WE WILL NOT BE SILENCED

How International Actors Bolster Women's Movements' Push for Strong Gender Provisions

UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET

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Master's Thesis
Spring 2023

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Word Count: 21,212

ABSTRACT

Gender provisions have the overarching goal of enhancing gender equality, however few peace agreements include strong gender provisions. The presence of strong gender provisions in ceasefire agreements has crucial implications in the immediate and post-conflict phase in improving women's situation. I use structured, focused comparison in this study to explore when and how strong gender provisions on violence against women are adopted. I focus on conflicts with a high prevalence of sexual violence and contexts where women mobilize in the conflict to advocate for women's rights. I demonstrate the relationship between international involvement and strong gender provisions. I argue that in civil wars with a high level of international involvement in support of peace, ceasefire agreements are more likely to include strong gender provisions on violence against women. This is possible through the mechanism of international actors serving as brokers for the women's movement that is already mobilized to access and influence the peace process. This mechanism is particularly crucial for autocratic countries where women's mobilization is not sufficient to lead to strong gender provisions. However, the findings are applicable to countries with other regime types.

Keywords: conflict-related sexual violence, strong gender provisions, ceasefires, women's mobilization, international involvement, Darfur, Sudan, Myanmar

ACRONYMS

AU - African Union

CRSV – Conflict-related sexual violence

CSOs - Civil Society Organizations

GBV- Gender Based Violence

JEM - Justice and Equality Movement

NCA – Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement

UNAMID - United Nations - African Union Hybrid Mission in Darfur

UNSCR – United Nations Security Council Resolution

VAW – Violence Against Women

WINGOs - Women's International Non-Governmental Organizations

WPS - Women, Peace, and Security

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In Africa, we say it takes a village to raise a child. Pursuing this graduate degree and writing this thesis has been quite the journey; I couldn't have done it without the incredible support from all the people around me. I thank God for good health and the opportunity to complete this degree.

I'm immensely grateful for the support from my two supervisors, Karin Johansson and Lisa Hultman, who helped me refine my ideas into a coherent thesis. Their encouragement and guidance throughout the process has been fantastic.

I thank my family, who have always supported my academic ambitions, and my friends, who have been checking in on me and urging me on to the finish line. I appreciate my classmates who provided feedback on my ideas and paper.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Rotary Foundation for providing me with a scholarship, the Rotary Peace Centre staff in Uppsala for their continuous support, and Rotarians in Sweden who have made our experience worthwhile.

Finally, I extend a special thank you to the women civil society members from Myanmar who spared time to speak to me, and women activists in Sudan who were keen to contribute to this research but were caught in an unfortunate conflict. I also appreciate key informants who spared time to share their insights with me.

I dedicate this thesis to the women of Myanmar and Sudan who continue to fight for women's rights and democracy in their countries.

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1. INTRODUCTION

A clip of a woman in a traditional white *thobe* dress on a platform leading chants during mass protests that became the 2019 Sudan revolution went viral online. That image of then-22-year-old Alaa Salah, inspired the world for its symbolic representation of the courage of women in the frontlines of toppling an autocratic regime. (Malik 2019) Similarly, women were on the frontlines in Myanmar's spring revolution in 2021, protests against a coup by Myanmar's brutal military that has clung to power. (Khan 2021)These events symbolize women's agency and reflects a culture of women's political mobilization in both countries silenced by repressive regimes. Women's movements also mobilize in conflict to push for the adoption of gender provisions in peace processes resulting in strong provisions in some cases and weak ones in others, what accounts for this variation?

I situate this study in the subfield of research on inclusion in peace processes. The role of women in peace processes and the impact of women's participation on the quality and durability of peace has been the subject of increasing scholarly attention. (Gizelis 2009; Nilsson 2012; O'Reilly, Súilleabháin, and Paffenholz, 2015; Krause, and Bränfors 2018) However, we know that women's participation in peace processes does not always mean they can influence the process to have gender provisions.(Reimann et al. 2013; Aduda and Liesch 2022)

This study is also inspired by the emerging conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) field which has grown in the past two decades.(Nordås and Cohen 2021)Feminist campaigning led to the establishment of the international normative framework on gender and peace; the women peace and security (WPS) agenda. As an output of feminist advocacy, the United Nations (UN) adopted several resolutions on gender and peace, starting with UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 in 2000. This resolution called for the participation of women in all stages of peace processes, their protection from gender based and sexual violence, prevention of VAW through accountability, legal reforms and support of women's peace work and gender mainstreaming. (Ellerby 2013)UNSCR 1820 in 2008, followed 1325, explicitly categorizing conflict-related sexual violence as a threat to peace. (Agerberg and Kreft 2020)This resolution 1820 had direct implications for peace-making. It urged UN mediators to address CRSV in the mediation processes. (Jenkins and Goetz 2010)It also called for excluding amnesty for sexual violence crimes in conflict resolution processes. This study is concerned with the application of the women peace and security (WPS) framework.

The research on factors that lead to adoption of gender provisions is nascent. Gender provisions in peace agreements are clauses that address the situation of women during and after conflict. (Lee-Koo and True 2018)This study will focus on gender provisions that address violence against women (VAW). According to Jenkins and Goetz (2010), peace agreements have historically largely failed to address CRSV, even in conflicts where sexual violence was massive and had been used strategically. There are few studies on factors leading to adoption of gender provisions. Women's civil society mobilization and elite participation in peace negotiations, third party mediation and UN peacekeeping are identified in the literature as significant factors for the inclusion of gender provisions in peace agreements. (True and Riveros-Morales 2019; Christien and Mukhtarova 2020; Lounsbery, Gerring, and Rose 2022)

We also know from research that gender provisions differ not only by type but also how much they are able to achieve their intended objective for instance addressing violence against women. To date Lee-Koo and True's (2018) study articulates this aspect noting that specificity and a gender inclusive implementation plan denotes strength of a gender provision. They also highlight that several agreements that have strong provisions were mediated by the United Nations and African Union but they do not go beyond mentioning it. A shortcoming in the few existing studies is that they do not adequately address why and how strong gender provisions get included in peace agreements. Additionally, no studies are specific to conflicts with high prevalence of sexual violence. Lounsbery et al. (2022) find that generally there is less resistance to gender provisions that address victimization as compared to empowerment provisions, what then accounts for variations in strength of gender provisions in ceasefire agreements?

This research paper studies the question *under what conditions are strong gender provisions adopted in ceasefire agreements* and seeks to explore the causal mechanisms. This study contributes to the literature on gender provisions by exploring the factors that accounts for variation in strength of gender provisions particularly in conflicts with high levels of sexual violence.

Given the strength of a provision determines how much it will achieve its goal. There is a need to understand how and why peace agreements adopt strong gender provisions. My aim is to develop a theory that explains how strong gender provisions get adopted. Various issues associated with the strength of VAW provisions and ceasefires underscore the importance of this study. Ceasefires are geared towards suspending violence temporarily or permanently. CRSV as a form of violence

can be prevented through ceasefire provisions if it is included as a ceasefire violation that is then monitored. Without explicitly prohibiting CRSV, perpetrators have no incentive to stop perpetrating it, ceasefire monitoring teams and peacekeepers also do not have a specific mandate to report and address CRSV respectively. Scholars have a consensus that there is no single agreed definition of a ceasefire but that it entails arrangements to achieve a temporary or permanent cessation of hostilities. (Forster and Bell 2019; Bara, Clayton, and Aas Rustad 2021; Clayton and Sticher 2021)

There are currently no theories that directly address my research question. I develop and test a theory concerning strong gender provisions in ceasefire agreements. By "strong gender provisions," I mean clauses that are specific in that they explicitly prohibit VAW, are gender inclusive in implementation mechanisms, and reference WPS frameworks. (True and Riveros-Morales 2019, 5)The strength of gender provisions is assessed based on whether the provisions meets intended goals for the type of provisions based on specific criteria.

I argue pressure from above and below leads to the adoption of gender provisions. Domestic women's mobilization constitutes pressure from below while international involvement is pressure from above. I conceptualize international involvement as several non-coercive actions; mediation, peacekeeping force with a political mandate, women's international NGOs collaboration with domestic actors and United Nations security council resolutions. I claim that international actors serve as brokers who create space and opportunities for women to access the peace process. They also give legitimacy to their demands and cushion domestic women's movements from state repression enabling them to substantially influence peace processes leading to adoption of strong gender provisions. I assert that the effect of international involvement is more significant in contexts with repressive regimes, however it is also relevant in contexts with other regime types.

To investigate the empirical variation in strength of VAW gender provisions this study employs structure focused comparison. Two cases are selected based on the Mill's method of difference; the cases are selected based on similarities which make them comparable, but they differ on one independent variable of interest that could explain the outcome, the dependent variable. (Seawright et al. 2008) The research analyses secondary sources; academic books and journals, reports by academic institutions, human rights, peacebuilding, and women's organizations, news articles from both local and international sources and UN statements. The findings of this study are in line with the literature and my theoretical argument that CRSV results in both domestic women's

mobilization and a high level of international involvement. Domestic women's movement mobilize with CRSV a central issue in their advocacy, international actors driven by normative mandates broker women's access to peace processes and bolster their demands leading to strong provisions on VAW.

This paper is structured as follows; in chapter two, I highlight key arguments in the literature related to my research question. I discuss literature related to gender provisions and consequences of sexual violence in the first part and identify a research gap in the latter part of this section.

Chapter three starts by describing how I develop the theory and then dives into related theories that shed light on my research question. Finally, I present a causal mechanism and conclude by drawing a hypothesis. Theory development is guided by several themes related to my question; women's mobilization in conflict, transnational feminist advocacy, and international norms.

Chapter four outlines the research design, the motivation for my choice of methods, case selection criteria and ethical issues, and how empirics are structured.

Chapter five discusses the Darfur conflict and the 2013 Ceasefire agreement between the Sudanese government and the Justice and Equality Movement. Chapter six outlines the Myanmar conflict and the Myanmar Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement of 2015.

Chapter seven tests the theory developed through a focused comparison of the two cases. Chapter eight discusses the main findings, explores alternative explanations, and highlights additional observations. Finally, in chapter nine, I will provide a summary of the paper, conclusion, and insights for future research.

2. PREVIOUS RESEARCH

In this section, I will provide an overview of the previous research and the research gap. Although the focus of this paper is on strong gender provisions, I approach the literature from a broader view because literature on factors specific to strong gender provisions is nascent. I start by presenting key arguments related to the research question. Next, I discuss literature on conflict related sexual violence, a theoretically relevant scope condition influencing gender provisions. (Lounsbery et al. 2022). I then move on to discuss literature that addresses the strength of gender

provisions and identify a research gap and I conclude this section by stating the purpose of the study.

Gender provisions and peace agreements

The adoption of WPS framework is credited for enhancing gender inclusion in peace agreements, empirically the research shows increased inclusion of gender provisions after UNSCR1325 but does not go as far as claiming causation. (Bell and O'Rourke 2010) Despite this increase, the WPS agenda has however fallen short in entrenching the practice, Duque-Salazar, Forsberg, and Olsson (2022) note that only 30% of all peace agreements include gender provisions. Lee-Koo and True (2018) note that gender provisions are still more of an exception than a norm, they go further to quantify the strength of gender provisions in ceasefires; 63% have weak provisions,31% had no provisions, and 6% had strong provisions.

The emerging literature on gender provisions encapsulates different aspects. Some studies argue for the utility of gender provisions on durability of peace.(Krause and Bränfors 2018)Another strand of the research assesses the effects of gender provisions and their implementation.(Davies and True 2022; Duque-Salazar, Forsberg, and Olsson 2022) and yet other studies explore factors that lead to adoption of gender provisions. This paper will focus on the latter type of studies as the scope of this paper is only limited to inclusion of gender provisions in ceasefire agreements and not the next steps of implementation and impact.

Gender provisions typology and categories.

Lounsbery et al. (2022) have developed a typology that places gender provisions into two broad categories: empowerment or victimization provisions. On the other hand, Lee-Koo and True (2018) put gender provisions into five broad categories; i)participation of women, ii)violence against women, iii)human rights and human rights instruments, iv)development and women's economic empowerment and v)peace processes and post-conflict issues. Using Lee-Koo and True's categories, this paper focuses on violence against women gender provisions which I argue are most crucial in early phase peace agreements such as ceasefires due to their potential to prevent further CRSV.

Factors that lead to adoption of gender provisions

According to research, there are several factors that lead to the adoption of gender provisions, the literature explores these factors in a dichotomized way; domestic and international factors which are often studied separately with little attention to the interaction of these factors. This research

paper explores the interplay between the international and domestic factors which are summarized in the table below and relevant factors discussed thereafter.

Table 1 Summary of factors leading to adoption of gender provisions

Domestic factors	**International factors**
• Women's formal/elite participation in peace processes as participants • Civil society organizations formal participation in peace processes as third party • Women's parliamentary representation • Increased level of women's civil society mobilization/ women's civil society participation	• Third party roles in the peace processes mediation by states or regional actors • UN peacekeeping mission • UN mediation • Mediator's agency
Other relevant factors: • Phase of agreement • Political power sharing agreements are more likely to include gender provisions • Level of gender equality	

First, scholars have a consensus that democratic peace processes where women and civil society participate in formal processes are associated with adoption of gender provisions. (Barsa et al., 2016 ;Lee-Koo and True 2018; True and Riveros-Morales 2019; Christien and Mukhtarova 2020). Women's presence as parties to peace negotiations enables them to bring in women's experience of conflict which informs a gendered perspective in the peace process. A gender perspective means ' …integrating women's concerns into policies and programmes in a way that addresses the root causes of issues affecting women...' (Bell 2015, 7). Research shows that when women participate in peace processes, they raise issues of women's rights and gender equality; women's pressure in Burundi led to the adoption of a 30% gender quota. (Barsa et al. 2016, 7)

Second, a high level of women's civil society participation increases the likelihood of gender provisions as women CSOs advocate for policies that are useful to women. Lee-Koo and True (2018) argue that women's CSO participation is one of the most crucial factors for the adoption of gender provisions. They conceptualize women's CSO participation as freedom for women to freely discuss issues, participate in CSO organizations and work as journalists. This argument is coherent with political science research on adoption of gender quotas which concludes domestic women's mobilization and international pressure results in gender quota adoption. (Agerberg and Kreft 2020)

Third, Lee-Koo and True suggest that women's parliamentary representation is positively correlated with adoption of gender provisions. They observe that women legislators do not necessarily speak for women as a group but that women parliamentarians are conduits of women's experiences which they use to push for gender equality issues.

Fourth, states or regional actors having a third-party role as either mediators, observers or witnesses to peace negotiations increases the likelihood of gender provisions adoption. The involvement of states and regional organizations such as the African Union in peace agreements has a substantive effect but this is dependent on the power and influence a state or regional body has over the peace process. (Christien and Mukhtarova 2020, 13)

Fifth, the presence of a UN peacekeeping mission in a country is also positively correlated with increased likelihood of gender provisions. The causal effect of the presence of UN peacekeeping mission is associated with the roles of a peacekeeping mission in advocating for a gender perspective in the peace process. (Ibid) I posit that this is particularly true for missions that have a political and gender mandate that allows for such missions to support mediation.

Sixth, there is divergent results on whether the UN involvement as a third party in an agreement increases the likelihood of gender provisions. Christien and Muktarova (2020) find that UN involvement as a third party in the peace process has no significant correlation with gender provisions. Other scholars argue peace processes that have the UN involved as third party (as signatory or declaratory) are more likely to have gender provisions than those that don't.(Bell and O'Rourke 2010; Bell 2015, 16) Lounsbery et al., (2022) claim that civil wars peace agreements that

are negotiated through third parties (mediation) are likely to include more gender provisions than those without mediation, this is true if the mediation is successful.

Another international factor mentioned in related literature is women's international non-governmental organizations (WINGOs). WINGOs promote global gender norm diffusion by providing strategic support in the form of international advocacy and resources. (Htun and Weldon 2012; Brysk 1993)They facilitate domestic movements to push for political reforms and therefore there is an expectation they also play a role in adoption of gender provisions.

Finally, there are also mixed results on whether the level of gender equality in a country is positively correlated with gender provisions, this depends on how it is measured. For instance, True and Morales (2019) use fertility rates and levels of women's tertiary education, lower levels of fertility increases the likelihood of gender provisions. Higher levels of education is surprisingly not positively correlated with gender provisions, Christien and Mukhtarova (2020) infer that this could be because mediators focus more on women's rights in contexts with low levels of gender equality. The general expectation is that countries with higher levels of gender equality / women's empowerment would have gender inclusion in peace agreements but that isn't the case, what accounts for this variation? I argue women's mobilization is a necessary but not sufficient condition, international involvement comes in to boost and pave way for women's influence in peace processes resulting in strong gender provisions.

Other factors noted in the literature include the phase of the peace agreement; major agreements within peace process such as constitutions and final /comprehensive peace agreements are associated with strong gender provisions. Power sharing agreements are also associated with gender provisions, as the inclusivity is extended to women too. (Lee-Koo and True 2018, 1; Bell and McNicholl 2019, 4)

Consequences of conflict-related sexual violence

Conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) is a persistent dynamic in recent conflicts across the globe despite substantive international legal prohibitions - including the designation of rape as a war crime (Muvumba-Sellström 2021). More than half of the conflicts between 1989 and 2008 saw conflict-related sexual violence perpetrated against civilians in various conflicts worldwide.(Chu and Braithwaite 2018) We know from research that conflict related sexual violence triggers both a domestic response in form of women's mobilization and various international responses.(Agerberg

and Kreft 2019). This paper argues CRSV is a condition that underpins factors leading to strong gender provisions, as such it is relevant to discuss literature on CRSV consequences in this section.

A high prevalence of conflict-related sexual violence results in mobilization at the local level and draws an international response. (Kreft 2019b) argues women mobilize against CRSV as it is viewed as a threat to women as a group hence all women rally against it. Lounsbery et al. (2022) in their statistical study find victimization provisions are more likely in conflicts with high level of civilian victimization. They attribute women's mobilization as a causal mechanism as articulated by Kreft.

Women mobilize through self-help groups, humanitarian, survivors groups which eventually morph into a political mobilization. Women's political mobilization is not intended to influence the government as a goal but a means to attract international attention and support towards the 'women's agenda' of which addressing CRSV features prominently. Kreft operationalizes women's mobilization as protests and linkages to women's international non-governmental organizations (WINGOs) and finds a significant positive correlation between high prevalence of CRSV and women's mobilization. Women's political mobilization enables their inclusion and participation in the peace process and gains for women. For instance, in Colombia a women's coalition was successfully able to advocate against amnesty for CRSV in the peace negotiations. In repressive contexts women's movement and civil society in general adopt strategies in response to repression. For instance, in addition to subtle strategies like silent vigils the linkage to international actors was protective factor against regime brutality for local activists. (Brysk 1993)

At the international level, international actors respond in various ways to CRSV. Kreutz and Cardenas (2017) argue there are two main types of international responses to CRSV in civil wars. The first is the coercive, what they term a punitive response which entails sanctions or deployment of third-party military, premised on 'women as victims' logic. The second type of international response is tailored to enhance women's participation and agency. It entails mediation and peacekeeping and is aimed at holistically addressing structural causes of CRSV. Overall, they conclude that measures that enhance participation are preferred by international actors over coercive measures when responding to high levels of CRSV. Other forms of international response include UN security council (UNSC) resolutions which usually precedes a peacekeeping force. UNSC resolutions indicate that CRSV has become a substantive international policy issue distinct from other forms of civilian victimization. A UNSC resolution mentioning CRSV in a particular

country raises the costs for conflict actors as it indicates the willingness of veto powers to respond to the conflict situation.

In this paper, I study the role of international involvement in bolstering women's advocacy for strong gender provisions in conflicts with a high prevalence of CRSV.

Ceasefires and the Strength of Gender Provisions

Scholars concur that ceasefires are less likely to include gender provisions due to limited scope, that is their focus on military hostilities (Lee-Koo and True 2018; Forster 2019, Christien and Mukhtarova 2020). However, VAW provisions are an exception, CRSV is mentioned in ceasefires in different ways; under list of hostilities to be halted, protection of civilians or the section on demobilization. If mentioned as part of the hostilities to be stopped it serves a beneficial prevention function. (Barsa et al. 2019). Lee-Koo and True 2018 identify UN and AU mediation as a factor that is associated with strong gender provisions. Nanako and O'Reilly (2018) whose study is focused on constitutions point out that women's political representation is associated with strong provisions.

Research gap, research question and contribution

The research question is inspired by an empirical puzzle. From past research we understand that women's mobilization and participation in peace processes is a significant factor in the adoption of gender provisions. However, from empirical cases we observe that women's mobilization is not sufficient for adoption of strong gender provisions. In cases with similar conditions (autocratic regime, high levels of CRSV) there is variance in the outcome. This presents a divergence puzzle, given the same conditions what then explains this variation in outcome (strong vs weak provisions)? Day and Koivu (2019) endorse this approach of using puzzles as a tool to identify research questions and note that it then informs the case selection method; the Mill's method of difference for a divergence puzzle.

As discussed above, the literature provides insights into factors that contribute to gender provisions. However, the current research is limited in that it does not speak to contexts with high levels of CRSV and autocratic contexts. Additionally, there is no research adequately addressing the interplay between international and domestic factors beyond mentioning the factors separately. Finally, on measurement of the strength of the gender provision, the literature is just emerging, to

my knowledge there is only one paper by Lee Koo and True (2018) measuring the strength of gender provisions. My study contributes to the literature by filling these gaps raised above. In addition to gaps in the literature, the research question is also based on the empirical puzzle which provides an opportunity for theory development. I study the question *under what conditions does women's mobilization lead to the adoption of strong gender provisions in ceasefire agreements?*

Purpose

In addition to enhancing how we should understand the research question, this study also informs practice by providing insights into debates in the field and highlighting possible effective interventions. Preventing sexual violence in conflict is a key concern for policymakers and ceasefires are a key entry point for preventive interventions. Firstly, in some cases, CRSV continues even after the cessation of conflict(Nordås and Cohen 2012). Secondly, when CRSV is not specified in the peace agreement, actors are not obliged to address it in the enforcement stage; for instance, peacekeeping mandates draw from the agreement text (Jenkins and Goetz 2010). Thirdly, ceasefires set the tone for the subsequent peace processes; if gender provisions are included in a ceasefire, this increases the chance that the subsequent peace agreements will maintain those provisions. (Forster and Bell 2019)

Furthermore, women continue to be at the core of social movements in Sudan and Myanmar in the struggle for democracy, this research can highlight visions for effective transnational feminist cooperation. Organizations working on the issue can utilize findings to avoid current pitfalls such as authoritarian regimes' co-option of the women, peace, and security agenda (Olivius, Hedström, and Phyo 2022)

3. THEORY

In this section, I will present the theoretical framework. I develop a theory on how strong gender provisions are adopted in conflicts with high sexual violence and in autocratic contexts. I use related literature from human rights and political science research to put together a theory related to my research question. I structure the theory section in in four parts; first an overview of the theory I develop. Second, I discuss how domestic women's mobilization in conflict unfolds in response to CRSV and under repressive regimes, third I delve into how international actors respond to high CRSV and women's mobilization and fourth I conclude the section by presenting the causal diagram mechanism and drawing a hypothesis.

Gender provisions refer to clauses that recognize the different gendered impacts of conflict and the need to address that in peace processes. They are clauses that mention gender, women, girls or terms associated with gender roles: mothers, pregnancy or effects of conflict on women i.e. widows. (True and Riveros-Morales 2019,27). In this paper I use autocratic states and repressive regimes interchangeably to mean states that deny citizens their fundamental human rights including civil liberties as per the definition by Roterberg. He posits that what repressive regimes have in common globally is that they use violence, torture, imprisonment of human rights activists and political opponents and assassinations to enforce compliance to demands of the ruler or ruling junta. (Rotberg 2007,3)

Pressure from above and below theory

In developing a theoretical framework, I refer to and synthesize key ideas from social movements, political science and human rights literature. I rely primarily on Agerberg and Kreft's theory on pressure from above and below. They argue that in conflicts with a high prevalence of CRSV, pressures from above (international involvement) and below (domestic women's mobilization) oblige states to adopt gender quotas. International actors respond to a high prevalence of CRSV by applying both normative and material pressure by using aid as leverage to urge states to adopt gender quotas. I make several points of divergence from their theory in developing a theory relevant to the research question in this study. First, in lieu of gender quotas I theorize on gender provisions. Second, instead of studying the effect of coercive international involvement, I consider a broader range of less coercive measures such as mediation, peacekeeping, international NGO coalitions and UNSC resolutions. Finally, the empirical cases I investigate are in the context of repressive regimes as such I expect mechanisms to differ particularly on the process through which CRSV visibility is achieved. Instead of women's public protests that has potential for backlash and

more gender-based violence as established in research, (Johansson 2022) I argue women's movements use covert and safe strategies such as documenting and publicizing CRSV through international networks or from exile. I capture my theoretical argument in a figure 1 below, this study focuses on international involvement which is highlighted in the diagram.

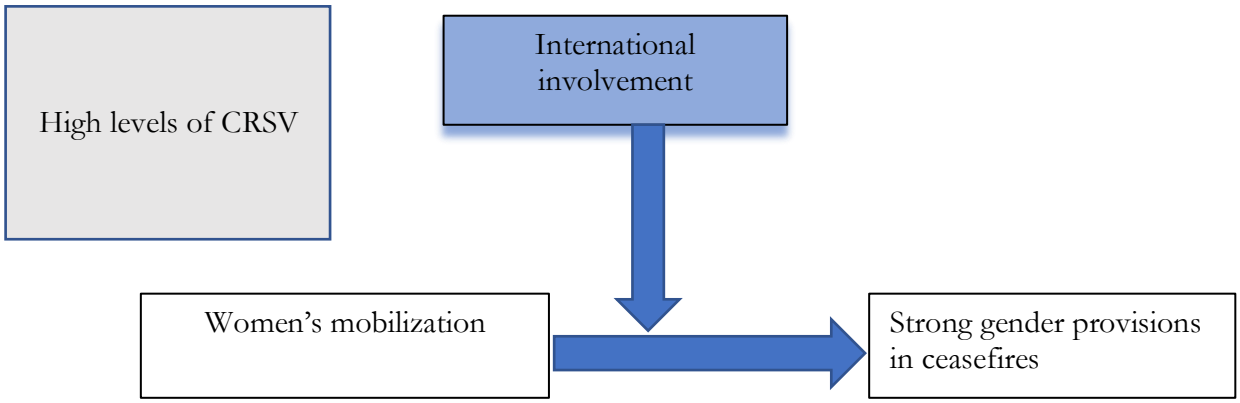

Figure 1 Pressure from above and below theory

Domestic women's mobilization

Scholars recognize threats as a trigger to mobilization and the collective identity as central to the process of threat framing.(Berry 2015; Kreft 2019a) CRSV is a threat that puts all women at risk by the virtue of their gender therefore pushing women to mobilize against it as common threat. Tilly defines mobilization as the process of a group coming together to participate 'actively' in the public sphere; as a process, mobilization therefore has steps. (Berry 2015, 136)Women's mobilization can take many forms and is largely grassroots based in the form of self-help groups, humanitarian-focused groups and victims association. (Berry 2015; Kreft 2019a)While Berry (2015) makes a case for the fluid nature of women's movements and in particular the impact of women's grassroots groups, Kreft (2019) argues women's groups metamorphosize for instance through formal women group coalitions and take a public approach such as protests to influence politics. It is the latter conceptualization of mobilization that this paper adopts; to be clear, that is, political participation of women's groups to influence policy. Bush (1992) highlights the conceptualization of social movement success as gaining access to political decision-making spaces, influencing institutions such courts, legislature, media, and achieving stated goals. She however critiques viewing policy change as success and argues for looking at how the policies are

then implemented by states. This paper argues that drawing international attention to high CRSV, access to the peace-making processes are indicators of movement success.

Information

The visibility of CRSV is the spark that kick-starts an interaction between the domestic women's movement and international actors. (Kreft 2019) I argue in autocratic contexts domestic women's movements opt for subtle strategies to achieve international visibility on CRSV in civil wars; for instance documenting CRSV and passing it on to international WINGOs who amplify and lobby their home countries often powerful states to act. Other means include individual women activists giving testimony to international human rights mechanisms and decision-making bodies such as the UN human rights council and the UN security council. Domestic women coalitions also themselves visit strategic seats of power UN in New York to create awareness on women's issues in conflict and call for international pressure on warring parties. (Conciliation Resources 2013, 40)

Similarly, diaspora organizations formed by activists in exile serve the role of sensitizing and advocating on CRSV at the international levels by holding side events at UN human rights meetings and submitting reports to treaty and human rights institutions. Brysk (1993) notes that during the repressive regime in the 1980s, the Argentine human rights movement had division of labour with different strands that served different functions. Exiled human rights activists undertook political sensitization (in Europe and the US). The domestic strand did documentation of human rights abuses that served as the basis for policy decisions by the United States (US) and the United Nations condemnation and international inquiry into human rights violations in Argentina.

These strategies reduce the overall level of backlash and security risks for women's movement that engage in public protests by raising the cost of violations; human rights violations could attract sanctions by global powers. I argue WINGOs publish reports and publicize documented CRSV to get parties perpetrating CRSV to change their behaviour, similar to what human rights organizations broadly do, naming and shaming strategy. DeMeritt and Conrad (2019)however claim that UN resolutions which is a naming and shaming mechanisms results in what they term repression substitution; it leads states to change tactic for instance reduce the human rights abuses it is condemned for and continue other violations.

Documenting and publicizing CRSV or human rights violations broadly is highly risky in autocratic contexts, in Sudan the government clamped down on CSOs working on CRSV expelling international NGOs and shutting down local ones. (Tønnessen 2017) I argue that domestic women's movements knowing the significant implications of documenting and reporting rely on it as a strategy despite the risks. They however adapt for instance publications of reports is done by diaspora women groups while in-country groups discretely collect the information.

International involvement

I conceptualize international involvement to entail a variety of actions; transnational network formation and advocacy, UNSC resolutions, peace keeping mission with a political mandate and mediation that advocates for integration of women's concerns. The literature has so far except for a few authors not looked at these actions collectively but studied their effects in silos. As a novel approach I focus on non-coercive international involvement and theorize that a combination of international factors are collectively responsible for strong gender provisions in ceasefire agreements

WINGOs, transnational advocacy and norm diffusion

International NGOs conduct international advocacy using information from domestic movements eliciting international solidarity and action. Principe (2017) notes how women political prisoners in Chile, during Pinochet's repressive regime wove messages on traditional quilts *Arpilleras* that were snuck out of the country and became the subject of an international campaign by Amnesty International. According to Brysk (1993), information can tilt the power balance in favour of social movements by appealing to, persuading, and influencing issue specific international regimes.

For CRSV advocacy, I expect similar mechanisms to be at play, I argue women's domestic mobilization is significant but not sufficient to result in strong gender provisions in autocratic contexts. The women, peace and security international regime bolster efforts of local women's groups through their influence. I argue women's international NGOs (WINGOs) sensitize the international policy makers and foreign governments through private lobbying and public campaigns to call for their response to stop CRSV. Research shows the crucial role international actors play; they serve as intermediaries between grassroots groups and the government bolstering efforts of women's movement to advance gender equality(Berry 2015). I argue that non-coercive international involvement interacts with domestic mobilization by playing a facilitative role to enable women voice their agenda.

I posit that transnational feminist networks are formed to respond to high levels of CRSV in conflict. Network formation means the interconnection of various groups for a common cause and entails communication, exchange of ideas, information and sometimes services. (Brysk 1993). VAW is an issue that converges women's movement globally as women's experience of violence transcends cultures worldwide, women as a universal group are susceptible to violence due to their gender. International networks provide a form of protection for domestic movements and activists through what Keck and Sikkink (1998)term the *boomerang* pattern. Groups that have ties to INGOs have the benefit of international supporters lobbying the powerful states to pressure the violating government thereby deterring further harm to a group or individual activists.

WINGOs aid domestic movements through funding, technical training on how to approach and navigate engagement with international bodies, logistical support and international advocacy to amplify messages and demands of domestic women's groups. I argue domestic women's movement also find a convergence on VAW as a priority issue although they differ in their framing and approaches. The difference in framing can be attributed to the orientation of women's groups and intersectionality; women from diverse race, ethnicities, geographies (rural/urban), political ideologies have different outlooks on VAW based on their unique experiences and ideological standpoint. However, women are good at overcoming vertical and horizontal divides to push for an agenda in the interest of women as a group. On advocacy, to amplify messages of domestic women's groups, WINGOs publish joint statements with the domestic women's groups helping to shape international understanding of the issues and providing international legitimacy.

WINGOs play a substantive role in diffusing WPS norm, research shows international CSOs played a crucial role in dissemination of international gender mainstreaming frameworks resulting in domestic policy change. International women's NGOs like the women's international league for peace and freedom (WILPF) with links to over 60 countries provide knowledge and help disseminate the WPS norms. Norm diffusion enables a domestication and adoption process where women then use it to claim their rights. (True 2016)

UN Security Council Resolutions

Benson and Gizelis (2020) find that higher CRSV significantly correlates with a larger number and high level UNSC resolutions. High levels of CRSV elicited higher levels of UNSC interventions in the conflict for instance sanctions and or third-party military force. This effect is independent of

prior action whether previous UNSC resolutions or the presence of a peacekeeping force that already demonstrates the conflict's intensity.

What then is the significance of UNSCR? Such resolutions precede most UN response and therefore an indicator of international visibility and great power interest in responding to a conflict. In sum, it shows the willingness of UN veto powers to respond to the conflict situation including through third party military intervention, it therefore raises the costs for warring parties. It is a decision motivated by high CRSV demonstrating its position as a conflict dynamic considered a distinct intensity indicator.

Furthermore, Nathan (2020) argues that UNSC resolutions reflect global norms and constitute mediation mandates that signal to the mediator what the priorities in a given conflict are and therefore direct and constrains the mediator. Mediators have a normative mandate; the WPS agenda is a prominent mandate which Nathan argues influences the mediation most when it is included in UNSC resolutions on a conflict. Beyond pressure, mention of WPS issues in UN resolutions provides the mediator, domestic women's groups and international WPS actors a basis to push for inclusion of gender perspective in peace processes. (Nathan 2020,4-5).

Peacekeeping

Multidimensional peacekeeping forces have a broader mandate including peace-making, peacekeeping, peace enforcement and peacebuilding. Bara et al. (2021) notes that such peacekeeping missions support mediators in their peace-making role such as putting together ceasefires. According to Christien and Mukhtarova's quantitative study peacekeeping missions are linked to an increased likelihood of gender provisions in peace agreements. Greig and Diehl (2005) find a possible contradictory outcome between peacekeeping and peace-making roles. They argue that a peacekeeping force may undermine negotiation if not deployed before a civil war breaks out. However, Clayton and Dorrusen (2022) find that mediation and peacekeeping are often deployed simultaneously and are complimentary. Peacekeeping requires the continuity of the peace process while mediation needs the conducive environment created by mediation. I argue that a peacekeeping force with a political mandate to support an inclusive peace process enables the adoption of strong gender provision. Combined with mediation, such peacekeeping missions give women access and facilitate their influence in the peace-making process.

Mediation

I argue that with international mediation in conflicts, mediators play a sponsorship role to women's civil society by providing an entry point for women to influence negotiations and output of peace processes. While participation is not synonymous with influence, research shows that when women participate in peace processes, they address violence against women. However, the literature on mediation and inclusion is divided on the impact of civil society participation on mediation effectiveness with arguments in favour of either inclusion or exclusion. Paffenholz (2014)bridges this dichotomy by proposing nine models of CSO participation. I argue mediators can interact with domestic women's CSOs through some of these participation modalities which are direct representation in negotiations, observer status, a spectrum of consultations ranging from official, semi-official to unofficial consultations such as high level CSO initiatives. Official consultations ran alongside the formal negotiations and non-official track II consultations happen in the pre-negotiation phase or parallel to the negotiation. Nathan (2020) claims a mediator's influence is drawn from their mandate, their personal commitment to gender and acceptance by parties which then determines the effectiveness of the mediator to advocate for WPS agenda in the peace agreement. Paffenholz and Ross (2015) assert that 'inclusion-friendly' mediators; put gender issues on the priority list, creating space for women to influence talks and serving as a conduit for women's demands. I argue such mediators are brokers that enable strong gender provisions to be adopted. I expect states and regional actors mediation to function in a similar way and the difference to be on level of influence based on their respective leverage and level of acceptance by belligerent parties.

Causal mechanism

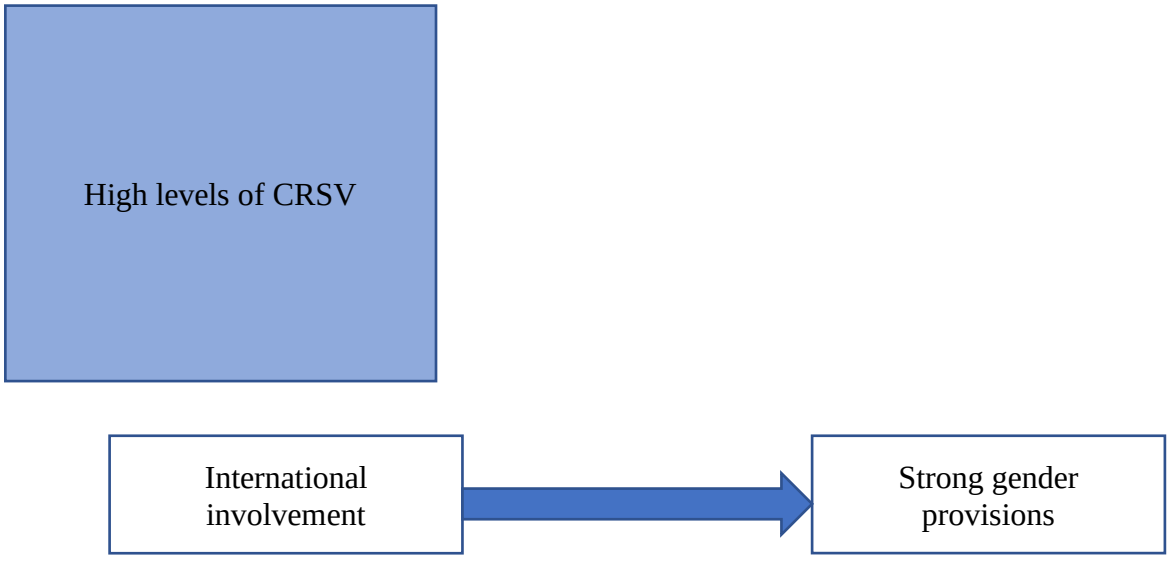

Figure 2 Causal mechanism diagram

Hypothesis

I hypothesize that in contexts of civil wars with high prevalence of CRSV, " Given domestic women's mobilization, international involvement increases the probability that ceasefire agreements will have strong gender provisions."

4. RESEARCH DESIGN

In this chapter, I will describe the methods I use to test my hypothesis. I will first outline my case selection criteria and why the cases are relevant then describe methodology I use, and sources I utilize. I also describe ethical challenges and how I operationalize key concepts in my theory.

Case Selection

This study will employ the method of structured-focused comparison. In a focused comparative case study where we seek to compare three to five cases, using random selection technique is likely to result in a sample that is highly unrepresentative as such I take purposive sample technique. Seawright and Gerring (2008)suggest three guidelines on which to base case selection for the purposive sampling process to be methodologically sound. First, the instances of the phenomenon to be studied should be present, second the case(s) should be representative of the population and third, the chosen cases must have variation on relevant elements of theoretical interest.

My starting point is to establish a population; all ceasefires with gender provisions. I used the Women, Girls, and Gender Peace Agreements ((PA-X Gender) database which captures all agreements between 1990-2022 that contain gender provisions. From the ceasefire agreements with gender provisions, I narrowed down to the two cases using scope conditions. I summarize the case selection criteria in the table 2 below.

Two cases are studied with ceasefire agreements as the units of analysis: the Myanmar Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement of 2015 and the 2013 Ceasefire agreement between the Government of Sudan and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). I used the Mill's method of difference to select the cases from the population. My aim has been to identify two ceasefire agreements where the preceding conflict had comparable levels of CRSV and women's mobilization, but significant differences in terms of the outcome, that is, strong gender provisions in the agreement itself. The Myanmar ceasefire does not have strong gender provisions while the Sudan one does. The two

case contexts are similar; both are autocratic states. The 2013 Darfur ceasefire is mentioned in the literature as having 'strong' gender provisions (Lee Koo and True 2018; Forster and Bell 2019). This case therefore warrants in depth study to identify the causal mechanisms and for theory building.

Table 2 Case selection criteria

Population	**Sample after scope conditions**
Ceasefires with gender provisions (mentions violence against women in one or more ways) Signed after 2008	Scope conditions ● High prevalence of sexual violence in the years preceding the ceasefire. ● Post 2008 – UNSCR 1820 ● Similar type of conflict – intrastate conflict ● Autocratic regimes
11 possible cases: 1) Burundi 2006 Government and Palipehutu – FNL) 2) Burundi 2002 (Transitional Government and CNDD-FDD) 3) Indonesia Aceh (RI and GAM) 4) Sudan 2004 (Humanitarian ceasefire Darfur) 5) Central African Republic 2014 (Brazzaville cessation of hostilities) 6) Central African Republic 2013 (Ceasefire agreement government and Seleka coalition) 7) Myanmar 2015 (Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement) 8) South Sudan 2014 (Cessation of hostilities between Government and SPLM/A in opposition) 9) Sudan Darfur 2013 (Ceasefire between Government of Sudan and JEM) 10) Sudan Darfur 2010 (Ceasefire between Government of Sudan and LJEM)	1) Sudan Darfur 2010 (Ceasefire between Government of Sudan and JEM) **2) Sudan Darfur 2013 (Ceasefire between Government of Sudan and JEM)** 3) Central African Republic 2013 Ceasefire 4) Central African Republic 2014 (Brazzaville Cessation of hostilities) 5) South Sudan 2014 (Cessation of hostilities between Government and SPLM/A in opposition) **6) Myanmar 2015 NCA**

Clayton and Stitcher (2021) posit that the effect of ceasefires depends on the logic and provisions they contain. Bara et al. (2021) argue for context and purpose-specific analysis of ceasefires, that is exploring where and why parties entered into the ceasefire agreement. Based on this theoretical reasoning, I do not put the two ceasefires I study into categories, but instead, I argue for their comparability based on their logic and the purpose for which they are designed. The sequencing stage at which a ceasefire is agreed upon impacts the kind of provisions the agreement will contain. (Forster and Bell 2019). This idea is another basis for comparing the ceasefires I study, both ceasefires come after previous peace agreements.

Table 3 Cases summary

CASES	**Scope conditions**	**Domestic Women's mobilization**	**International involvement**	**Strong gender provisions**
Myanmar NCA ceasefire	Autocratic regime Widespread level of sexual violence[1]	Present	?	Weak
Sudan GoS and JEM ceasefire	Autocratic regime Massive level of sexual violence[2]	Present	?	Strong

[1] A count of 25-999 reports of sexual violence as coded in SVAC dataset, sexual violence is conflict related but not used systematically or strategically (SVAC codebook pg.9)

[2] A count of 1000 or more reports of sexual violence, sexual violence is systematic and used a tool, tactic , strategy of war.

Time frame and Sources

In selecting cases, I focus agreements on the period after 2008 as a core part of my theory links to international norms, although 1325 is considered monumental, resolution 1820 that was passed in 2008 more specifically addressed sexual violence in conflict. After this resolution, the UN developed a guideline for mediators on addressing CRSV in ceasefire and peace agreements. (United Nations 2012). The theoretical expectation is that WPS norms gives impetus to international involvement and norm diffusion where domestic CSOs use WPS norms to advocate for women's rights including protection and prevention of VAW in conflict. I choose to focus on ceasefires that were negotiated after this period for this reason. There is a time lapse of two years between the two cases which has no implications for comparability. Given the cases are from different contexts, that is Asia and Africa, we would only expect regional and global events to have an effect, there was no significance global events between 2013 and 2015 in relation to the issues that may affect comparability.

Comparability is crucial for a study to establish that the outcome is caused by the explanatory variable and not other differences. As Lijphart (1971)observes one crucial contextual difference that could have implications on the outcome is time frame, a comparable time frame is therefore established to guide analysis. Given conflicts related to both cases are protracted and the peace processes under analysis have been built up over time, women's mobilization and international involvement will be evaluated in a period of eight years prior to the ceasefire agreements.

As the starting point in selecting cases, this paper utilised the University of Edinburgh Peace Agreements Women, Girls and Gender (PA-X Gender) database. The database lists all agreements from 1990-2023 that include Women, Girls and Gender, or Sexual Violence. (Bell et al., 2020). After identifying all peace agreements with gender provisions, I narrowed down cases using the advanced search option by applying intrastate filter as type of conflict, and violence against women as category and sexual violence as an issue mentioned in the agreement. The database does not provide a filter for type of agreement (ceasefires, comprehensive agreement), as such I applied a time frame relevant to my study from 2008. The database also provides a summary of gender issues in particular agreements. For instance, for the two ceasefires selected, the gender provisions that address violence against women are highlighted. (PA-X Gender,2017) The database also provides the original agreement text which I also analyse to assess the strength of the gender provisions in the empirics section of this paper.

To analyse women's mobilization and international involvement, I retrieve and analyse data from a variety of sources. Research publications by academic, peacebuilding and women's organizations provide different insights; those that analyse the overall peace process shed light on the design and process, inclusion and international involvement if any. A second type of publication by peacebuilding organisations specifically addresses women's role in the peace process; this kind of publication is available for both cases allowing for comparability. However, this type of source relies on other secondary information available on the design of the peace process to make conclusions. I problematize this peacebuilding sources that do not include primary information such as interviews with women or other stakeholders participating in the peace process, as such it is possible they overestimate the influence of international actors. We also cannot establish whether women's participation in the peace process was substantive and not tokenistic beyond their numbers cited in the reports. A third type of publication by women's organisations entails analysis of the gender inclusion perspective in the peace process including a review of gender provisions and gaps in the ceasefire document. This type of publication is only available for the Myanmar case, the Darfur case is cited in publications as a case with strong gender provisions but no in-depth analysis is available. I also utilize data from academic books that provide contextual information on the conflict, the peace process design and the role of different actors in the peace process.

The paper also cites human rights reports, UN statements and media articles both from domestic and international media. The same news item is checked in the international and domestic source to verify whether the facts are reported more or less in a similar manner for triangulation to counter potential bias. If any additional information is brought up in one source it is further investigated.

Methods

Structured focused comparison

An inherent problem of case studies is that generalization is limited, however since the aim of this method is not inference but rather to elucidate the causal mechanisms, it is an appropriate method for this study. Nonetheless the findings are applicable to the broader population; countries with no autocratic regimes.

Interviews

The study aimed to incorporate findings from interviews with women's movements from the two cases to trace how international involvement has interacted with women's domestic mobilization

to push gender provisions in ceasefire agreements. Some initial interviews were conducted with Myanmar participants, however, renewed outbreak of conflict in Sudan in April 2023 just as interviews were scheduled that week necessitated a shift of the methodology to reliance on secondary sources as an ethical and pragmatic consideration. Secondary sources have some limitations; they do not give a full picture of the dynamics of women's mobilization and how domestic women's movements interacted with the international factors. It is therefore challenging to fully substantiate some theoretical arguments.

Ethical considerations

I had initially considered various ethical issues that would apply in conducting primary research such as participant privacy, confidentiality and risk of traumatization for women activists recalling their situation or that of their community during conflict. An ethical dilemma presented as reports of conflict breaking out in Sudan. I had the dilemma of whether to immediately suspend plans for conducting interviews with participants in Sudan or to proceed at a later date if the situation was manageable. I made the decision to not pursue interviews altogether even at a later date taking into account not only the physical but also the psychological safety of participants. The research was looking into conflict that happened two decades ago but whose dynamics are very much driving the current conflict.

Analysis of secondary material also required some thought into ethical issues I discuss below. Firstly, my positionality as an African and Muslim woman coupled with my practitioner experience working on gender-based violence and inclusion issues gives me a critical perspective when interacting with the research material. For instance, I apply an intersectional lens understanding that gender issues in the contexts I study are shaped by additional interlinked identities; race, class, religion, ethnicity, geographical divides. Indeed, some of the literature I use for this study also acknowledges these aspects and shortcomings of Western feminist research. My positionality and consequent application of an intersectional feminist lens shapes my analysis of secondary material. I take the standpoint that this enhances the quality of the research, argue that 'rather than view positionality as an obstacle to overcome, we can view it as a resource.' (Ali and Pratt 2016,81) They recommend a transnational feminist approach which I adopt in this paper recognizing the unique nuances of women's experiences rather than assuming a universalist view on issues affecting women.

On reflexivity, a primary issue I have reflected on throughout is my responsibility as a researcher to ensure fair representation of the groups I study. In my paper, assessing international institutions can be less subjective as compared to women's movements. As such I remained conscious of this fact and alert the reader potential shortcomings in my assessment of women's movements.

As Guillemin and Gillam (2004) note reflectivity is a tool that guides the researcher to navigate issues beyond the realm of procedural ethics. In the context of this research, I have therefore elaborated on my positionality as a frame for understanding and writing about the research question and my practice of reflexivity to mitigate inaccurate representation.

Operationalization

In this section, I identify and discuss indicators; that is observable aspects of the concepts in my theory and how I will measure them. While some concepts are easily directly observable in empirics others are complex and have to be unpacked, yet others have come to be accepted as standard measures of certain concepts. (Powner 2015)

Women's mobilization

I measure women's mobilization using the following indicators:

- Domestic women's documentation of CRSV.
- Domestic coalition formation.
- Women CSO participation in the peace process

Independent variable - International involvement

- One or more UNSC resolutions particular to a conflict that mentions WPS issues.
- WINGO collaboration with domestic women groups
    - Technical support to domestic movements on navigating international mechanisms and international networking.
    - WINGO international campaigns and advocacy on CRSV.
- Formal consultation forums with women civil society convened by third party mediators/ mediation team.
- Informal consultation sessions with women civil society endorsed by mediators.
- Multi-dimensional peacekeeping mission presence and interaction with women CSOs

Dependent variable - Strong gender provisions.

To operationalize strong gender provisions, I will focus specifically on provisions on violence against women (VAW) and develop a list of theoretically relevant indicators to measure whether the provision is strong. Strength of gender provisions is an ordinal variable that can be put in categories and ranked. There are no set standards on measuring gender provisions, drawing inspiration from True and Riveros-Morales, I utilize the following indicators and develop a scale to assess the strength of gender provisions.

Scale

To assess the strength of each relevant gender provision, I develop a three-point scale, to score the highest (3) a gender provision must meet each of the three criteria below:

1. Explicitly prohibit CRSV; that is, the clause should be written in clear language expressing prohibition and be placed in a prominent place in the agreement text i.e. not footnote or in the preamble.
2. Convey a commitment to implementing the prohibition through a gender inclusive monitoring plan.
3. Demonstrate a broader understanding of CRSV by referencing international frameworks specifically on women's rights (WPS framework).

The scale therefore ranges from 1 which implies the criteria is entirely not met /absent from the provision, to 2 partially met but with significant gaps and 3 the clause fully met the criteria.

Indicator	**No provision (1)** *Entirely unmet*	**Weak gender provision (2)** *Partially met*	**Strong gender provision (3)** *Fully met*
CRSV is mentioned in the operational paragraphs of the ceasefire document.			
Wording of the clause mentioning CRSV indicates prohibition /obligation for actors to cease CRSV perpetration			
Presence of clauses that refer to inclusion of women in ceasefire monitoring mechanism			
Presence of reference to WPS international framework (one or more)in the ceasefire agreement.			
Overall ranking/score			

Causal Mechanism

Conflict-related sexual violence.

Scholars differ slightly in their definition of CRSV with the point of divergence being either on the type of acts that constitute sexual violence or what can be considered conflict related. I adopt the definition in the Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict (SVAC) dataset. Cohen et al. (2021) who developed the SVAC dataset define conflict related sexual violence to include the following acts: rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, and forced sterilization/abortion, sexual mutilation, and sexual torture. What acts of sexual violence are considered conflict related is tied to whether the perpetrator is an armed actor on either divide of the conflict whether government, rebel forces or their affiliated armed proxies such as militia. Acts of sexual violence

committed by civilians in conflict are excluded. SVAC relies on reports from Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the United States Government database, I also utilize two human rights organizations' reports as sources.

Structure of Analysis

In this section I describe how the analysis section is structured. Firstly, the analysis will begin by presenting the individual case studies; the Ceasefire Agreement between the Government of Sudan and the Justice and Equality Movement-Sudan (JEM) hereafter referred to as Darfur Ceasefire and the Myanmar 2015 Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement hereafter referred to as Myanmar NCA in chapter five and six respectively. For each case I begin by giving a brief of the conflict and peace process leading to the ceasefire then I collect similar empirical data in each case and wrap up by conducting a within case analysis. To guide the case discussion, I use the following questions to assess the two independent variables:

- What were the dynamics of women's mobilizations (history, mobilization strategies)
- What were the dynamics of international involvement? (What type of international factors were present)
- How did the domestic women's movement and international involvement interact, in what ways did it push for gender provisions.

For the dependent variable strong gender provisions, the following questions will frame the discussions and support in scoring the strength of the Sudan (Darfur) and Myanmar ceasefires.

- To what extent is a clear prohibition of CRSV made in the ceasefire text?
- To what extent does the ceasefire provisions convey a gender inclusive commitment in implementing the prohibition.
- To what extent does the ceasefire demonstrate a broader understanding of CRSV?

Secondly, after discussing the specific case values for the IVs and DV the next part of the analysis section will cover a comparative analysis of the two cases assessing whether the empirics support my hypothesis and arguments and to what extent.

Thirdly, I will discuss the main findings, alternative factors that have an explanatory power for the causal relationship under study and extra observations. Next, I will discuss limitations of the of

the study to wrap up analysis. I will finally end the paper with a summary and conclusion section that will provide a summary of the theoretical arguments, main findings, the study's contributions and identify gaps for future research and policy implications.

5. DARFUR CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT 2013

5.1 Darfur Conflict and Ceasefire Background

The Darfur conflict began in 2003 with an armed rebellion against the government of Sudan (GoS) by two rebel groups Sudan Liberation Movement / Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). The two rebel groups rose on claims of marginalization of the region by the Khartoum government. (Ottaway and El-Sadany 2012) Noteworthy is that these armed groups emerged when the Khartoum government was negotiating with armed groups in the country's South. The government of Sudan (GoS) responded to the armed uprising with massive military force and used local militias, known by the Arabic name the *'Janjaweed,'* as proxies to target civilians in a campaign of terror. The aerial bombardment of civilians was often followed by attacks by the Janjaweed, who killed, looted, and committed systematic violence against women, including abductions, rape, and sexual slavery. (Amnesty International 2011). Totten (2009) argues genocidal patterns were present in this conflict but that that the decision by the UN international commission of Inquiry on Darfur not to term the crimes by the government and the Janjaweed genocide was politically motivated. He notes that the UN was hesitant to launch an inquiry and only did so at the request of the United States (US). According to Prunier (2007), the conflict was rooted in the Khartoum government's political and socio-economical marginalization of Darfurians and an environmental crisis. Still, it took a racial dimension framed as a conflict between Arab and African communities.

A series of ceasefires, including one mediated by the African Union, paved the way for the Darfur Peace Agreements (DPA) signing in 2006 in Abuja, Nigeria. However, the DPA, although a comprehensive agreement, was not considered successful as only a splinter group of the SLM signed the agreement with the GoS; the other SLM faction and JEM refused to sign the agreement as their expectation of power-sharing at a national level was not met. (Hottinger 2006). Before this, a ceasefire in 2004 was followed by the deployment of the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS)

to monitor a humanitarian ceasefire; by 2006, the mission had grown into a peacekeeping force with 6,000 military personnel and 1500 police officers. (Abbas 2015, 410) This AU mission would later morph into the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), established in 2007 with 19,000 personnel. UNAMID's mandate ranged from protecting civilians to ensuring and assisting with an inclusive peace process. (Heywood and Maeresera 2019) However, the DPA failed to bring peace, and fighting continued in Darfur for another four years until fresh negotiations began in 2009, led by the government of Qatar, which was appointed by the League of Arab States and supported by the AU and the UN.(Marsden 2020) These negotiations in Qatar consisted of track I and track II and culminated in the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDDP) in 2011. The DDDP was a comprehensive framework for peace; negotiations of ceasefires between the government and Darfur rebel groups followed it. JEM had boycotted Doha negotiations since 2010, when a ceasefire it had signed with the government collapsed soon after. However, JEM re-entered negotiations in Doha in 2012 and signed the 2013 ceasefire under analysis in this study. Before that, in 2009, the International Criminal Court (ICC) had indicted President Omar El Bashir for war crimes and crimes against humanity; later, a genocide charge was added, effectively placing an international warrant of arrest against the president. Among the grounds for the ICC indictment of President El Bashir was the charge of systematic use of sexual violence in the conflict. (Back 2015)

5.2 WOMEN'S DOMESTIC MOBILIZATION

Tracing Women's Mobilization in Sudan

It is important to note that this paper traces women's movement from the perspective of North Sudan because the peace process under study in this paper concerns this geographic scope. Women's formal mobilization in Sudan can be traced back to 1951 when the Sudanese Women's Union, which later became the Sudanese Women's Democratic Union (SWDU), was founded. Women in Sudan have a long history of mobilizing politically for women's rights and peace issues; in the 1964 revolution that led to the overthrowing of Sudan's first military regime, women protested alongside men. Over time, the political environment and rights that Sudanese women enjoyed changed under different regimes. The focus of SWDU as the leading women's movement was on women's rights in the public sphere and less on rights in the personal sphere, including issues such as forced marriage and sexual violence.(Tønnessen and Kjøstvedt 2010) Although women considered the personal status laws discriminatory, they did not work on it yet; this

aversion to work on these issues was because they did not want to directly criticize Islamic law and the clergy. Nonetheless, they began tackling the issue from less contentious topics. (Tønnessen and Kjøstvedt 2010,4).

Research shows that the women's movement in Sudan has been inaccurately portrayed as unitary, what Hale terms 'totalizing of the women's movement.'(Hale 2001,83) She notes that the Sudanese women's movement falls into three categories; secular left groups, cultural nationalists/religionists, and grassroots groups that also organize as NGOs operating in Sudan or exile. (Ibid)Understanding the different ideologies of the women's movement is essential as it has implications for how women organize. An additional rift manifested in the urban-rural/elite-grassroots divide between Khartoum-based women's groups and those in other regions of Sudan. This study focuses on the third type –groups that are organized as non-governmental organizations.

Mobilizing under repression

In the 1950s, Sudan's Women Union organized and participated in protests in solidarity with women in other parts of Africa and supported the independence of other African countries and Arab women freedom fighters. However, this form of outward mobilization was repressed under the subsequent regimes, including the Bashir regime under which the Darfur conflict occurred. In 1955, the organization began a publication *Sawt al- Mar'a* Women's Voices, to raise and advocate for women's rights and as a tool to mobilize women. SWU also enjoyed bold transnational ties as a member of the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF) (48-49) and the Women's Arab Union. Beyond women's issues, SWU stood for social justice and against the systematic discrimination of 'African' communities by the regimes in Khartoum that identified as 'Arab.' As a national organization, it initiated connections across the racialized divide by reaching out to women in South and Western Sudan (Darfur). (Osman 2014)

SWU is critiqued as having focused on non-strategic feminist issues, but I argue that it is the foundational work on fundamental rights that enabled women to claim political rights. The women's movement was an entryway into politics for women; SWU's leader ran for office and was elected as Sudan's first woman MP. The women's movement in Sudan flourished and went from strength to strength in 1970 SWU held an international conference to discuss women's education

and social and economic issues affecting women. The 1973 constitution granted equal rights under the law regardless of gender. Women from the North were appointed to government positions, including as government ministers and other arms of government, including the judiciary.

1989 was a turning point when the state under the National Islamic Front slid to repression, and women no longer enjoyed certain rights. The repression of women is associated with this period when the imposition of *Sharia* Islamic law took root, although it had begun under the 1983 Niemeri regime. Osman (2014), however, observes that under the civilian government of 1986-1989, the *Sharia* law remained in place but was no longer used to harass women on the same level. Another Sudanese scholar underscores that "the implementation of Islamic law has been more about politics than interpretation, as the regime used law at every turn to expand the state apparatus." (Abbas 2015, 355)

Women formed civil society organizations that flourished in this period working on diverse issues, including peacebuilding. Following the 1989 coup that brought Omar El Bashir into power, a new era of repression took root in Sudan. The regime banned SWU, trade unions, and political parties; the Public Order Act was used to target and curtail women's participation in the public sphere, dictating women's dressing, restricting movement by requiring women to seek permission from a male guardian to travel, and similarly permission to work outside the home. This law stifled women's mobilizing and reversed the gains women had made. (Abbas 2015) However, over the decades of repression, the women's movement developed strategies to continue mobilizing. For instance, since the 1990s, the women's movement refrained from using the term gender-based violence(GBV) to put their work out of the regime's purview. An Islamic women's movement emerged to confront the regime and was successful in advocating for reforms to policies discriminatory to women. Leftist women's groups prioritized reform of public order laws which they viewed as the basis of the repression of women. It is under this backdrop that women mobilized post-Darfur conflict.

Domestic Women's Responses to Sexual Violence in the Darfur Conflict

Sexual violence is considered a sensitive issue, and working on GBV in Sudan has been extra challenging; one could be labeled anti-government, which compounded the stigma.(Tønnessen 2017, 148)Any work under the banner of 'gender' issues has been faced with government restrictions and clampdowns, with the government raiding offices, meetings, attacking activists,

detaining them arbitrarily, and using sexual violence against women and youth activists. Even scholarly and research-related work has not been spared; the Gender Centre for Research and Training (GCRT) is one CSO that faced such a fate when 2004 security forces raided a workshop on gender and political participation. (Osman 2014)

In 2011, Hawa Abdullahi, a Darfurian woman working with UNAMID and a community activist on gender issues, was detained by the government under a barrage of false accusations. (Dabanga 2011) Earlier in 2009, she had been detained for 11 days following the ICC indictment announcement; Human Rights Watch had indicated she had faced ill-treatment in detention. Before 2007, citing her own family's experience, she had spoken to international media on the atrocities committed by the Janjaweed militia against civilians, including the rape of women. (BBC 2011). The government's actions are consistent with its repressive tactics against women activists working on gender-based violence and political opponents of the ruling regime. (Human Rights Watch 2011) When Hawa was arrested, Amnesty International put out an urgent action campaign for Hawa (Amnesty International 2011)

The government of Sudan placed severe restrictions to prevent working on and documenting gender-based violence, particularly in the Darfur conflict. By introducing laws such as the Organisation of Humanitarian and Voluntary Work Act in 2006, the government expanded its regulatory power giving it control over the work of NGOs. Women's NGOs such as Khartoum based Salmmah Women's Resource Centre, along with others, met and petitioned the UN Security Council Mission visiting the country in 2006. They asked the mission to put pressure on the government to revise this restrictive law and enable access for women's organizations into conflict areas namely GBV- affected women in Darfur, the Nuba Mountains, Eastern Sudan, camps of displaced people near Khartoum and parts of South Sudan. (Hashim 2007). According to a UN report on the mission's visit, the UNSCR1325 was highly quoted by the Sudanese women's NGO delegation he met; they proposed a series of actions to prioritize to achieve the goals of the landmark 1325 resolution. They recommended; political and legal reforms, property land ownership, protection of women from GBV and holding perpetrators accountable, and establishing women resources centers in refugee and IDP camps. The head of this UN mission recommended that individual UN agencies collaboratively work on implementing recommendations of this strategy proposed by Sudanese women.

Khartoum-based Sudanese women's activist Fahima Hashim, made wide-ranging recommendations to the UN and AMIS. She called on them to;

> recognize women's peace-making role, do more to address CRSV, namely by mandating and resourcing AMIS to take action on GBV, training the personnel on gender and prevention of GBV and for AMIS to coordinate with and support work of women's organization in Darfur and at the national level. (Hashim 2009,1)

Most CSO,s working on women and human rights were based in Khartoum; according to Hashim(2009), their priority in a CSO response strategy to CRSV in Darfur was to repeal the rape law and form a network of women's rights organizations.

Politicization of Sexual Violence and Backlash

In March 2005, the UN Security Council referred the situation in Darfur to the ICC, citing war crimes and crimes against humanity, which CRSV substantively featured. In June, the ICC prosecutor confirmed the case was admissible and began investigations. (Mary Deutsch Schneider 2006)

Due to the repressive regime and its role in widespread CRSV, Sudanese women's groups working on GBV did not publish reports. However, the domestic women groups managed to manoeuvre government suppression to provide direct services to victims of CRSV, such as legal aid, psychological support, and other services for survivors. (Hashim, 2009). In 2008, the ICC prosecutor brought charges against President Omar El Bashir on five accounts of crimes against humanity, including rape, and in 2009, issued a warrant for his arrest. The mass CRSV in Darfur and the substantial international attention it received opened space to discuss rape in the public sphere, and the women's movement in Khartoum began mobilizing for legal reforms on laws on rape. (Tønnessen 2014)

The ICC issue further triggered the repression of CSOs by a government already silencing women's activism. NGOs working on CRSV faced a backlash, 13 international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) were kicked out of Sudan, and three local ones, including a Darfur-based one, were shut down. The data on CRSV collected during their work supporting victims were also taken. (Tønnessen, 2017) The National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) had far-reaching

powers and was responsible for arbitrarily detaining activists, holding them without charge, and subjecting them to torture and ill-treatment in custody. In 2011, during the wave of the Arab Spring, the NISS arrested activists it accused of plotting protests and used sexual violence against women activists in detention to silence them. One such activist spoke out about her experience; the government arrested two female journalists who covered the case. (Women Media Centre 2012). Although these incidences were in Khartoum, in a different context, it was depictive of the government's repressive tactics against women activists that could have been deployed in Darfur but under-reported.

Khartoum – Darfur-Diaspora Dynamics

Both facing repression, women's groups in Khartoum had some room to operate, while those in Darfur faced severe restrictions. Tønnessen (2014) notes that the situation worsened with the ICC indictment, with the government believing women's groups were collecting evidence for the ICC. Osman (2014) argues that the women groups in Khartoum had the duty to speak out for marginalized women, given that they were less likely to face severe risks than grassroots women's groups.

Murphy and Tubiana (2010)noted that fragmentation and difference in approach also emerged at the Doha CSO conference; they highlighted two camps that emerged on one side Khartoum-diaspora groups and Darfuri groups on the other. They attribute the differences to the respective groups' proximity to the conflict or lack thereof.

Formation of Domestic women's groups' coalitions

The conflict in Darfur and widespread violence against women elicited the response of women groups in Darfur and at the national level in Khartoum. The Khartoum-Darfur divide depicting an elite-grassroots barrier also manifested in how the different camps framed the issue of VAW. Darfur groups perceived it as an issue within the conflict that should be addressed within peace processes. Khartoum groups saw it as a continuum of violence and an opportunity to push for more comprehensive legal reforms.

At the local level in Darfur, women CSOs like the Sudanese Women's Initiative for Darfur participated in the civil society forums held as part of the peace processes**.** (Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative 2018). It is unclear whether the Darfur women CSOs established coalitions concerning their participation in the CSO tracks. In 2009, Khartoum women groups formed a

coalition called ' 149 Alliance' to campaign for the reform of section 149 of the North Sudan penal code that prevented reporting of rape by equating the crime of rape to *zina,* which covers adultery and sexual intercourse between unmarried individuals. With stringent measures to prove rape and the burden of proof on women, this legal provision essentially criminalized victims of rape. (Refugees International 2009)

Participation in civil society consultations in the Doha Peace Process

Women CSOs did not participate in direct track I negotiations in the Doha peace processes but mobilized in a number of ways to make their concerns known and influence international involvement. Darfuri civil society participated in formal consultations held as track II initiatives in Doha and Darfur. Women delegates who attended CSO forums in Doha that ran parallel to track I talks mirrored demands of broader civil society; women activists involved had specific women-focused demands which included protection from CRSV, economic rights, and political participation, including in peace processes (Ibid 5). I contend that the civil society track contributed to the realization of a sustainable and legitimate peace process that went beyond veto actors enabling women to influence the peace process. CSOs wielded real power and influence, according to Murphy and Tubiana (2010)

5.3 INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT – INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

Transnational advocacy

In the case of Darfur, some women's international NGOs have collaborated with domestic women's movements in global advocacy. One such organization is the Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice (WIGJ), which describes its mandate as pursuing gender justice by working with women in conflict-affected countries under investigation by the ICC. As the Doha process went on, the government of Sudan continued attacking internally displaced people in Darfur and arresting youth and human rights activists. WIGJ help internally displaced women from North Darfur referred to as its 'partners' on its website, to distribute their petition internationally. The petition by IDP women to the UN Security Council detailed continuing government violations, including killings and rape; it also called for UNAMID to step up its role to protect civilians in Darfur, accusing the force of condoning the government's attacks on civilians. (WIGJ 2011). The

fact that the statement is unsigned nor names the group or representatives who prepared them implies the persons or group did not want to be identified. Given the repression and backlash, it can be understood that WINGOs like WIGJ were conduits of the plight of women in Darfur whilst cushioning them from serious security risks.

A mix of different civil society organization coalitions were also formed at the international level, including the most prominent one, the Save Darfur Coalition made up of 130 diverse organizations, faith-based, human rights, and humanitarian ones. This coalition is credited for successfully advocating for an international response. (Lanz 2019) Darfur Consortium, a group of African civil society and women's rights organizations, campaigned on and supported the call for justice for victims of CRSV in Darfur through the ICC. This consortium is credited as having contributed to the referral of the Sudan case to the ICC. Monim-Elgak (2008) claims Darfur Consortium's advocacy was rooted in positioning itself as a credible voice in a highly divisive international arena marked by Arab-African divisions and genocide claims by the US. It got information from in-depth briefings by Darfuri and Sudanese activists during meetings of the consortium. This was reinforced by investigations by African human rights activists who visited Sudan and Chad. The approach of connecting with Darfuri and Sudani activists, CSOs, and NGOs created credibility. However, I posit this solidarity was only geared towards one aspect of addressing the widespread CRSV in the Darfur conflict; accountability through the ICC and not peace processes within the country.

UN Security Council Resolution

The adoption of Security Council resolution 1769 laid the foundation for the setting up of UNAMID and its operational mandate. Besides protection of civilians, the peacekeeping mission was also given the political mandate to assist in making the peace process inclusive. (Limpho & Maeresera,2019). This resolution condemned the widespread sexual violence and called for perpetrators to be brought to justice. I contend it signalled that CRSV is considered a key issue and, by extension, gave a gender mandate to the mediator. The UNAMID gender advisory unit drew its mandate from UNSCR 1769, which established the peacekeeping mission; this unit was responsible for addressing GBV and facilitating women's participation in peace processes. The unit also popularized and built the capacity of local women leaders in Darfur on UNSCR 1325 with the aim of domesticating the resolution by supporting women to develop local action plans relevant to the context. (UNAMID 2011)

Joint Mediation and Support Team, UNAMID, Qatar and the Civil Society Track

The Doha civil society consultation conference that gathered some 170 CSOs delegates, including women in Doha, Qatar, in 2009 was organized by the Joint Mediation and Support Team (JMST) created by the UN and AU. The JMST facilitated the inclusion of women, although there were critiques that a number of CSO delegates were reportedly selected by the government and therefore not legitimate representatives. Acting on this criticism, the government of Qatar and UNAMID did local consultations with CSOs, including women CSOs as a specific category in different parts of Darfur. (Barakat 2014) In July 2010, a second civil society conference (Doha 2) gathered 340 participants for track II consultation alongside the track I negotiations. International academics and INGOs also convened forums outside Sudan with the endorsement of the mediation team. (Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative 2018) The meetings were relayed to mediators to influence the peace negotiations. Murphy and Tubiana (2010) argue that women were excluded from traditional decision-making systems and that international actors brought in an affirmative action giving women a platform to articulate women's priorities and influence the peace process. An account of a woman delegate participating in the second civil society forum corroborates their argument. She noted in addition to taking a stand on broader issues, the women CSO representatives from Darfur would negotiate on specific issues affecting women. (Dabanga Sudan 2011)

The mediation team's role in engaging CSOs, particularly women CSOs, through the Joint Mediation and Support Team, the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) for Sudan, and UNAMID provided a vital avenue for women to state their demands and priorities. The Qatar government negotiator spent substantive time listening to the diverse groups even before meeting conflicting parties.(Barakat 2014) From this investment in the context analysis and engagement of women groups through consultations, it can be deduced that both the Qatar and UNAMID mediators acted as conduits of women's messages and concerns to the peace negotiations. On the AU's part, Thabo Mbeki who was involved in the tripartite mediation team as part of the AUHIP, is reported as having strongly pushed for the inclusion of women and CSOs broadly as a way to create local ownership of the peace process following lessons from Darfur's failed 2006 peace agreement. (De Waal 2009)

UNAMID, although criticized for overall not being able to protect civilians and reduce the scope of GBV, in its first 2 years of existence, there was an improvement in the protection of women from GBV, according to Back (2016). It trained its police contingent to address CRSV, established a reporting unit, provided a range of services to victims, and undertook an awareness campaign to reduce stigma against victims. These actions depict that addressing CRSV was a core part of the mission's gender mandate following from the resolution that established the mission.

Regarding its political mandate, which is the focus of this paper, I posit UNAMID was instrumental in putting CRSV in Darfur on the international agenda and eventually in the peace process. The peacekeeping mission helped facilitate the visit of eight women ambassadors from around the globe who consulted IDP women, female members of parliament and women leaders in Darfur(Back 2016). This visit made recommendations on how to address gender-based atrocities; according to Back, it was part of AU's broader goal to not only address GBV but also ensure women participate in all stages of peace processes. UNAMID considered women's participation in the peace process strategically and made women a focus in putting together a civil society track for the Doha peace process. Reporting on this task, an article by UNAMID captures the role of the staff facilitating civil society workshops for the peace process as follows;

> "To take necessary measures to train women as mediators to be involved in the Darfur peace process, we have to advocate and empower them to champion their concerns at all levels, ensuring that their problems and priorities are reflected in the official agreements." (UNAMID 2011)

By May 2011, UNAMID had conducted 20 civil society workshops in Darfur in connection with the mediation process in Doha. This quoted statement demonstrates UNAMID's focus on women groups as key stakeholders in the peace process. I argue women had delivered their demands consistently through UNAMID, AU, and the Government of Qatar consultations; the mediators then became advocates and custodians of the women's agenda and saw it through to the written text of the ceasefire negotiation resulting in the strong gender provisions.

5.4 STRENGTH OF THE GENDER PROVISIONS - DEPENDENT VARIABLE

To measure the strength of provisions in the JEM and GoS Ceasefire agreement of 2013, I will score the different areas based on the scale developed earlier in the research design section of

this paper. I will then discuss the specific indicators by assessing provisions in the ceasefire document.

Indicator	**No provision (1)** *Entirely unmet*	**Weak gender provision (2)** *Partially met*	**Strong gender provision (3)** *Fully met*
CRSV is mentioned in the operational paragraphs of the ceasefire document.			**3**
The wording of the clause mentioning CRSV indicates prohibition /obligation for actors to cease CRSV perpetration			**3**
Presence of clauses that refer to inclusion of women in ceasefire monitoring in the ceasefire agreement.			**3**
Presence of reference to WPS international framework (one or more)in the ceasefire agreement.			**3**
Overall score (average)			**3**

Explicit CRSV prohibition

The prohibition on GBV and sexual exploitation is mentioned in a substantively important part of the agreement; the prohibited acts section. Section 4 , subsection i) of the ceasefire text states that the parties signing the agreement, namely the government of Sudan and JEM :

1. Agree to immediately cease and refrain from any:

...

i) Acts and forms of gender-based violence and sexual exploitation. (GoS and JEM ceasefire, 2013,5.)

This provision signals CRSV is strongly prohibited and considered a ceasefire violation. This provision grants the ceasefire monitoring teams a mandate to assess whether any forms of GBV is taking place and report it. The two elements make the provision strong enough to substantively contribute to the prevention of CRSV.

Ceasefire monitoring

The need for substantive participation of women in all ceasefire mechanisms is stipulated clearly in clause 9 of the ceasefire text, which reads;

'Cognizant of the important role of women in peace-making, adequate and effective representation of women shall be guaranteed by the Parties at all levels of the ceasefire mechanism.' (GoS and JEM ceasefire, 2013,7.)

From the wording of the clause, the term adequate is ambiguous in that it leaves open the number of women to be included. However, the qualification 'effective' denotes the intention of the phrase is for the participation of women to go beyond tokenistic participation. Moreover, the provision directs that women be involved at all levels, and further denotes the understanding that women have an important role to play. Reading this clause together with those that precede it denotes holistic participation of women as important stakeholders is conceived in the agreement. Clause 6 of the ceasefire agreement stipulates how the ceasefire monitoring and verification mechanisms referred to as CFC will be constituted, clause 7 is on the components of the mechanism, and clause 8 is on the role of the mechanism in monitoring and implementing the ceasefire. (Ibid)

Clause 22 further explicitly provides for the participation of women in the sector sub ceasefire commission and team site groups tasked with an effective investigation and reporting incidents and violations, respectively. (GoS and JEM ceasefire, 2013,10.)

WPS Framework

The terms of reference(ToR) for the 'Commission', which is the term referring to the body responsible for the overall monitoring and implementation, specifically mandates the Commission through clause v of the ToR to ensure all forms of GBV and violence against children are addressed with a gender lens. Gender sensitivity in the context of addressing such violence entails ensuring peacekeeping missions, police, and other enforcement agencies have in place female staff to enable victims to report CRSV. The clause references resolution 1325, which calls for women to be involved at all levels of the peace process, including in formal processes and peacekeeping forces, and for gender mainstreaming in response and recovery. (Ellerby,2013)

...

v. In accordance with the UNSC Resolution 1325 (2000), the Commission shall ensure that all forms of violence that specifically affect women and children are heard and redressed in a gender-sensitive and competent manner; (GoS and JEM ceasefire, 2013,13.)

5.5 Within Case Analysis

As the analysis above suggests, women mobilized domestically in Sudan, both in Darfur and at the national level in Khartoum, in response to CRSV. I argue the Khartoum group's focus on legal reforms, in addition to being a pathway to change, was also an adaptive strategy to the regime's clampdown on CRSV work. Women groups in Darfur saw the peace process as an avenue to address CRSV and had it as a key issue in their demands. International actors came in and created space for women's activism to be successful by influencing the peace process. There was less international support for the broader legal reforms pathway preferred by the Khartoum-based groups.

The analysis shows a correlation between women's mobilizations and strong provisions that are included in the Darfur Ceasefire of 2013. I argue the analysis is consistent with the argument that with international involvement coming in as a factor facilitating the domestic women groups to achieve their stated goals, the strong gender provisions. The analysis lends partial support for the hypothesis; due to some limitations that will be discussed in a subsequent section, we cannot conclude the hypothesis is fully supported. We can therefore gather from this case analysis that there is evidence in support of the hypothesis for the causal mechanism.

6. MYANMAR NATIONWIDE CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT (2015)

6.1 Myanmar conflict and ceasefire background

Myanmar's conflict is a protracted and complex conflict situation. A complex conflict situation 'denotes a situation in which two or more armed groups co-exist with a government's armed forces.' Myanmar has been categorized as a complex conflict consistently in the Uppsala conflict data program since it gained independence in 1948 (Tønnesson et al. 2022). Every region of Myanmar, which is inhabited by different ethnic groups, has an armed group. The groups known as ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) also have a political wing, and some provide social services. Each of these groups has been at war on and off with the Myanmar military over time, fighting for the autonomy of their regions.

In 2015, the military initiated a nationwide ceasefire agreement (NCA) that would encompass EAOs across the country. The 2015 NCA agreement came after a series of waves of failed bilateral ceasefires between the military and EAOs, the first wave beginning in 1989, a second one in 1994 where there was a spike in ceasefires and in 2012 there was a 'new generation' wave of ceasefires. (Smith and Gelbort 2023). Myanmar has experienced several military coups; 2011 marked the beginning of a semi-civilian government and democratization of politics with the entry of the national league of Democracy (NLD) into parliament through elections in 2012. However, the military retained its long-term grip and key role in security and political realms; as such, the new president Thein Sein continued with a policy of bilateral ceasefires renewing bilateral ceasefires for 14 armed ethnic organizations. 21 EAOs were taking part in the negotiations for the NCA agreement of 2015, but eventually only 8 would sign the comprehensive peace agreement. Among the EAOs left out of signing the NCA is the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), the largest ethnic armed group in Myanmar. Not surprisingly, soon after, in 2016, the army restarted a military operation against the KIA in Kachin state. In other regions of Myanmar, the army continued fighting key groups left out of the 2015 agreement, depicting the failure of the NCA to create peace in Myanmar. The ceasefire held up for other EAOs that signed the NCA; however, Tønnesson et al. (2022) argue that the Myanmar military used the divide and rule strategy negotiating with some and fighting others, and overall violence did not reduce.

Sexual violence has been prevalent in Myanmar across recent decades of the conflict. Both domestic women's groups and international organizations that documented CRSV noted a pattern

of widespread and systematic use of sexual violence. (Human Rights Watch 2005; 2012, Women's League of Burma 2014)

6.2 WOMEN'S DOMESTIC MOBILIZATION IN MYANMAR

Emerging in Exile

In the complex conflict system in Myanmar, the women of Myanmar curved out their political space by mobilizing in exile. The Women's League of Burma (WLB) was Myanmar's first multi-ethnic women's group that laid the ground for the women's movement in the country.(Hedström 2013) A turning point for Myanmar, the 1988 popular protests against the military regime also saw a mobilizing moment for women. The military's brutal crackdown on protests led to Myanmar people fleeing to the border with Thailand. Forced to flee the military violence, as part of the broader political opposition and student activists, women groups began to mobilize in the 1990s along Myanmar's borders with India, Bangladesh, and Thailand.(Olivius 2019)It is in the Myanmar-Thailand border that the women's movement emerged, providing humanitarian services to Myanmar people. The WLB is characteristic of women's movements bridging divides; in the case of Myanmar, the ethnic divide is a major issue in general. WLB, formed in 1999, is a coalition of 12 women's organizations comprising of women from diverse ethnic backgrounds, from the majority Burmese to minority groups. (Ibid, 150-151) Olivius argues that being based in the diaspora accorded WLB the opportunity to garner international support and back their clamour for gender equality with international norms. They understood and grasped the lingo of norms like the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women CEDAW) and had access to international platforms for lobbying. It also enabled women activists to speak freely about women's situation in Myanmar to create international awareness without risks that would come under a repressive military regime.

Ethnic Women's Organization

Myanmar's women's movement also partly emerged from ethnic women's organizations (EWOs) ;women's wings of EAOs set up as 'auxiliaries of the male-dominated ethnic armed groups' primarily to cater to issues of women and children. (Pepper 2018, 216)These groups work on women's issues within their respective regions, conduct advocacy and collaborate with other women's groups across ethnic borders and nationally. Some ethnic women's groups were based

inside Myanmar, while others operated in exile in locations such as the Thailand-Myanmar border. EWOs are a key block of the civil society in Myanmar. The EWOs role straddles both conflict and peacebuilding; it is this identity that has helped women navigate to access the political space in Myanmar, scholars argue. (Ibid)

EWO is organized on the basis of traditional gender roles focusing their programs on motherhood and the role of women as nurturers of the next generation, training traditional birth attendants, providing baby kits, and running orphanages. Framing their work in traditional gender norms has provided women an entryway into political activism. Through activities that are palatable for their cultural contexts, women have been able to mobilize collectively and carve a space for themselves as stakeholders in the political sphere. (Ibid, 224) However, the downside of ethnic-based mobilization is a tendency to exclude those not part of the ethnic group.

EWOs have served as a springboard into politics; they created political training programs to enhance women's skills in public speaking and advocacy. Experienced women in EWO, such as Karen's Women's Organization's leader Naw Zipporah Sein went on to competitive politics within the ethnic group's political wing. She rose through the ranks, first elected as secretary general of the Karen National Union (KNU), then as vice chairperson; eventually, she became the leader of the Ethnic Armed Groups Senior Delegation, representing EAOs and tasked with reviewing the 2015 NCA text. Sein speaking on the relevance of women being elected to leadership roles in the KNU noted that women's leadership is generally not valued despite its importance, she argued women see peace issues differently for instance prioritizing safety of civilians and women in general. Since 2012 up to the signing of the NCA in 2015, she and others consistently called for the removal of Burmese military stationed near civilian and displaced people's homes (Irrawaddy 2017)

> …Men don't suffer like women. Women suffer even after the war. But men do not understand. Making peace is not only about stopping the fighting. It is about ensuring safety for civilians, especially women. Women should be included in the leadership…(Irrawady 2017)

It can be deduced from this statement that as a woman in a lead negotiating role, Sein perceived women to be affected disproportionately by the conflict, specifically by gender-based violence.We would expect this to reflect in negotiations. I argue despite being a woman, her key role representing first the KNU and later the EAOs overshadowed gender considerations as she took

on the EAOs stand and spoke to their priorities in the negotiations of which women's issues did not feature. Muehlenbeck and Federer (2016) note that women negotiators were not perceived through their gender but for their competency, implying they were solely perceived as representatives of the EAOs.

Repression of the women's movement

Myanmar's women remained excluded from the political sphere, with their roles relegated to the domestic realm largely due to the prevailing patriarchal culture in the country. Women's rights in Myanmar were severely curtailed since the 1962 coup that brought in military rule that deliberately ensured women CSOs could not operate. By banning women's networking and allowing only organizations that 'preserve the culture of Myanmar,' the military, in essence, strategically reinforces a patriarchal culture that subjugates women. (Byrd 2021, 12)

The absence of women's CSO coupled with laws detrimental to women, such as discriminatory property ownership policies, Myanmar women were curtailed from education and an opportunity to advance women's rights until 2011, when the country ushered in an error of democratization. In 2008, similarly, the flow of aid in response to cyclone Nargis enabled a turning point which saw Myanmar's women's movement grow significantly. Besides international aid directly going to NGOs and community-based organizations, the cyclone opened opportunities for network building which was not possible before, and also marked a departure from the international community's stand of isolating Myanmar (Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies 2009). More organizations, community-based ones grew organically to respond to the cyclone, the military relaxed strict registration allowing all sorts of groups to emerge as long as their work was not political. Networks like the Myanmar NGO Network (MNN) emerged during the period after Cyclone Nargis; comprising 20 NGOs. The network had a focus on women and children. From 2011, the democratic transition also became a window of opportunity for the women's movement; the aid coming into Myanmar placed emphasis on gender issues. Diaspora women's movements like WLB partially returned, keeping their main operations in Thailand as a risk mitigation strategy. Returning to work in the country even partially meant a change of strategy; they could no longer use the language of international women's rights norms, and activists noted it was riskier to openly criticize the military for sexual violence, a task they reserve for when based outside the country. (Olivius 2019,158)

Yangon- Ethnic Regions and Diaspora Dynamics

The differences in women's groups based in the capital Yangon, ethnic women's organizations, and diaspora groups like WLB are evident in the approaches they took and issue framing. As Olivius (2019) documents, Yangon-based groups, which were mainly composed of the country's majority group, the Burmese, focused their advocacy on the government and did not frame women's rights in the context of conflict. WLB, like other groups formed outside the country, had a broader ethnic base, was connected to the ethnic nationality aspirations, focused on the international community, and perceived women's issues through the country's protracted conflict. Olivius emphasizes this framing by diaspora groups;

> "For Burmese women exiles, experiences of violence and abuse of ethnic minority women at the hands of the Burmese military was essential in mobilizing a cross-ethnic gendered political consciousness, making the emergence of a diasporic women's movement possible." (Olivius 2019,152)

Documenting CRSV

Women's movement documented CRSV, which they utilized to publicize the atrocities of the military and advocate for accountability. Ethnic women's groups collected and published CRSV in their regions as individual women's groups but sometimes also collaborated to provide information to the coalition WLB which published a national report. The Women's League of Burma in 2014 published a report detailing national-level CRSV violations by the military. (WLB,2014). Although outside the analysis period, it is noteworthy that in 2004 Thailand based Karen Women's Organization (KWO) also documented CRSV perpetrated by the army publishing a report. Earlier in 2002, Shan Women's Action Network (Swan) published a report, *'Licenced to Rape'* that got substantive international attention; Swan continued documentation and calling out CRSV by the army (Mizzima 2011)

The WLB report aimed to highlight the continuous systematic CRSV resulting from decades of impunity from past violations. The report had recommendations for the government, the international community, and ethnic armed groups. It called for accountability by the government, for EAOs to ensure women participate in peace processes, and for the international community to put pressure on the government to stop CRSV. WLB notes in the report their concern the issue

of VAW being left out of the peace process, and consequently post-conflict plans will exclude women and hinder the reform of key gender laws.(WLB,2014)

Working in exile was a security and survival strategy for women's movements to deal with the repressive military regime. The exile groups had affiliates operating inside Myanmar and collecting the information discreetly.

Advocacy

The Myanmar women's also conducted advocacy to sensitize the international community on the situation of women in Myanmar and CRSV. The WLB had participated in international women's forums, including the Beijing conference and several UN forums. Following WLB's international engagement, the movement led in drafting and submitting the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Myanmar reports. (OHCHR 2008) This placed violence against women in the international limelight against the government's denial of violations and silencing of CSOs inside Myanmar.

Women in the peace process

Myanmar's homegrown 2015 NCA process was not inclusive; civil society was not involved; it was designed as a negotiation between the EAOs, the *Tatmadaw* military, and the government. (Transnational Institute 2016) This reflected the exclusive nature of past peace processes, bilateral ceasefires the government had signed with CSOs before not inclusive as one scholar sums it; "indeed input from civil society was kept at a minimum as most of these agreements were verbal, and the negotiations kept out of the public domain…" (Hedström 2016, 73)

The reason given for exclusion is the pretext that women are not experienced in political issues , but the WLB noted that ethnic women have experience even in international advocacy, but women who are outspoken are blocked from accessing the formal peace processes.(Pepper 2018, 66–67)

Not surprisingly, peace-making structures were almost exclusively dominated by men, with the exception of a few women in advisory and support roles. KNU's Zipporah Sein and Saw Mra Raza Lin were the only that served in the senior delegation of EAOs as negotiators; the second woman was brought on board through Zipporah's lobbying. (Faxon et al. 2015)Two women from civil society served as technical experts supporting the peace process; they were highly experienced in women's rights and flagged with the parties the international women's rights frameworks such as

CEDAW. Some women's groups, such as WLB, served as observers and conveyed the negotiation proceedings with broader women CSOs.

Given the setup in Myanmar, women have had to access political decision-making spaces through ethnic armed groups and tried to influence the process through women representing EAOs in the negotiation. I argue this backchannel involvement did result in gender provisions but was not substantive enough to result in strong gender provisions. Women's CSOs sought an audience with the international actors funding the peace process precisely to address this challenge they were facing. (Muehlenbeck and Federer 2016)

Domestic Coalition building

Beyond documenting CRSV and conducting advocacy from exile, the post-2011 women's movement inside the country formed coalitions whose aim included pushing for women's issues broadly and specifically in the negotiations leading up to the 2015 NCA.

The gender equality network (GEN) was founded in 2008 after cyclone Nargis to ensure humanitarian assistance paid attention to gender issues; it evolved to work on gender equality broadly. Unlike other organizations, GEN's research did not focus on conflict but covered intimate partner violence, sexual harassment, and assault; the research also collaborated with the government. GEN prioritized legal reforms as its main goal in response to prevalent CRSV and VAW; it advocated for the law on preventing VAW (PoVAW). In collaboration with the government and the UN, GEN worked on consultation and drafting of the PoVAW bill that was eventually passed into law in 2014.

The Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process (AGIPP) coalition was formed in 2014, comprising three Myanmar women networks and two domestic NGOs. The coalition's main aim was to advocate for involvement of women in all levels of the peace process; this coalition focused on resolution 1325 and other resolutions that form the WPS agenda. The coalition lobbied women in EAO delegations to advocate for women's positions; it also undertook a gender analysis of the NCA, recommending changes to ensure gender issues are incorporated substantively. This coalition saw divisions, WLB, which was a founding member of this coalition, would later leave, citing the different standpoints; WLB saw the peace process as exclusive, leaving out some EAOs, while AGIPP wanted to continue pursuing women's involvement in the peace process regardless of the flaws. (Olivius, 2019,169)

6.3 INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT – INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

International Advocacy

Women from Myanmar participated in UN meetings and used the platform to advocate for accountability for crimes committed by the Myanmar military, calling for the ICC to be involved. According to Transnational Institute (2016), Myanmar's women's groups have conducted international advocacy on issues ranging from the prevention of gender-based violence to women's participation in peace processes and politics. They have engaged international institutions such as the CEDAW Committee, United Nations Human Rights Council, UN General Assembly, UN Special Rapporteurs on Myanmar and foreign ambassadors present in Myanmar. In their first 10-year anniversary report, WLB notes their active involvement in various UN and specific international women's forums, including UN resolution 1325 lobby week. (WLB, 2009). The women's movement based in the diaspora therefore had the role of sensitizing and rallying the international community for their support of women's issues in Myanmar.

Fragmented international involvement

Political influence

2011 marked a break from the past in Myanmar in terms of it being the first period of Myanmar's peace processes that had international involvement. China is most notably the most powerful external actor involved in the NCA process. Although formally, the process was entirely domestic, behind the scenes, China had cultural, political, and economic influence over key actors in the peace process. It had good relations with Northern EAOs on the Myanmar-China border areas , the military, and the government, which earned it observer status in the peace process, and as Roy (2022)argues, China had aimed to have an active facilitator role.

Funding

The United States was far less involved in the peace process but provided funding for human rights and democracy initiatives, including funding to civil society organizations. The United Kingdom similarly was involved as a donor to the peace process together with the European Union setting up the Peace Support Fund (PSF). Roy (2022)

Norway was called on by Myanmar's president Sein to coordinate international efforts owing to its global reputation as a peace-making nation. (Roy et al. 2022 2174) Although widely viewed as a neutral peacemaker, Roy et al. argue Norway's peace-making role in Myanmar was driven by economic interest – a 'capitalist peace approach', a factor that then enabled the government to leverage and dictate terms of Norway's engagement limiting its actual influence over the peace process.

The international actors had no common goal for the peace process but instead pursued their own interests ranging from countries looking to develop infrastructure (India), others that preferred both development and peace (Japan), China that had access and influence of a wide array of the actors and the UN which sought socio-economic and humanitarian projects. The flurry of international involvement in the NCA peace process had no effect on civil society, who were side-lined in the process.

The NCA peace process was an exclusive, elitist peace process that prioritized the belligerents, and domestic women's movement, although aiming to influence the peace process, did not receive international support towards realizing this aspiration.

Observers

To counter distrust, EAOs emphasized foreign countries being represented at the ceasefire talks as observers. Although EAOs wanted more countries to sign the NCA as witnesses, eventually, only China signed alongside a UN envoy and a representative of Japan's peace brokering organization Nippon Foundation, whose chair was Japan's official envoy on peace in Myanmar. (Burma News International 2015)

6.4 STRENGTH OF GENDER PROVISIONS IN THE MYANMAR NCA 2015 – DEPENDENT VARIABLE

To assess the strength of provisions, I will similarly score the NCA gender provisions against a scale with key indicators that measure strength.

Indicator	**No provision (1)** *Entirely unmet*	**Weak gender provision (2)** *Partially met*	**Strong gender provision (3)** *Fully met*
CRSV is mentioned in the operational paragraphs of the ceasefire document.			**3**
The wording of the clause mentioning CRSV indicates prohibition /obligation for actors to cease CRSV perpetration		**2**	
Presence of clauses that refer to inclusion of women in ceasefire monitoring in the ceasefire agreement.	**1**		
Presence of reference to WPS international framework (one or more)in the ceasefire agreement.	**1**		
Overall score (average)		**2**	

Explicit CRSV prohibition

While the provision mentions CRSV by listing out examples, and it is placed in an operational paragraph under the protection of civilians, it falls short of explicitly prohibiting CRSV. CRSV is not one of the acts explicitly prohibited in the list of acts of violence to be ceased. Furthermore, the language used in the provision places no obligation on ceasefire parties, as quoted below;

3 m) Avoid any form of sexual attack on women, including sexual molestation, sexual assault or violence, rape and sex slavery. NCA (2015, p. 3)

Ceasefire monitoring

The ceasefire monitoring mechanism clause describes how the committee monitoring the ceasefire will be composed, listing several categories but fails to mention gender or women's inclusion in monitoring.

12 a) To coordinate the parties' compliance with this agreement, we shall form a Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee, comprised of members of the Union Peace-Making Work Committee, representatives of the Ethnic Armed Organizations, and trusted and well-respected individuals. NCA (2015, p. 6)

WPS Framework

The NCA does not reference international WPS frameworks, even the CEDAW convention, which Myanmar has been a signatory since 2007, as a starting point in addressing gender-based discrimination.

6.5 Within case analysis

Following the analysis above, Myanmar's women actively mobilized, formed networks and coalitions yet did not influence the peace process substantively. In the lead-up to the ceasefire, women's groups organized, seemingly effectively forming coalitions that specifically aimed to influence the peace processes. International actors had limited involvement in Myanmar's peace process, as per how this paper conceptualizes international involvement. International actors only had a supportive role limited to a financial role; the process was entirely homegrown, and neither the UN nor third parties were involved as mediators. The UN, although having in place a special envoy for Myanmar, did not have a substantive role in the NCA process.

The result of this analysis lends support to the hypothesis that in the absence of international involvement, gender provisions that emerge out of the peace process are weak. The causal mechanism in the theory also seems to be supported; without international involvement, women's mobilization in Myanmar was insufficient to result in the adoption of strong gender provisions.

7. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The methodological rigour of the structured, focused comparison is founded on the use of theory and a systematic approach to explain an outcome of interest and causal factors by defining and measuring concepts consistently in the same way across cases.(Drozdova and Gaubatz 2014) In this section, I will conduct a structured, focused comparison of the two cases to assess whether they provide support for the hypothesis *"Given domestic women's mobilization, international involvement increases the probability that ceasefire agreements will have strong gender provisions."* I will first comparatively assess women's mobilization as a constant in both cases, then proceed to international involvement and conclude by comparative discussion on the causal mechanisms. Following from this, I will discuss additional observations; alternative explanations and then conclude this section by discussing limitations.

On the one hand, Myanmar women mobilized politically with CRSV featuring as a key issue. Myanmar women's groups documented CRSV as a tool to sensitize the international community. However, it did not elicit an international response. VAW against women was perceived as a priority issue across the women's movement, but the framing of the issue was different for urban-

based groups as compared to rural ethnic and diaspora groups, as highlighted previously. There was no clear pathway for women to push for substantive gender provisions with the peace process excluding CSOs and women. However, through liaising with women in the negotiating teams and women experts sensitizing parties on international gender frameworks, gender provisions were adopted, although they were not strong provisions. (Muehlenbeck and Federer 2016)

On the other hand, although CRSV was a key issue in the women's movement in Sudan, however, the domestic women's movement did not document CRSV but adapted to government constraints to provide services to survivors, for instance, by not mentioning GBV or protection as part of their projects. International human rights groups filled the gap and documented the strategic use of CRSV by GoS and the Janjaweed. CRSV elicited an international response reflected in international CSO coalitions set up with the goal of advocating for accountability on sexual violence committed in the Darfur war. Another international response was the UNSC resolution that set up UNAMID, which upscaled the AMIS force and consequently granted it a gender mandate.

There are similarities between domestic mobilization in the two cases, both Myanmar and Sudan; women groups were up against brutal repressive regimes that silenced CSOs and women's activism. Both adapted in contextually relevant ways, with a part of the movement urban and diaspora movements taking on bolder advocacy and drawing on international standards, while grassroots groups in conflict areas adopted a low visibility approach such as providing services to survivors, although even that was eventually constrained in Darfur.

Fragmentation in the movement and difference in approach is another similarity in the two cases; urban groups in Yangon and Khartoum preferred legal reforms viewing the VAW issue through a continuity of violence lens, while the EWO and Darfur groups viewed it as a conflict issue to be addressed through the peace processes. This finding is partly consistent with the argument in past research that women's movement in repressive regimes mobilizes discretely and frames the CRSV issue narrowly rather than openly challenging the root of gender-based violence such as gendered roles. (Kreft 2019) However, we also see part of the women's movement in the two countries framing CRSV in a classical feminist way, using the opportunity to push for legal reforms and advocate for women's rights based on international frameworks. Coalitions from Sudan visited capitals of global powers like Washington DC and headquarters of international institutions, UN in New York and ICC in the Hague.(Conciliation Resources 2013, 40) Myanmar's WLB reports

having access to various UN institutions and sending their members to global capitals for training and participation in international forums; it is not clear from the available data how much this international exposure was advocacy focused.

A distinct difference that emerges in the two cases is the difference in international involvement. In Myanmar, international involvement can be characterized as low, with international actors merely serving a funding role, whereas in Darfur, international involvement was high, with several international actors serving a variety of functions, from mediating, creating international awareness, and carving space for women's influence.

Despite the existence of diverse and vibrant women's organizations and civil society networks in Myanmar, women were excluded from the Nationwide ceasefire agreement. The domestic women's movement was substantive enough to make efforts and an impression on the peace process but not significant enough on its own to influence strong gender provisions.

In Darfur, a chain of international factors that can be linked to the prevalence of CRSV in the conflict bolstered efforts by Sudani women to advocate for strong gender provisions. The combination of international factors and their interaction with women's groups served to lobby for strong gender provisions. These interactions created pressure from above and below that resulted in strong gender provisions even in the context of a repressive regime. In the case of Darfur, the designation of the conflict as genocide and the international media coverage are nuances that could point to other explanatory factors and will be discussed in the alternative explanatory factors. On the contrary, the NCA's low international involvement did not create space for inclusion, leaving women with limited room to influence the peace process. The lack of a gender perspective manifests in the outcome in terms of weak gender provisions. It follows that the hypothesis finds support is supported but not conclusively.

With regards to the causal mechanism, in Myanmar, women mobilized and carved out a space in the peace process, although it was not strategic; therefore, are not able to substantively influence the ceasefire. They passed on their demands through ethnic women represented in talks. On the other hand, women in Darfur had extensive engagement and space brokered by international actors. They voiced their demand through the CSO track; the mediation team served as conduits and lobbyists who carried their key concerns into the text of the agreement. The theoretical argument on the role of WINGOs in transnational advocacy and mobilizing finds no support in

the empirical analysis. Instead, international human rights organizations and coalitions made up of a mix of diverse organizations were central in international advocacy that shaped and is credited for the high international response seen in Darfur.

Table 3 Summary of findings

CASES	**International involvement (Independent Variable)**	**Strong gender provisions (Dependent Variable)**
Myanmar NCA 2015	Low (funding, observer,co-signatories)	Weak
Sudan GoS and JEM Ceasefire 2013	High (Multidimensional peacekeeping mission, Mediation, transnational advocacy)	Strong

In summary, the empirical analysis lends partial support to the hypothesis and theory, given the challenges in assessing some indicators solely from secondary sources, as will be discussed in the limitations section.

8.2 Additional observations

The paper sought to examine the relationship between the IV and DV but also made findings relating to the role of international human rights organizations, the dynamics of women's mobilization, and the WPS frameworks.

Human Rights Framing and Role of Human Rights Organizations

We find no support for the theoretical expectation that WINGOs would play a significant role in the documentation and advocacy of CRSV and the plight of the domestic women's movement under repressive regimes. International humanitarian and human rights organizations led the bulk of work on stepping into the role of documenting CRSV in Darfur when local CSOs were severely restricted. They also then campaigned for UN and other forms of international action to address

CRSV as well as the government's repression of the clamp down on women and human rights organizations and activists by governments.

Early documentation of mass CRSV in Darfur was largely done by international human rights and humanitarian organizations such as the *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF), Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. MSF entered Darfur to offer humanitarian services in 2003; it published a report in October 2004 detailing the over situation of conflict-affected people and in March 2005, a briefing paper titled *The Crushing Burden of Rape Sexual Violence in Darfur***.** MSF documented mass rape and abduction of women perpetrated by armed men during attacks on villages, noting the strategic use of CRSV for ethnic cleansing from victim's accounts. (MSF 2005)

Amnesty International, in July 2004, published a report, *Darfur: Rape as a weapon of war: sexual violence and its consequences.* The report highlighted the mass CRSV women and girls were subjected to by the *Janjaweed* abductions, rape including gang rapes, abductions, sexual slavery, and torture. It called for the international community to take the CRSV issue more seriously. (Amnesty International 2004, 4). As part of their advocacy recommendations, Amnesty International and Human Right Watch (2006) called on the UNSC to ensure resolution 1325 is implemented and women participate in all peace processes. International organizations concurred that the figures reported did not fully depict the magnitude of the issue; many women would not report even to NGO staff due to cultural stigma, shame, and fear of the consequences of reporting.

Given the Darfur conflict was marked by widespread human rights violations, the assertion by Brysk (1993) that a wider human rights framing on VAW has more traction globally and is more effective in transnational feminist advocacy explains why advocacy on CRSV in Darfur had diverse INGO participation.

WPS norms significance

Contrary to the theoretical expectation that the domestic women's movement uses the WPS framework to advocate for gender provisions in the peace process, the empirical cases analyzed demonstrate mixed results.

Even within the same context, women's understanding and consequent use of WPS frameworks vary; in the context of the women's movement in Sudan, it seems the elite groups use the WPS

framework to advocate for rights; on the other hand, grassroots groups do not refer to this framework. A similar pattern is observable in Myanmar, where Yangon-based groups and coalitions also reference WPS frameworks in their advocacy documents and analysis of the NCA. This trend is suggestive of the fact that the WPS agenda has not been diffused effectively; this could be partly explained by the absence of substantive WINGO collaborations with domestic groups prior to the peace processes under analysis. Another factor that could explain this pattern is the fact that in both contexts, national action plans on UNSCR 1325 that normally domesticates and popularizes this resolution and WPS agenda were not in place both in Sudan and Myanmar.

Intersectionality

There is no standard way women's movements are organized or mobilized; the way women's organizations emerge, their priorities, and the ways they mobilize and practice activism is motivated and shaped not only by contextual realities but also by their identities and their implications. In Myanmar, the ethnic nationality identity is a prominent factor with a majority group; in Sudan, the ideological standpoints determine issue framing and approach. Whilst often framed as grassroots -urban divide, I argue proximity to conflict determines how women perceive VAW and consequently what solutions they prioritize; for instance, conflict-affected women may prioritize their protection in contexts of displacement and continued gendered targeting of women in conflict. The peace process in Doha partly acknowledged this by involving IDP representatives, although it is not clear if displaced women were represented as a specific group.

8.3 Alternative explanations

Gender equality levels

Comparing the two cases as discussed above, both Myanmar and Darfur case had women's mobilization that varied in their contextual histories and consequent strategies adapted to mobilize. The women's movements in both contexts worked under a fluctuating environment and, at different points in their history, benefitted from regime changes with short-lived periods of democratic transitions. In Myanmar, women were systematically discriminated against in all facets of life, with minority ethnic women (non-Burmese) being denied access to education and basic rights that constitute empowerment. They also could not participate in politics until the democratic transition. In Sudan, women began their empowerment journey earlier; they secured basic rights by prioritizing girls' education; women had the opportunity to pursue a university education and worked in professional roles outside the homes, which was the basis for securing the right to run

for political office. (Osman 2014) The difference in gender equality could account for the variation in the strength of gender provisions. As Lounsbery et al. (2022) underscore 'peace negotiations are reflective of existing power structures and norms". This alternative explanation is, however, not very plausible. As we know from previous research, violent conflict is a social rupture that spurs changes in gender roles leading to increases in women's political participation and empowerment. The mechanism that facilitates this empowerment is international actors that broker women's access to government to kickstart reforms.

Previous experience of involvement in peace processes

In the case of the Darfur ceasefire, the domestic women's movement had the experience of previous processes, such as the DPA, although they did not have substantive involvement in it. In the DPA, UNIFEM supported Darfuri women, and the resulting agreement had provisions on GBV, among other gender provisions. Darfuri women also benefited from the experience of women from South Sudan who had participated in the comprehensive peace agreement process. (Conciliation Resources, 2013)

For international actors, one of the biggest lessons from the Darfur Peace Agreement of 2006 was the need to include civil society. (Marsden 2020, 236). The fact that international actors also had learned lessons from the failed process seems to have incentivized them to create space for women's substantive representation and influence in the peace process. In as much as the previous experiences informed the strategies of domestic women's movement and international actors without coordinated efforts in the peace process, it seems unlikely strong provisions would have been adopted.

8.5 Limitations

There were several limitations associated with the reliance on secondary sources for this study. First, the sources do not substantively discuss women's mobilization, or how women responded to CRSV. The sources, for instance, note that women had strategies to overcome state repression and work on CRSV, but the claim is not substantiated with specific examples of elaborating how they did this or what specific responses they had.

Second, it is also not possible to establish the demands of the women's movement. Some sources cite top-level general issues and some gender-specific ones like sexual violence but do not elaborate on the details of what women expected of the peace process. We also know that women's movements are not unitary but forge a unity of purpose for specific issues; the secondary sources do not give a full picture of the differences and how women pursue the objectives in light of the differences.

Third, the sources consulted are only those in English; this means that this study misses out on contextual nuances that domestic sources in Burmese or Arabic could provide. Interviews with domestic sources would have mitigated this shortcoming in that local actors are interlocutors between the researcher and the context.

Finally, the relationship between international actors is not well articulated in available sources; for instance, it was difficult to find out whether and which WINGOs, if any, supported or collaborated with the domestic women's movement. While some sources were available noting some WINGO collaboration with domestic women's groups, the extent and utility of the relationship is not nuanced.

With regards to case selections, the aim was to select cases that are as similar as possible. However, it was not possible to account for the effect of case-specific contextual factors at the selection stage. From case analysis, it emerges that calls for international response to the Darfur conflict were largely framed on the right to protect (R2P) norm requiring the international community to prevent genocide. Back notes that the AU and UN were haunted by failures in preventing the genocide in Rwanda, which elicited their involvement. Contrary to this view, we know from the research that UN action was underpinned by the push from the US, a veto power in the security council. The US itself had been hesitant to take action in the Darfur conflict but faced domestic pressure from the Save Darfur coalition. Implications of the R2P framing in this study are at the causal mechanism level, which elicits the question of to what extent did the crimes of genocide rather than widespread CRSV motivate the high international involvement. This is one area future studies can advance by studying other cases with high levels of CRSV that are not categorized as genocide.

On scope, it may strike the reader that this paper does not delve into the issue of accountability. I take the standpoint, like much of the literature, that accountability issues come under transitional justice provisions, which do not fall within the scope of this paper.

9. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study illustrates the relationship between international involvement and strong gender provisions. This chapter marks the conclusion of this paper; it will provide a summary, highlight main contributions, discuss implications, and show potential directions for future research.

The prevailing theme of this paper has been to highlight women's agency. Specifically, this study sought to understand *under what conditions women's mobilization leads to the adoption of strong gender provisions in ceasefire agreements*.

This study has demonstrated that women's movements continue to mobilize even under repressive regimes. They adapt strategies suitable for their contexts and show unity of purpose even though the women's movements are not unitary. Consistent with the literature, this study has also highlighted that diverse forms of women's participation in peace processes can result in gender provisions. How much influence women have over the output of peace processes; in other words, the strength of gender provisions is dependent on the presence of international actors who serve as brokers.

High international involvement in the Darfur ceasefire process, where international actors brokered space for women, and low international involvement in Myanmar, which maintained an exclusive process, is a key difference between the two cases. This difference in level and type of international involvement appears to be an explanatory factor for why we have strong gender provisions in Darfur and not in Myanmar, despite contextual similarities.

By conducting this study, I make contributions to the literature; first, I elucidate factors that lead to the adoption of strong gender provisions by illustrating the mechanisms. Second, I contribute to theory development by proposing a theory relevant to strong gender provisions. Finally, I fill a research gap on repressive contexts, illustrating strategies for domestic mobilization and utility of international involvement in advancing strong gender provisions.

The implications of this research for practice are that practitioners and policymakers can understand the conditions under which strong provisions are adopted. Specifically, this study also provides them with insights on how to understand women's movement and opportunities for solidarity for women's empowerment. Although the focus of this paper is on repressive contexts, shedding light on strategies relevant to such contexts, the findings are applicable to a broad range of countries.

Future research can assess a wider variety of cases; for instance including cases without women's mobilization and cases with high CRSV but where genocide is also not a factor. Strong gender provisions are not a panacea, but implementation of those provisions seems a promising avenue to enhance the prevention of CRSV, yet further research will also be required to substantiate this assertion.

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