

2022 IN REVIEW

2022 TALK WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY WEBINAR

What is WPS?

Women, Peace and Security (WPS) is a policy framework under the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325. The role of women in fostering peace in their communities and beyond has often been overlooked. Therefore, the WPS agenda affirms the significance of women's equal participation and full involvement in preserving and strengthening peace and security efforts.

The landmark resolution 1325 on WPS is the cornerstone of FOSDA's Women Peace and Security (WPS) work. All actors and stakeholders are urged under UNSCR 1325 to increase the participation of women and consider gender perspectives when making decisions about peace and security.

As part of our Women, Peace and Security (WPS) work, FOSDA initiated the "Talk WPS" Webinar Series. On Talk WPS, we raise awareness among the general public about Women in Peace and Security and Gender Equality. Talk WPS is also a platform to educate our audience on the value of meaningful involvement of women in the peace and security sector. It is also a platform for women's empowerment and capacity building especially for young women.

FOSDA is dedicated to advancing women's vital contributions to peace, development, and human rights. We would like to recap some of the series' highlights from "Talk WPS" last year (2022).

MARCH

On 31st March we had the first Talk WPS episode in commemoration of International Women's Day. The global campaign theme for 2022 was #BreakTheBias. Accordingly, three influential women in the peace and security field captivated us with their perspectives on "Breaking the Bias: Pushing the Boundaries for Women in the Security Sector."

These women in the persons of Professor Esmeranda Manful, Major Josephine Amoah and Ms. Awas Mary Goretty enlightened us on:

1. The difficulties women face as peace builders and peacekeepers, and the lack of female participation in local peacekeeping processes.
2. The need to invest in the technical expertise of women working professionally in Peace and Security.
3. The importance of diversifying Ghana's National Peace Council governing board, and the importance of civilian involvement in security.
4. The importance of properly mainstreaming the WPS agenda in Africa.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE INSIGHTFUL EPISODE ARE BELOW:

- 1. Promote gender mainstreaming in Peace and Security efforts to facilitate the integration of women's rights and experiences into all institutions.**
- 2. Promote effective media communication and advocacy on women's meaningful participation.**
- 3. Create a powerful women network that prioritizes and advocates for the WPS agenda and promote this database of Female professionals in WPS.**



The poster features the FOSDA logo at the top, followed by the title "TALK WOMEN PEACE & SECURITY SERIES" and "INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY EDITION". It lists three speakers: Prof. Esmeranda Manful (Programmes Officer, KNUST), Major Josephine Amoah (Ghana Armed Force), and Ms. Awas Mary Goretty (Specialist - Peace Education, South Sudan). The title of the episode is "Breaking the bias: Pushing the boundaries for women in the security sector". The date and time are "31ST MARCH, 2022 12:00PM GMT". The moderator is Omolara. Social media handles for @fosdaghana and @fosdaghana1 are provided at the bottom.

APRIL

In April, the title of our episode was "The Gender - Small Arms Nexus: Gender Considerations in Small Arms Control". This topic was chosen to highlight that Gender concerns are essential for effective and long-term management and control of arms. The speaker, Mr. Leonard Tetey, National Project Coordinator of the National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons, emphasized the importance of education and sensitization in order to demystify the concerns surrounding small arms and light weapons.

It was also stated that the Commission on Small Arms was considering introducing a policy that required a man to consult his wife before purchasing a firearm.

In policy making, this would address the significant role women have in influencing the setting in which guns are used and controlled. Domestic violence in Ghana will be reduced by this proposed policy. Hence, FOSDA urged the commission to put more gender-responsive arms control strategies into action.



MAY

The May edition of the series on "Countering Violent Extremism and Terrorism" was motivated by instances of violent extremism in West Africa and the Sahel that had surfaced within the year. Ms. Dorothy Barnes, the WPS programme officer at FOSDA facilitated the session. She informed participants about the causes of terrorism, the effects of terrorist activities and the role of women in preventing and countering extremism,

We successfully educated the participants on how to identify suspicious behavior that could be considered as extremist or terrorist behavior as well as identifying roles women can play in their communities to counter and prevent Violent Extremism and Terrorism



Image from: UN WOMEN -ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

JUNE

In June, Talk WPS explored "Gender Equity and Affirmative Action in the security sector". The session was led by a panel of High-ranking officers from Ghana National Fire Service, Ghana Immigration Service, and the Ghana Armed Forces.

The speakers, Assistant Chief Fire Officer(1) Gilbert Klutse, Chief Superintendent Evelyn Danquah Kottoh and Group Captain Theodora Agorny, illuminated us on the following:

1. The gradual increase of women occupying senior roles and undertaking sensitive assignments in the security sector, and the opportunities to encourage higher numbers.
2. The equitable policies and gender-transformative strategies the services were working on to encourage women's involvement.

The primary takeaway from this episode was that, despite the gradual increase in the number of women employed in security services, more deliberate effort was still needed to maintain their high levels of motivation and develop their careers. As a result, FOSDA advocated for the full implementation of gender policies across the board for security services.

This edition of Talk WPS serves as a foundation for FOSDA's initiative to monitor the implementation of Ghana's second National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325



JULY

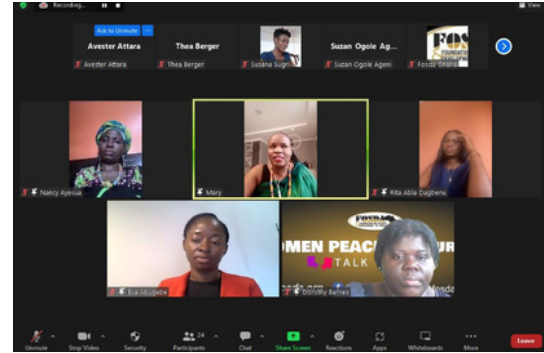
Our July edition, inspired by women's growing achievements in peace and security, gathered gender equality activists to offer guidance on how to advance women's empowerment under the topic "Young women leading the charge". Our speakers were Ms. Nancy Ayesua Otu, Ms. Awas Mary Goretty, Ms. Eva Abugabe and Ms. Rita Abia Dugbenu.

These young activists and social developers spoke highly of being deliberate in their collaborations, strategies, and actions when promoting gender equality. The women presented motivating stories that emerged from their desire for change.

They each gave important recommendations captured below:

- 1. Deliberately engage men and boys through practical strategies and actions when developing gender-related programmes.**
- 2. To bridge the gender inequality gap, both state and non-state actors should work together.**
- 3. Women-led organizations should advocate for structures that support women, especially the girl child.**
- 4. Consistent dialogue among actors and stakeholders is important to keep the gender equality and WPS topics relevant**

These stories were a source of great inspiration for participants present to advocate confidently for gender equality.



AUGUST

We conducted an evaluation in August to get feedback from participants over the past 2 years on how to make the Talk WPS webinar series a better experience overall. The Talk WPS community gave us overwhelmingly favorable feedback.

Our evaluation found that 85% of participants acknowledged having learned enough, while 64% said they had put their newfound knowledge to use.

On the best aspect of the Talk WPS webinar series, notable replies included:

- 1. The opportunity to learn from practical experience of others and also get the opportunity to engage with others.**
- 2. The expert resource speakers**
- 3. The opportunity to learn from different people in different areas and to network as well**
- 4. The opportunity to know how women are impacting their lives for the better**



Image from shutterstock

SEPTEMBER

Although there has been some progress in increasing women's participation in the peace and security sector, much more can be done, especially in terms of policy implementation and the visibility of the WPS agenda.

As a result, in the September edition, Dr. Charity Binka, a journalist and an expert in gender equality, led the session on strategically using the media to promote WPS processes and oversee the implementation of the WPS framework. This was under the topic, "Promoting Women, Peace and Security: Journalistic Perspectives"

She called all to action to influence lasting change for women and girls and recommended that to do this, it was necessary to have a media strategy in both program planning and implementation stages to promote women in peace and security.

This recommendation has been translated and will be utilized in FOSDA's project to monitor the implementation of Ghana's second National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325.



NOVEMBER

"Ending Sexual and Gender Based Violence from the Perspective of Women, Peace, and Security" was the topic of our Talk WPS final episode.

The November edition was consistent with 2022's 16 Days of Activism Campaign under the global theme 'UNITE! Activism to end violence against women and girls'.

The discussions were centered on:

1. Different types of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV).
2. What is being done to put an end to SGBV from the perspectives of both governmental actors and civil society organizations in Ghana.

Police officer, Superintendent Lydia Okrah Osei-Agyapong from the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) and Development worker, Ms. Gloria Kankam from Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF-Ghana) were our distinguished speakers for the session.

It was noted that promoting the value of women falls under the Participation, Prevention and Protection pillars of the Ghana National Action Plan (GHANAP 2) based on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

This session brought to light SGBV issues in Ghana as presented by the speakers and participants, two of which FOSDA followed up on through the participants who brought up those issues.

The recommendations highlighted during the episode are as follows:

1. Broaden the conversation on ending all forms of violence against women by including all groups of women everywhere, especially women at the grassroots level.
2. Ending gender based violence requires collaborative efforts from everyone especially at the individual level. Therefore, more awareness raising on UNSCR 1325 and the Ghana National Action Plan on WPS is necessary.




WPS and Gender Equality Quotes

Here are a few quotes taken from our accomplished speakers and partners

TALK WOMEN PEACE & SECURITY SERIES
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY EDITION

“ We need to look at security in its broadest sense. Non-state actors are also crucial in enhancing security. When we look at security in its broadest sense, brokering peace as a state will allow us to include women and diversify Councils like the National Peace Council. ”

Prof. Esmeranda Manful
A/g Vice-Dean for the Int'l Programmes Office (KNUST)




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TALK WOMEN PEACE & SECURITY SERIES
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY EDITION

“ Bias puts the woman in an awful dilemma which makes it that, she doesn't know whether she belongs or not ”

Major Josephine Amoah
Ghana Armed Force




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TALK WOMEN PEACE & SECURITY SERIES
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY EDITION

“ Profiling and documenting women and girls who are doing great things in the Women, Peace and Security agenda is a good way to advance WPS and to influence policy makers to promote gender mainstreaming in our policies ”

Ms. Awas Mary Goretty
Gender Mainstreaming Specialist
Hope Restoration - South Sudan



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TALK WOMEN PEACE & SECURITY SERIES
APRIL EDITION

“ Education and sensitization are needed to demystify the issues and information about small arms and light weapons. Men are not the only ones to be considered when we speak about anything relating to arms. There are so many ways women can contribute to the issues of arms. Women can influence the environment in which arms are used and controlled especially through policy making ”

Mr. Leonard Tettey
National Project Coordinator
UNDP/Small Arms Commission



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TALK WOMEN PEACE & SECURITY SERIES
TWPS SNIPPET

“ As a Finance person, from programme inception to completion to review I look at the gender aspects. If we are doing budgeting, I find out how the budget affects those who are at an advantage and those who are more disadvantaged to make sure that those that already have do not get more and those that do not already have use what they get. So that by the time the budget is implemented, it works equitably ”

~ Nancy Ayesua Otu ~
Finance Manager



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TALK WOMEN PEACE & SECURITY SERIES
TWPS SNIPPET

“ Despite the gender stereotyping challenges we were all raised with, we need to change the narrative as parents. As people of society we should desist from communicating in ways to downplay the role of women or young girls of their importance. We need to encourage them with positive words and let them know that they are also significant people of society who can explore and take up opportunities that come their way to self-actualise. ”

~Eva Abugabe ~
Integrated Development Practitioner



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TALK WOMEN PEACE & SECURITY
16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM
“SGBV is a Women, Peace and Security Issue”
#Prevention Pillar of UNSCR 1325

“ An important aspect of the Women, Peace, and Security agenda is acknowledging the value of women and girls. Violence against women and girls is therefore like rejecting their value; violence against women and girls is like the end of virtue, while preventing it is like the renewal of beauty and morality ”

~ Eric Frimpong Boateng ~
General Anti-Corruption Specialist (GACOS)

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TALK WOMEN PEACE & SECURITY
16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM
“SGBV is a Women, Peace and Security Issue”
#Participation Pillar of UNSCR 1325

“ Violence against women is not only physical, it also restricts women from contributing to, and participating in development of society in their daily living. The participation pillar of the UNSCR 1325 and the GHANAP calls for more women to participate in decision making at all levels. Let us promote women participation to create solutions that reflect the needs of all. ”


~DSP Angelina Yitankey~
(DOVVSU Unit, Ghana Police Service)

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TALK WOMEN PEACE & SECURITY
16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM
“SGBV is a Women, Peace and Security Issue”
#Protection Pillar of UNSCR 1325

“ The women peace and security agenda requires us to protect women from all forms of violence. Freedom from violence is a fundamental human right. Equality and non-discrimination is applicable to everyone, everywhere in all countries, cultures and communities and societies. Let us all unite to stop violence against women and girls anywhere, anytime. ”

~Horname Noagbesenu ~
(Director of PPME, KAIPCT)



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Talk WPS testimonials

FOSDA: "What Impact has the Talk WPS webinar series had for you?"

"It's been refreshing and eye-opening on issues critical to personal and national security"



Afua Boatemaa Yakohene

Research Fellow

Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy

University of Ghana

"Well, it's encouraging to know that people are doing their bit as women, to enhance security. It's also encouraging to know that institutions are becoming more gender sensitive and giving equal opportunity to women."

Anonymous



"Each session of Talk WPS has been enlightening. I'm always looking forward to each month and it's been beyond expectation. Women in security are leading great Interventions and it's about time they are brought in focus, appreciated and supported to do even better. I have been motivated and gained much knowledge from the experiences and stories by the WPS community. I hope future engagements will be just as educative."



Rubaba Suleman, Student

"Talk WPS exposed me to true challenges that women encounter in their unrelenting efforts to contribute to decision making in the management and resolution of disputes which affects them in all aspects. It also exposed me to the fact that women have so much influence as triggers of conflicts as well as being great influencers in bringing about peace."

Peter Apuko Awuni

Rector, Institute of Paralegal Training and Leadership Studies (IPLS)



"It has helped me gain more understanding on the Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) topic and how I can contribute to preventing it.

It helped me gather strategies on how to fight against SGBV in our communities and the nation at large. These strategies focusing mainly on Prevention, response and accountability. The knowledge gained helped me plan activities towards ending SGBV in my community during the 16 days of activism campaign.

Kassim Nakidu

SRC president of Kpembe Nursing and Midwifery Training College



"FOSDA's initiation of 'The TALK WPS webinar' is recommendable. As a key speaker in the the July episode, it provided a great opportunity to amplify the voices of vulnerable groups especially women and the need for consolidated efforts towards securing peaceful environment for human development. It also served as an avenue to reiterate the need for women's inclusion in peacebuilding, mobilise stakeholder support and especially encourage young women to explore and maximise opportunities within the peace and security space."

Eva Abugabe

Integrated Development Practitioner

