating in these post-conflict countries. Irvine (2013) argues that the “boomerang effect” model from Keck and Sikkink (1998) cannot explain the results of the advocacy work of women’s NGOs in the Balkans, since international actors in BiH and Kosovo also did not comply with international women’s human rights norms. Hence, I studied in detail the interaction of Bosnian women’s NGOs with national and international actors as well as their accomplishments from 1991 to 2011. Research for this study was conducted on a trip to Bosnia and Herzegovina in the summer of 2013. I interviewed women’s rights activists, parliamentary representatives, scholars as well as staff members of international Organizations and international donors. I collected documents, reports, letters of

protest about government and international organizations as well as other materials put out by women's NGOs, used for their campaigns to implement SCR 1325.

Based on the analyses of the advocacy work of Bosnian women's NGOs, I introduce the double strategy model of norm implementation. This paper does not only look at the process of norm translation into domestic policies, but also in the policies of international actors in the internationalized post conflict countries who did not or do not comply with international norms and standards. Hence, the Bosnian women's human rights advocates had a "double" task: on the one hand, putting pressure on the local and national authorities; on the other hand, acting the same towards the majority of international actors in post-war BiH. This model includes different phases of activities from women's NGOs as norm advocates: the orientation phase, agenda-setting phase, policy-creation and norm implementation phase. During the orientation phase, national stakeholders (e.g., local and national government) ignore or are involved in human rights violations. Even if the government ignores the problem and, therefore, isn't directly involved in the human rights violation – for example, when other private actors violate human rights – the government is nevertheless responsible for these violations. In this orientation stage the women's NGOs are defining the problem, looking for national and international support and networking in the region in order to put the topic on the political national and international agenda. In transitional societies especially feminist NGO's usually don't have financial or moral support from local or international authorities (see Dubljević, 2003; Korac, 2006; Kesić, 2007; Rosul-Gajic, 2014; Sejmenović, 2013; Zvizdić, 2013). Government does not fund women's projects, as well as many international donor organizations (Špehar 2007; Zvizdić, 2013). Local gender equality instruments and allies first have to emerge. In the agenda setting phase, the women's NGOs use different instruments and strategies to put pressure on the local and national government and international actors operating in different roles in the internationalized post conflict country. The policy-creation phase is a crucial part, but also the shortest stage in the process of norm implementation. It is the period when both national authorities and international actors include women's NGOs as experts in this field to develop gender sensitive policy and its implementation strategy. After this stage follows the norm implementation phase, which is when the new local gender specific norms and mechanisms on women's human rights emerge.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: a historical overview from a gender perspective

In the following paragraph, I will identify the violation of and non-commitment to various women's human rights norms during and after the conflict. Violation of women's human rights led to the founding of numerous local women's NGOs, who then worked towards putting these issues on the national and international political agenda. Furthermore, it led to Bosnian women's NGOs fostering international women's human rights norms to be put into both policy and praxis of national decision makers and international actors.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a telling example of the worst war crimes on European soil since the Second World War. At the end of the twentieth century, terror, torture, rape and concentration camps were part of the daily life in this region of Southeastern Europe. Bosnian women were confronted with a diverse range of gender specific human rights abuses and violations. During the war, and especially after the Dayton Peace Agreement in 1995, a large number of international actors came to BiH to support the peace and democratization process. Women's human rights were not only continually violated under the supervision of international organizations, but UN personnel and other international actors were involved in human trafficking

and forced prostitution (Calinska, 2007: 292; Zvizdić, 2010; Irvine, 2013: 29; Simic, 2012: 35–36). Hence, even international actors in BiH, such as UN staff, did not comply with their own norms regarding women’s human rights. The staff members of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), who were stationed in BiH between 1992 and 1995, evidently did not receive gender sensitive training before embarking on the mission. Their disrespectful and dehumanizing conduct manifested itself on several layers. Humiliating phrases and statements, which treated all women as whores, were written in graffiti on public facades, revealing a deeply chauvinistic attitude imposed on the public domain. Such examples include “No teeth...? A mustache? Smells like shit...? Bosnian Girl!” (Schilcher, 2008: 60). These graffiti were drawn by a Dutch soldier at the UNPROFOR base in Potočari, BiH. “The best tits are in Mostar!” and the “Weekly Girl Report”, which was a satirical list written together with the “Weekly Security Report” by the Canadian soldiers at UNPROFOR-base in Visoko, BiH, both show the lack of a gender sensitive approach (Louis, 2008: 104). These signs and reports were only removed after one of the staff members of the NGO *medica Zenica* had complained about them to the commanding officer.

Additionally, the unstable postwar situation, economic collapse and corrupted local decision makers and police led to diverse illegal businesses and women’s human rights violations. Trafficking of women for sexual exploitation was one of those post-war practices ignored by the government, local authorities and international actors. This phenomenon is definitively connected with the huge number international actors in BiH. More than 100,000 foreigners, a number of international organizations and a huge number of international NGOs were estimated to be part of the humanitarian operation during the war and the post war situation (Simic, 2012: 23). In addition, the prostitution and trafficking of women in post war Bosnia was driven by the arrival of tens of thousands of predominantly male peacekeepers (ibid: 35). There is no exact data about the “clients” using the services of these prostitutes/forced prostitutes. Some investigations have revealed that 50-70 percent of clients were international staff, including both the Stabilization Force (SFOR) and UN staff (Louis, 2008: 162). Human Rights Watch estimates approximately 70 percent of clients were local citizens, including police and local authorities, with internationals making up the remaining 30 percent (Human Rights Watch, 2002: 11). However, bars and brothels with women trafficked from Central and Eastern Europe mushroomed near UN bases, while the number of females trafficked into the region increased as more and more peacekeepers came into the country (Simic, 2012: 35–36). Selmin Caliskan points out another paradox:

Men, who just yesterday fought each other, and today are all wanted war criminals, make billions of joint profit (Calinska, 2007: 292).

This means that, despite religious and ethnic differences, organized-crime groups from both entities got involved in a wide range of joint illegal activities, including trafficking in women for sexual exploitation. Furthermore, although the security sector reform started in 2003, local and national authorities did not take women into account and the integration of gender issues were completely ignored (Belgrade Centre for Security Policy, 2013; Zvizdić, 2013).

Implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Bosnia and Herzegovina

According to Žene Ženama's² Sarajevo report on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the international organizations, national institutions and structures, police and military missions and civil society initiatives active in the country, are also those which are responsible for putting the resolution into effect (Udruženje Žene Ženama, 2007: 10). Furthermore, being subject to international law, states and international organizations are also obliged to implement Security Council Resolutions, which are binding for all member states. Hence firstly, international organizations working in BiH are obliged to mainstream a gender perspective in their own ranks and structures. Secondly, they are also obliged to support the Bosnian Government during the democratization process, including enforcing gender, peace and security issues in state policies; in this case, they are required to implement UNSCR 1325 on women, peace and security. Despite these obligations and responsibilities of national as well as international actors, I argue that Bosnian women's NGOs played the largest role in implementing gender, peace and security norms, since both national and international actors were initially unwilling to implement UNSCR 1325 (Irvine, 2013: 20). This is due to the fact that women's NGOs were the first advocates and *agenda setters* for implementing the SCR 1325 into the national policy. This was also the case for other gender specific issues.

As norm advocates for women's human rights, the Bosnian women's NGOs³ were already set up during the war, when they established the first rehabilitation centers offering mainly therapeutic and humanitarian aid for traumatized women (Gršak, 2007: 120). Since women's NGOs did not exist in BiH before the war, and the resource and knowledge of project and organizational development for NGOs were missing, international feminist organizations and individuals supported the first Bosnian initiatives and projects. Medica Zenica, one of the first organizations, was established in central Bosnia in the city Zenica by the German gynecologist Monika Hause; she went to BiH in the middle of the war to set up a therapy center for women victims of war offering gynecological and psychological assistance. Hence, the first activities and projects to emerge were those which addressed gender issues associated with the conflict. The state staff and activists working in those first women's NGOs launched further projects and organizations in other cities, where they also focused on different issues besides post-war trauma. One example is the women's NGO Žene Ženama based in Sarajevo. The founder of Žene Ženama had been previously active before in Medica Zenica. From the start, these Bosnian women's NGOs networked nationally and internationally, took part in international conferences, put pressure on the Bosnian government and mobilized a broad public worldwide. The first meeting between women from different parts of Bosnia, regardless of their nationality, already took place in 1996 (Jenichen, 2012: 150; Thomasson, 2006: 28). These events and projects were organized by the Bosnian Women's NGOs and financially and logistically supported by international foundations like the Swedish Kvinna till Kvinna (Jenichen, 2012: 151). Similar to the findings in Andrea Špehar's (2007) case study on women's movements in Croatia, in BiH it is also possible make a distinction between two different major groups of donors: those who exclusively support women's

² Žene ženama is a Women's Human Rights organization which took a leading role in pushing to implement SCR 1325 and also organizes awareness raising campaigns on women, peace and security issues at the local, national and international level.

³ When I talk about Bosnian women's NGOs, I am referring to organizations that are – or were – active in women's human rights, which promote equality between women and men in all areas of society and are not nationalist, conservative or religious women's organizations. The women's NGOs to which I refer in this paper are mostly members of the Women's Network BiH. The Women's Network BiH was formally established in Sarajevo in July 2014.

projects (e.g. Kvinna till Kvinna, MamaCash, the Global Fund for Women, UNIFEM/UN Women) and those who support women's NGOs within a somewhat larger framework of support for civil society and NGO development (e.g., USAID, Open Society Institute, European Commission, Heinrich Boell Stiftung, various embassies).

With the Dayton Agreement, Bosnia and Herzegovina was divided into two entities – the joint Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) (mostly Bosniacs and Croats) and the Republika Srpska (RS) (mostly Serbs). Bosnian women realized they were still confronted with the same problems: violence, discrimination, exclusion from political and economic structures, etc. Although the situation was very complicated and the women's groups didn't have moral support among Bosnian people and local authorities, the women nevertheless started networking and cooperating (Cockburn, 2002: 78-81; Thomasson, 2006: 28). "People would ask women attending the conference 'why do you meet with [Serb/Bosniac] women, whose husbands were killing us?'" (Thomasson, 2006: 28). The purpose of conferences was to establish contact and discuss different post conflict problems and issues common to all women. To place the various gender equality issues on the political agenda as well as enforce gender equality into state policy and the policy of international organizations, women's NGOs formed several networks at the national level (Zvizdić, 2013). One of the most important steps was raising awareness about women's human rights within Bosnian society.

Thus, when UNSCR 1325 was passed in October 2000, the Bosnian women's NGOs were already very well organized throughout the entire country and its entities were cross-linked. They immediately recognized the first Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security as an instrument to legitimize their demands for effectively incorporating gender perspectives and women's rights into conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and peace-building. They also used the Beijing Platform for Action to formulate their goals and accomplish change (Jenichen, 2013: 206). As I have already described in the double strategy model, the process of implementing the gender, peace and security norm in BiH was carried out over different phases, in which women's NGOs played the most important role as norm advocates. In the early 2000s, they became involved with UNSCR 1325 and its implementation. In this orientation phase – in order to plan the agenda setting phase, policy creation and norm implementation phase – women's NGOs were not only concerned with exploring the gender, peace and security policies of the government, but also those of the international actors in BiH. With a few exceptions, the international and national actors and institutions in BiH had not been sufficiently informed about UN Resolution 1325 at this time (Alice, 2008: 209). For the peacekeeping troops stationed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there was no gender training, and a gender perspective was not integrated into their work. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) even believed implementing UNSCR 1325 in BiH was not part of its mission mandate. Finnemore (1993) claims that International Organizations are 'teachers of norms'. But which norms? Is norm content categorically irrelevant? In 2001, the gender policy advisor post disappeared from the Office of the High Representative (OHR). "The OHR has no policy on gender" (Udruženje Žene Ženama, 2007: 4). The OHR was created in 1995 with the purpose to oversee the civilian implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement. The international actors operating in BiH either saw gender inequality as a less important issue compared to the "bigger problems" at hand, or as an issue that could be resolved by solving economic problems and making reforms in the political, law enforcement and judicial sectors (ibid). According to the OHR, the reason for failing to implement gender equality policies in BiH was due to the weakness and inability of women's NGOs and civil society to influence government policy making (Alice, 2008: 210). This example demonstrates

that the international political elite was not acting in a gender-sensitive manner; thus, the process implementing women's human rights norms in BiH did not just emerge from "top" to "bottom". The OHR also did not consider itself responsible for implementing gender-specific norms.

The corrupt national authorities paid even less attention to violence against women, trafficking and other forms of abuse and discrimination. A good example is the operation "Macro" in March 2001. The operation was led by the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Srpska and Federation of BiH under the supervision of UNMIBH (United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina). The result of this action was the prosecution of 34 foreign women and 8 Bosnian women for prostitution (14 women were sentenced to 15 days' imprisonment and expulsion from the canton, 19 women were charged with 400 KM (200 €) and deportation). None of the brothel owner was sentenced (Bolkovac, 2010; Global Rights Partners for Justice, 2004: 38-39). Instead of punishing the actual traffickers, trafficked women were prosecuted and imprisoned after testifying against them.

Hence, given that national and international actors both needed to be socialized to comply with the norm on gender, peace and security in BiH's post-conflict internationalized society, Bosnian women's NGOs had to work with a double strategy.

The first step Bosnian women's NGOs had to take was to define the problem in order to set the plan for campaigning and agenda setting. To put the issue of women, peace and security on the national and international political agenda, they sought national and international support and networked in the region. Their work was supported by international donors and women's foundations (Sejmenović, 2013; Zvizdić, 2013). Some of the international donors supported specific projects on women, peace and security like the UNIFEM, while others like Kvinna till Kvinna supported Bosnian women's NGOs by giving them institutional support to strengthen themselves in general, not just for specific projects.

Similar to other gender-specific issues in the region, civil society first started to talk about UNSCR 1325 and about implementing it into the work of national and international stakeholders, although Gender Centers in both entities had been established since 2001. As Bosnian regional institutions, both Gender Centers were established to monitor the situation of women, advocate and promote gender equality as well as coordinate the implementation of women's human rights norms. Even the establishment of these first legal gender equality institutions was made possible thanks to the efforts of women's civil society organizations in BiH (Belgrade Centre for Security Policy, 2013: 62; Zvizdić, 2013). Bosnian women's NGOs had already started campaigning for political and institutional change in 1997. In the first post-war election in 1996, women won 2.3% of the seats in the Parliamentary Assembly (Jenichen, 2012: 76; Lithander, 2000: 35; Miftari, 2015: 18). In 1997, in cooperation with various politicians, women's NGOs started the campaign "There are more of Us," which advocated against the deep marginalization of women in decision-making. The result of this campaign was adopting 30% quota of women on every party list (Borić, 2005: 39). Other NGO campaigns advocating for gender equality institutions and laws followed. However, the knowledge of women's NGO experts was recognized by the Gender Centers themselves, which involved them in various projects and cooperation (Sejmenović, 2013; Zvizdić, 2013; Jenichen, 2012: 160). In the orientation phase, women's NGOs created legitimacy for themselves vis-à-vis state institutions that they did not have before. They created their voice which can still be heard. The first step during the orientation phase was to analyze the activities of national and international actors active in the country, who are responsible for implementing UNSCR 1325 in BiH. Since UNSCR 1325 was not well known among national and international structures and institutions in BiH, the Bosnian women's human rights organization Žene Ženama, based in

Sarajevo, translated the text of the resolution into the local language and distributed it widely (Belgrade Centre for Security Policy, 2013: 64–65; Zvizdić, 2013). To reach various national and international decision makers, Žene Ženama also organized a series of public debates and workshops on the topic of gender perspective in the security sector and gender perspective in UN reports (Zvizdić, 2013; Gender Equality Agency of Bosnia and Hercegovina, 2010: 20; Jenichen, 2012: 160). The agenda setting phase started. The purpose of these events was to raise public awareness about the importance of mainstreaming gender into peace and security policy as well as ensuring UNSCR 1325 was well known among Bosnian authorities and international actors in BiH.

In 2002, about 75 NGOs formed the Coalition for Gender Equality, which campaigned for the adoption of the Law on Gender Equality and other gender equality mechanisms (Jenichen, 2012: 152). When the Bosnian Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees presented a draft of the Law on Gender Equality, the women's NGOs were not satisfied; they insisted the working group responsible for drafting the legislation should also include representatives of women's NGOs (GlobalRights Partners for Justice, 2005: 55; Jenichen, 2012: 202-203). Among the amendments strongly pushed by the women's NGOs were introducing a stricter definition of discrimination, prohibiting sexual harassment and gender-based violence, implementing government commitments, judicial protection and establishing monitoring mechanisms (Global Rights Partners for Justice, 2005: 56; Jenichen, 2012: 204-205). In 2003, the Bosnian parliament finally passed the Law on Gender Equality, which included the amendments put forth by the Bosnian women's NGOs. This success was also possible thanks to the efforts of civil society, their international allies and various Bosnian decision makers (Jenichen, 2012: 160; Sejmenović, 2013). In article 22, the Law on Gender Equality points out that the government is required to establish the Agency for Gender Equality BiH, which is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this law and coordinate activities with all relevant entities in the process implementing the state Gender Action Plan (PARLAMENTARNA SKUPŠTINA BOSNE HERCEGOVINE 2003, Article 22). The Gender Equality Agency of BiH became one of the crucial allies of Bosnian Women's NGOs for implementing UNSCR 1325 in BiH, especially in the policy creation phase.

Since 2003, the non-governmental organizations in BiH contributed considerably to raising public awareness about the resolution. Various Bosnian NGOs carried out different projects aimed at advancing the implementation of the gender, peace and security norm into policy of Bosnian stakeholders, both national and international. About 20 NGOs from different parts of BiH worked together to implement UNSCR 1325 (Gender Equality Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2010: 20). During the agenda setting phase, the women's NGOs used different instruments and strategies to draw attention to the significance of mainstreaming a gender perspective throughout all governmental and international institutions, policies, planning and decision-making. They criticized national authorities and international actors. They connected with individuals involved in political decision making process, like the Gender Equality Agency of Bosnia and Hercegovina, and with the both Gender Centers (Sejmenović, 2013; Zvizdić, 2013). One of the first monitoring projects for implementing UNSCR 1325, which was carried out by NGOs and supported by UNIFEM, took place between 2005 and 2007 (Alice, 2007: 2). The result of these reports were a few official publications criticizing international and national stakeholders' insufficient implementation of UNSCR 1325 in BiH. Another example is the project *Participation of the Public in Human Security, UNSCR 1325 in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, which was implemented in 2008 and 2009 by the women's NGO Žene Ženama, in cooperation with the partner organizations the Helsinki Citizen's Assembly, Horizonti, Budućnost and Žena BiH. Since more and more

national and international stakeholders were willing to participate in the NGO project on integrating gender into their peace and security policy, this can be described as the agenda setting stage with a transition into the policy creation stage. Part of the project involved seminar training for trainers and workshops with local communities across BiH. Seminar and workshop participants were members of national and local institutions (e.g., the Ministry of the Interior, BiH Ministry of Security, local law enforcement, NGOs, political parties) and international institutions (EUPM, EUFOR, UNIFEM) (Žene Ženama, 2010).

Since the women's NGOs became very vocal and successful at putting the issue on the agenda of national and international authorities, both national and international actors started to change their behavior and the way they acted towards gender, peace and security policy. The policy creation phase took place when NGOs started working together with local authorities and international actors on common projects to implement UNSCR 1325 and mainstream gender in peace and security policy. The Agency for Gender Equality BiH was an important actor during this process. It started its work in 2004 and worked together with the civil society organizations from the very beginning. Under the coordination of this institution, a working group has been established which prepared a draft of the National Action Plan to implement UNSCR 1325 in Bosnia and Herzegovina (NAP). The working group consisted of representatives from various ministries and equality institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as a representative of the women's organization Žene Ženama. In July 2010 the Bosnian parliament finally adopted the NAP drafted by the working group. It was the first in the region and a fundamental step towards a gender-equitable peace and security policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The objectives of the National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Bosnia and Herzegovina are: inclusion of women in all levels of decision-making processes; incorporation of a gender perspective in military and police training and increasing the number of women in these fields; increasing the participation of women in peacekeeping missions and including a gender perspective in the training of peacekeeping mission participants; fighting against human trafficking; reducing risk in mined areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina; improving support to women and girls who are victims of war; improving cooperation and partnership of state institutions with international and non-governmental organizations to implement UNSCR 1325 (Gender Equality Agency of Bosnia and Hercegovina, 2010). In 2011, the coordinating board was established by the BiH Council of Ministers as a basic mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the NAP. The coordination board consists of twenty-five representatives⁴ from all the institutions in the BiH security sector and only one member of the civil society sector (Agencija za ravnopravnost spolova Bosne i Hercegovine, 2014; Belgrade Centre for Security Policy, 2013: 69). In cooperation with other stakeholders, the Agency for Gender Equality of BiH submits an annual report on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the Council of Ministers and House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH. For 2011, the report points out the cooperation of the institutional gender mechanisms with the NGOs as "achieved results", and lists events and projects which were actually launched by NGOs or other international actors in BiH (Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, 2012: 9). Even these governmental reports give the impression that Bosnian women's

⁴ Since 2014, the coordination board members have been representatives from: the Ministry of Security, State Investigation and Protection Agency (SIPA), border police, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance and Treasury, Gender Center of the Federation of BiH, Gender Center of the Republic of Srpska, Ministry of Interior of the Federation of BiH, Ministry of interior of the Republic of Srpska and the association "United Women" as representatives of the non-government sector (NGO Women to Women was a former representative of the NG sector).

NGOs supported by international donors continue to be the most important advocates in integrating gender sensitive policies in the security sector. In 2011, Žene Ženama carried out a project across BiH, which provided trainings for members of the national and local stakeholders from the security sector. Furthermore, they trained coordination board members to mainstream gender into their programs. The goal of the project was to strengthen the capacities of the coordination board and the local representatives from the security sector (Žene Ženama, 3). Hence, it seems that NGOs are still the most involved actors in implementing the guiding principles on gender, peace and security issues as well as improving cooperation between the states as well as entire institutions responsible for implementing UNSCR 1325. Furthermore, they are still the more vocal critics of the rather slow and inconsistent implementation of the demands set goals laid out in the National Action Plan. Lack of political will and technical know-how have been named among the reasons for the slow implementation of gender norms in general (Sejmenović, 2013; Zvizdić, 2013).

Some critical voices will even claim that “(...) there are still no places for women in decision-making, peace process, executive authority, there are no women leaders of the political parties.....Women as civilian war victims do not have a settled status, they do not have a life worthy of human being. (...) The majority of parliamentarians and those who make decisions on our behalf have not read Resolution 1325 yet in a way in which they are able to apply it” (Miličević, 2014).

Not only did Bosnian authorities start acting in a gender sensitive way, international actors in BiH changed their behavior as well. In January 2003, the European Union Police Mission (EUPM) replaced the International Police Task Force of the UN (IPTF). EUPM and European Union Force (EUFOR) have committed themselves to implementing gender equality policies within their own mission and appointed officers to implement gender mainstreaming. It seems that EU missions now have a better understanding about the importance of integrating gender issues into the peace and security policy. This is mainly due to the local women’s NGOs and UNIFEM/UN Women, who successfully became involved in the work of EU missions. For this purpose, an agreement between UNIFEM, EUFOR and EUPM was signed in October 2008. EUPM and EUFOR have committed to implementing gender equality policies within their own mission and have appointed officers to implement gender mainstreaming. The equality officers are experienced women from BiH who were employed in the EU missions. In 2007 and 2008, Žena Ženama implemented a project in partnership with EUFOR, EUPM and women’s NGOs in both entities to advance the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The goal of the project was to strengthen the cooperation between EUFOR and EUPM with local institutions and civil society, in particular women’s NGOs (Zvizdić, 2013). It had been a long road to convince the international military and police missions to ensure sustainable gender equality policy in their own ranks.

Although criticized for their unwillingness to implement UNSCR 1325 until 2007, the NATO Headquarters in Sarajevo has become one of the key supporters among international actors for integrating a gender perspective in BiH security sector reform. It seems that a blaming and shaming method has had positive effects on the behavior of NATO and its gender, peace and security policy. It has been active in supporting the implementation of NAP through workshops and various events on integrating a gender perspective into policies and practices of local and national authorities (Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, 2012: 30–31). Together with the Ministry of Defense, the NATO Headquarters in Sarajevo has been promoting and raising awareness of the importance of UNSCR 1325. It has been collaborating with local women’s NGOs on diverse gender equality projects (Matić, 2016). This has also contributed to sustainable gender

equality, and will hopefully have a better impact on daily life of women and girls in post-war BiH. These accomplishments are recognized as an example of good practice in constant activity and can be seen as a part of norm implementation phase by some institutions and stakeholders (Belgrade Centre for Security Policy, 2013: 68). However, according to Vanja Matić a former gender advisor at NATO Headquarters Sarajevo some feminists NGOs and feminist scholars have been criticizing cooperation of women's NGOs with NATO on gender, peace and security projects. The interesting question here is: Does feminist movement also block women, peace and security norms and its implementation in post-conflict societies?

Since Resolution 1325 has been adopted, significant progress has been made in the field of women, peace and security in BiH. However, a lot more remains to be done if it is to maximally benefit Bosnian women and reach a level of sustainable peace in the society. Key challenges for fully implementing UNSCR 1325 remain the lack of women's participation in decision making, not enough understanding about the importance of implementing UNSCR 1325, insufficient financial support for actors working in the field of gender, peace and security issues, no accountability and still too little involvement of civil society in policy planning.

The United Nation Security Council adopted six additional resolutions (1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106 and 2122) on women, peace and security focusing primarily on sexualized violence in conflict, which are barely known or used as instruments in BiH. With the exception of UNSCR 2122, the emphasis in most of the resolutions is placed on viewing women as victims of war and violence. In stark contrast, UNSCR 2122 is firmly focused on the agency, meaning the inclusion of women as involved actors in the peace and security field. There is also crucial demand for more civil society participation, both at UN Headquarters and in in-country field missions. Furthermore, the member states are urged to support the development and strengthen the capacities of national institutions, particularly the judicial system, health system and the local civil society networks. Hence, in the BiH case study, the conclusion can be drawn that, “(...) *persisting barriers to full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) will only be dismantled through dedicated commitment to women's empowerment, participation, and human rights, and through concerted leadership, consistent information and action, and support, to build women's engagement in all levels of decision-making*” (United Nations Security Council, 2013: 1).

Conclusion

In this paper I analyzed the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I traced the question of how Bosnian women's NGOs contributed to implementing UNSCR 1325 into the policy of the Bosnian authorities and international actors in BiH. To implement UNSCR 1325, the Bosnian government has adopted National Action Plan, which can be seen as the final norm implementation phase. Though the National Action Plan is outstanding, whatever is reported to be effective for fulfilling this plan seems to be NGO activism as well as the work of some international actors. Hence, women's NGOs are also playing an active role in the final process of norm implantation.

Although Bosnian women's NGOs were the strongest norm advocates and had already started campaigning for gender equality already during the war, their success was first visible after national and international actors joined the campaign. The “double strategy model” presented in this paper shows why and when women's NGOs started advocating for implementing gender specific norms, as well as why and when international and national actors joined the process. In summary, however, several conclusions can be drawn. After the orientation and agenda setting

phase, the Bosnian activists worked together with international allies and received financial and logistical support from them. Secondly, the women's organizations acted as a strong national network, which was powerful enough to exert political pressure on both national and international authorities in BiH. Thirdly, Bosnian women's NGOs used a double strategy for implementing UNSCR 1325; they still play the strongest role in the monitoring process. This analysis shows that changes in domestic human rights do not necessarily appear from top to bottom. This is because not only do national actors need to adopt gender specific norms, but also the international political elite operating in post-war Bosnia. Consequently, the double strategy can better explain the successes and failures in implementing gender-specific norms.

Even if those achievements around UNSCR 1325 in BiH have been recognized as an example of good practice, a lot more remains to be done if it is to maximally benefit Bosnian women and reach sustainable peace in society. Three questions arise from those recent developments and the conclusion of this article: First, did those new local gender norms and standards reach local women? And, how can we measure that? The second question is, how to find a balance between feminist perspective, which is not to even more militarize the post-war vulnerable society by including women in armed forces or accepting armed forces, and the need to sensitize military structures, which are existing and operating in post-conflict and patriarchal societies as Bosnia is? Do feminist NGOs also block norm implementation? Third question to be asked is about the role of international military organizations in countries with a fragile civil society, a weak women's movement and still existing patriarchal and traditional norms which deny women's rights, such as Afghanistan. Could NATO as a hyper-masculine organization overtake the role of being the strongest norm advocate for the implementation of gender, peace and security norms codified in UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions? Is the norm diffusion "top-down" approach in such countries an adequate answer to the better implementation of gender, peace and security norms?

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