Chapter Two
Background on UNSCR 1325, Women, Peace, and Security

The end of the Cold War saw a rise in post-conflict and late-developing states that have required international assistance, often including military intervention. Many post-Cold War states have suffered from internal violence and conflict such as civil wars, foreign invasions, and in recent years terrorist activity. State and government institutions are neglectful of civilian populations, incapable of responding to crisis, and often challenged to meet societal expectations. International interventions often focus on restoring and rebuilding state, defense, and security institutions through capacity-building programs to provide a foundation for the host government to restore services. As assistance efforts reconstruct institutions, women’s inclusion brings different perspectives, insights, and mediation styles effective for reconstruction efforts. Research has also demonstrated that women serving on the front lines of effort play a meaningful role in preventing conflict when tension rises in society’s social strata. Afghanistan has presented a unique set of multiple and simultaneous post-conflict circumstances the international community must address.

Geopolitically, Afghanistan is a landlocked buffer state between two nuclear-weapon states: Iran and Pakistan. To further complicate matters, Afghanistan shares a border with Pakistan which is in a persistent existential conflict with India, including the threat of nuclear escalation. Afghanistan has experienced many conflicts ranging from regime failure, Soviet occupation, civil war, humanitarian crisis, violent extremist regime, and invasion, which has resulted in its designation as a failed state. After decades of conflict and civil war, in the early 1990s the Taliban arose to stabilize war-torn Afghanistan. As the movement gained momentum in the late 1990s the Taliban’s reins of power were built on tyranny, repression, and fear. The Taliban harbored al-Qaeda and as a result of the attacks on 11 September 2001 (9/11), the United States invaded Afghanistan in October 2001 and began an international effort to rebuild the Afghan state.

Historically, Afghanistan has been a rentier state relying on foreign economic assistance that continues to the present time. As one of the pillars of state development

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and capacity building, economic prosperity is crucial for post-conflict failed states. The international community does not have a blank check by which to continue supporting states undergoing capacity building. There is a fine line on building capacity in these fragile societies while achieving measurable outcomes simultaneously. International partners provide vital economic resources, which, at a cost to the host government, have little incentive to develop their organic capacity. Ethnic divisions also influence effective capacity-building programs. Ethnicity is an underpinning that Western nations often ignore due to historical norms and lack of familiarity with cultural conditions.

Afghanistan fits several doctrinal paradigms in terms of operational approach; the international community commits resources to address state failure, including stability, peacekeeping, reconstruction, counterterrorism, humanitarian, security cooperation, and security assistance operations. In Afghanistan, all these paradigms are simultaneously executed. The theoretical underpinning to help Afghanistan recover after four decades of conflict has been international foreign assistance by conducting capacity building ranging from peace and stability operations to long-term reconstruction and development programs. To address Afghanistan’s future needs and raise its status from a failed state to a prosperous state, it is imperative to understand how the United States has prioritized capacity building in failed states, inclusive of gendered perspectives in Afghanistan. Reconstruction efforts inclusive of women’s perspectives facilitate the advocacy for policies and procedures that lessen conflict drivers in ways that less gender-diverse groups do not. Groups that exclude women, minorities, and those with disabilities often fail to consider the needs of the population and account for gender-sensitive social programs and resources crucial to increasing social stability and security.

**Afghan Women’s Rights Under the Taliban**

Afghan reforms in the early 1920s and again in the 1950s included ending the seclusion of women and abolishment of the veil. Reforms and social changes were drastic from Kabul and the rest of the country as a high concentration of modernizing institutions and more liberal attitudes of the population was concentrated in Kabul. Reforms were introduced first in Kabul with the intent of extending to the rural areas were gradually applied. Unveiling was seen as a choice versus compulsion and did not take root in the rural areas as women continued to observe strict purdah in con-

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servative areas. Unveiling was seen as a larger project designated to transform Afghan life through the emancipation of women. Reforms directly affecting women included restrictions on the age of marriage, and proof of consent, limiting bride price and wedding prices, and prohibitions on polygamy, which all had direct impacts on Afghan women’s rights. Life under the Taliban reverted to strict seclusion, banning from all social spheres, and mandatory veiling.

At the end of the Cold War, the pattern of conflict in Afghanistan restructured society to exclude women from public space. Afghan women have always played a limited role in public politics, however some have served as ministers and members of parliament. Decades of war brought the militarization of society as well as destruction of productive activities and resources women had access to. As resources became scarcer, women were disproportionately affected as males, the only armed gender, gained more access to whatever was available.

As the Taliban movement gained supporters and strength, the primary focus was on the military campaign and the imposition of an obscurantist version of Sharia law that was a mixture of tribalism, male chauvinism, and illiteracy. They forced women into seclusion and imposed brutal forms of punishment to control women such as beatings, stonings, and executions in front of large crowds of men and boys. The Taliban codified existing regulations limiting women’s education and economic empowerment and enforced them with harsh punishment. The pervasive male feeling of dishonor as a result of the war led to harsher attempts to control women, who in patriarchal societies are seen as repositories of the honor of their families. When Madeline Albright became secretary of state under the Clinton administration, she was outspoken and was the driving force behind the United States publicly condemning the Taliban’s gender policies. Supported by feminist, human rights, and lobbying groups, Taliban gender policies became a political issue.

After capturing Kabul, in 1996 the Taliban issued a decree relating to women and other cultural issues. Specific to women, this decree segregated Afghan men and women in all social settings, restricted women’s freedom of movement, and delineated the role of Afghan women in society and in the home. The decree stated that when leaving their residence, women needed to be covered in burqas in accordance with Islamic Sharia regulation. The Taliban encouraged domestic violence toward women.

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23 Use of the veil fell out of fashion by the women of Kabul during this period. However, women in the countryside continued to wear the veil as it was seen as a social status, following the urban elite who had chosen to wear the veil and its association with not needing to work.


who violated any aspects of the decree, thus establishing one of the worst forms of gender apartheid in the 21st century.

The Taliban established the Amar Bil Maroof Wa Nahi An al-Munkar, or the Department of the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice. Also known as the religious police, young men walked around the streets with whips, long sticks and Kalashnikov rifles looking for violations of strict dress codes. In 1997, Afghan women were banned from wearing high heels, making a noise with their shoes while they walked, and from wearing makeup. The contrast was stark, as in the late 1980s Afghan women were attending universities, teaching, and working as doctors, nurses, and professors—some of them in miniskirts, but many of them unveiled.

**Gender Inequality and Armed Conflict**

Research on gender inequality and armed conflict suggests a connection between women’s security and a state’s peacefulness. Valerie M. Hudson et al.’s research linking the security of women to the security of states found empirical evidence linking the two variables. Gender performance varies widely across cultures. Few works recognize the intimate relationship that may exist between the political order between men and women and the political order that develops within the nation-state. Fewer studies contemplate the relationship between these two political orders and the resulting stability and resilience of the nation-state. The idea that the sexual order and political order are linked is not new. Suggesting that political order is based on the structure of male and female relations—that is, the established sexual political order shaping the development of societal collective political order—is of critical importance to military coalitions supporting nation-state stability and reconstruction efforts.

Sexual political order is focused on building fraternity through the systematic subordination of women that uses patrilineality to facilitate the creation of fraternity. Interlocking patterns of institutions, processes, and norms that enforce it is termed Patrilineal/Fraternal Syndrome. For peace, stability, and security to be established, the syndrome must be disrupted and dismantled. Hudson et al. suggests populations in Central Asia and Southeast Asia see the prevalence of clan politics, which propels real-world challenges to governance, economic performance, and in some cases stability. States failing to provide security for their citizens will propel groups to resort to clan-based governance in the absence of authority and is a consideration for future building partner capacity efforts. The most successful form of social control in

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32 Hudson, Bowen, and Nielsen, *First Political Order*, 44.
33 Hudson, Bowen, and Nielsen, *First Political Order*, 25.
Afghan society is the patriarchal family. It is impossible for Afghan women to escape male domination and is a domestic contention that women fight hard against. It is under this control that Afghan women have self-organized and have created a distinct women’s culture, which when given the chance, could enable them to defend themselves and meaningfully participate in conflict resolution, conflict negotiations, and peace building.

Building Partner Capacity

Gender-sensitive building partner capacity efforts in failed states provide a lens to analyze and address root causes of conflict. According to Francis Fukuyama, Barnett R. Rubin, and Thomas Barfield, international assistance in post-conflict states suffering from state failure require international nation-building assistance to develop state capacity. Brinkerhoff defines capacity as dealing with aptitudes, resources, and relationships, and facilitating conditions necessary to act effectively to achieve some intended purpose. Capacity can be addressed at three levels: the individual, the organizational, and the institutional. Capacity development is linked between these levels and is mutually dependent on one another. Post-9/11, Afghanistan state building was an extremely challenging endeavor. The U.S. toppling of the Taliban left the country with yet another vacuum of power that needed to be quickly resolved. William Maley found that the rebuilding of Afghanistan as initially conceived at the Bonn Conference in 2001 was not doomed from the outset; rather, it was undermined by a series of strategic misjudgments and miscalculations that combined to produce a dispiriting, rather than inspiring, outcome. State building in failed states requires the rebuilding of new institutions from the ground up. However, the massive requirements and intervention from the international community can have both positive and negative outcomes. Afghanistan was a unique state after the fall of the Taliban. The international community’s inherent contradictions led to immense challenges in developing state capacity after the Bonn Conference. Although research on nation building and women does not demonstrate a direct link between military intervention and women’s equality, it is essential to note military intervention can support the security situation.

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Literature on women’s participation in peace building and post-conflict reconstruction suggests linkages in improving security allows women to access crucial foreign aid organizations’ basic needs, including health services, food aid, and education.

The DOD defines building partner capacity as a broad set of missions, programs, activities, and authorities intended to improve other nations’ ability to achieve those security-oriented goals they share with the United States. However, the effectiveness of building partner capacity and whether or not strategic objectives have been achieved has been a debated topic among scholars and the U.S. Congress. Since 2001, building partner capacity has been a core component of the U.S. efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. It only recently has been prioritized in U.S. administrations in addressing weak and failing states. However, it was not until 2006 when building partner capacity was formally discussed in U.S. strategy and foreign policy documents, as addressed in 2006.

Long-duration, complex operations involving the U.S. military, other government agencies and international partners will be waged simultaneously in multiple countries around the world. . . . Maintaining a long-term, low-visibility presence in many areas of the world where U.S. forces do not traditionally operate will be required. Building and leveraging partner capacity will also be an absolutely essential part of this approach, and the employment of surrogates will be a necessary method for achieving many goals.

From a historical U.S. policy standpoint, and before 2001, building partner capacity was focused on security force assistance (SFA) missions, conducting bilateral engagements and training exercises, including military-to-military engagements, and U.S. forces conducting training alongside foreign militaries. The United States began operations in Afghanistan to destroy al-Qaeda for attacking the U.S. homeland and to destroy the Taliban for harboring Osama bin Laden. Combat operations against the Taliban succeeded and resulted in the organization’s overthrow on 9 December 2001. Seventeen months later in May 2003, the United States declared an end to major combat operations. However, post-combat was a fragile time for the Afghan state and was a crucial period for state-building initiatives to take place. U.S. strategy and policy lacked focus on Afghanistan reconstruction efforts. Instead, it focused on killing or capturing bin Laden and turned attention toward Iraq in a broader Global War on Terrorism. Still, since 2002, the United States has committed more than $190

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billion in aid and reconstruction in Afghanistan. In January 2015, a new NATO-led mission, Resolute Support, focused on training, advising, and assisting government forces to include defense and security institutions at the ministerial level. In 2017, Trump unveiled his South Asia Strategy which outlined a conditions-based approach to Afghanistan and was reliant on NATO allies and global partners to support the new strategy. The 2017 National Security Strategy of the United States of America (NSS) outlines and reinforces the importance of partner alliances and working alongside countries with the same shared values to maintain international order and stability. Partnerships are crucial to U.S. strategy as is one of the lines of effort outlined in the National Defense Strategy. The emphasis on partner alliances reinforces the critical task of building partner capacity and working alongside allies to ensure mutual and collective defense through advising partner nations.

**Security Cooperation Advising**

Nadia Gerspacher states that advising missions are fundamentally a capacity-building activity that helps restore the host government’s ability to govern. The United States has prioritized capacity building through the execution of its security cooperation Title 10 authorities and establishment of the Ministry of Defense Advisor (MODA) program and Afghanistan Pakistan Hands (APH) program, which marked a significant evolution in the DOD approach to capacity building at the institutional level. Very few scholars have considered the implementation of advising strategy and advisor training to execute defense institution building as a capacity development tool and a crucial factor that affects the building of state capacity in failed states. Gerspacher, however, finds evidence that it could be a substantial contributing factor in some cases. Alexandra Kerr and Michael Miklaucic claim defense institution building is an effective method and approach to support failed states in building capacity; however, it is not clear if military advisors from conventional forces are adequately prepared to conduct defense institution building at the strategic level due to competing missions of combat operations and advising and the sustainment and predeployment training involved.

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46 Donald J. Trump, “Remarks by President Trump on the Strategy in Afghanistan and South Asia” (speech, the Pentagon, Arlington, VA, 21 August 2017), 5.
51 Gerspacher, *Strategic Advising in Foreign Assistance*, 1.
in preparing conventional forces for conventional war.\textsuperscript{52} It goes without arguing in post-conflict states that a basic set of requirements is needed to assist the state.

**UNSCR 1325 Women, Peace and Security**

Twenty years ago, on 31 October 2000, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted UNSCR 1325.\textsuperscript{53} This landmark security resolution was the first of its kind to formally recognize the disproportionate effect conflict has on women and girls while recognizing the unique perspectives women bring to conflict resolution, conflict negotiations, and peace building. At the time, this resolution was exceptional as it shifted global thinking regarding conflict and its aftermath, bringing to the forefront gender considerations incorporated into a nation’s foreign and diplomatic policies. Additionally, this revolutionary resolution increased awareness between gender inequality and international peace and security. It also brought forth discussions on the effects of conflict and treatment in domestic lives of citizens exposed to conflict, such as treating wives and children as equal partners, as highlighted by Major Rahmani’s sentiments to Major Taylor’s wife.

UNSCR 1325 has three themes, including conflict resolution, conflict negotiation, and peace building. Furthermore, the resolution has four pillars: participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery. Ten additional resolutions were adopted, encompassing the WPS agenda.\textsuperscript{54} The agenda provides member states a framework for implementing WPS principles into civil, defense, and security sectors and more specifically in the planning and conduct of military operations.\textsuperscript{55} The WPS agenda addresses sexual gender-based violence, rape as a weapon of war, and children in armed conflict. These resolutions call for UN member states to protect women and girls from sexual gender-based violence and employ the resolutions in accordance with legally binding laws such as international humanitarian laws and human rights laws. Obligations under the Geneva Conventions and international laws supporting the WPS agenda, which requires parties in a conflict to prevent violations of women’s rights, support women’s participation in peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction.

The WPS agenda calls on member states to integrate gender perspectives into military operations, which includes military advising operations in Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{56} NATO has responded to the demands of UNSCR 1325 throughout its organization by integrating gender perspectives across the alliance’s core tasks of collective de-

fense, crisis management, and cooperative security. NATO calls on countries to use a gender lens in defense and security sector planning and operations to enhance military effectiveness through engagement of the entire population and to seek solutions to enhance security.

A gender perspective is a way of assessing gender-based differences between women and men as reflected in their social roles and interactions in the distribution of power and access to resources.57 When advising the Afghan defense sector in the implementation of UNSCR 1325, through Afghanistan’s National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325, Women, Peace and Security, a gender perspective is essential in establishing gender-sensitive ANDSF professional development programs and ensuring that women’s and men’s specific needs are included in programming and resource distribution. NATO recognizes the disproportionate impact conflict has on women and girls and the importance gender perspectives have on NATO military operations in critical areas such as intelligence, operations, and decisionmaking.58 For this reason, the RSM OPLAN included the implementation of UNSCR 1325 as a NATO military strategic objective.

As outlined in the U.S. South Asia Strategy, Afghanistan reconstruction efforts seek to build trust and technical expertise among the ANDSF through building partner capacity programs. The strategy is aimed at creating conditions on the ground to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a terrorist safe haven from which terrorists can launch attacks on the U.S. homeland. After more than 40 years of violent conflict and more than $190 billion dollars, political instability remains. Terrorist activity targets Afghan citizens, resulting in nearly two generations of Afghans growing up in wartime conditions. As a result, violent and aggressive behavior has become status quo in Afghan society, which negatively impacts Afghan gender roles.59

The U.S. Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 and the United States Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security support the Afghan national action plan for implementing UNSCR 1325 and reconstruction efforts by applying a gender perspective to pursue security and peace operations.60 The RSM has witnessed modest attempts of WPS implementation, as evidenced by the deployment of gender advisors, female engagement and cultural support teams, and U.S. and donor nation gender-specific funding. Despite the call for meaningful inclusion of Afghan women in the security sector in the U.S. WPS strategy and in annual U.S. Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF) appropriations, RSM leadership has not prioritized WPS efforts or fulfilled the obligations outlined in these authoritative documents. Afghanistan reconstruction efforts have witnessed a modicum of success and the fragile peace talks

57 Charlotte Isaksson, “Integrating Gender Perspectives at NATO: Two Steps Forward, One Step Back,” in Women and Gender Perspectives in the Military, 229.
60 Egnell, “Gender Perspectives and Military Effectiveness.”
exclude Afghan women’s meaningful participation in the peace process. Although implementing UNSCR 1325 in Afghanistan is a stated military objective, underinvestment in WPS application at the command leadership level and daily advisor activities remains unprioritized.

**Peace Building**

More than 20 years after the adoption of UNSCR 1325, women’s participation in peace negotiations and presence at the negotiating table remains exceptional rather than the norm. Women’s civil society organizations and the international community have acknowledged a women’s participation gap in peace negotiations that has garnered much attention in recent years. There is a growing body of literature and emerging consensus on women’s participation in peace negotiations and the quality and durability of peace processes. In fact, a study by Jana Krause, Werner Krause, and Piia Branfors found that between 1990 and 2014, women signed only 13 of 130 peace agreements. Despite the adoption of UNSCR 1325, the number of peace agreements signed by women has not increased.61 Addressing the women’s peace process participation gap is important because post-conflict societies and countries involved in peace negotiations offer a window of opportunity for increasing women’s meaningful political participation. The relative absence of women’s perspectives in peace negotiations contributes to negative effects on prospects of peace.62 Krause et al indicates the robust relationship between women signatories and the durability of peace. The linkages established by female signatories and women’s civil society groups contribute to increased peace provisions and commitments supporting effective peace arrangements and implementation.

Authors have argued that the role of women in conflict resolution and peace building provides linkages to provisions and access to resources during post-conflict discussions. The post-conflict period provides a window of opportunity for the meaningful inclusion of women to ensure economic, justice, and security institutions are inclusive of the needs of the population. Examples from countries such as Rwanda demonstrate how the inclusion and engagement of women during post-reconstruction can facilitate gender-sensitive programs and resources. In military advising operations, individual advisors serve as a crucial link in the transfer of knowledge and resources to support post-conflict reform. Regardless of the framework for a post-conflict failed state and the capacity-development program implemented, without inclusion of gender perspectives and implementation by well-educated and -trained advisors, capacity-building programs are fruitless. Lack of gender perspectives mainstreamed


62 “The Heart of the Matter,” in *Sex and World Peace*, 103.
into these development programs remains a strategic gap in reconstruction efforts. This study examines these factors and advisor predeployment training and gender implementation on how they affect advising and reconstruction in Afghanistan.

Applying gendered perspectives to conduct building partner capacity and security sector reform with a foreign security force partner involved in active conflict remains a research gap. The literature on applying a gender perspective to military operations remains focused on internal processes versus supporting a foreign military in implementing gender perspectives in military plans, policies, and operations. It is essential to understand the differences between advising the command and advising a foreign security force. These differences are gendered and involved relations between the sexes, power and authority dynamics, and access to resources, to name a few. Understanding these dynamics affects advising strategies and behaviors.

Implementation of gender perspectives in advisor efforts will result in gender-sensitive reconstruction efforts within the ANDSF to meet military outcomes and objectives, creating the conditions of an effective, affordable, and sustainable force.