

ICAN's Better Peace Initiative (BPI): The "how to" of Gendered and Inclusive Mediation

About ICAN

ICAN is dedicated to elevating and amplifying the voice and impact of women and women-led organizations in promoting peace, resilience, equal rights and pluralism (PREP) in countries affected by violence, extremism and closing political space. ICAN offers thought leadership and gendered analysis and fulfills its mission by providing its partners access to international arenas to inform and influence peace and security policy making; resources to enable their impact in their communities; and connectivity through spearheading the Women's Alliance for Security Leadership (WASL) that globally connects some 60 locally rooted women-led organizations in 30 countries.

For over two decades, ICAN's staff and partners have been thought leaders and pioneers in the practice of inclusive and gender-sensitive mediation and peacemaking. The Better Peace Initiative (BPI) enables ICAN to share this knowledge and practical experience with a wider community of policy makers, mediators, and practitioners, so that our global peace and mediation processes are better equipped to resolve modern-day conflicts.

The ICAN Better Peace Initiative provides:

1. Examples of past cases and lessons on the 'why' and the 'how' of inclusive and gendered mediation;
2. Sample criteria on how to identify and include civil society groups committed to the resolution of conflicts through political and nonviolent processes;
3. Advice on how to overcome the 6 most common excuses used to exclude women peacebuilders from mediation;
4. An adaptable 4-part framework that mediators and peace practitioners can use to ensure the effective participation of women peacebuilders and integrate gendered perspectives in mediation from pre-talks to the implementation phase;
5. Gendered peace and conflict situation analyses, and process design;
6. Advisory services to multilateral organizations, governments and women peacebuilders globally; and
7. A cadre of trained and certified BPI advisors and women mediators who are multi-lingual, located globally and can be contracted and deployed to support formal and informal mediation processes.



Within a few minutes, the video was able to summarize clearly and simply what we have been saying for 6 years on how important the participation of Syrian women is in the peace process."

- Syrian activist



Why do we need the BPI?

The wars and conflicts we witness today are more complex than those of the past. To prevent or resolve them effectively, it is necessary to have the state and non-state *armed* actors involved in negotiating peace. But they alone cannot bring sustainable peace. It is imperative to include peace actors, civilians, and women in the peace process. With knowledge of on-the-ground realities, they are active in every sphere, from providing relief to the refugees, to mediating local ceasefires, negotiating peace, countering violent extremism, disarming fighters and helping with reconciliation. Yet this know-how and commitment is still absent from peace processes.

The Stats and Facts

- Peace agreements are **54% less likely to fail** when **women** and civil society groups are included
- 1992 - 2011: women appeared as single digits in peace processes: Chief Mediators **2%**, Witnesses & Signatories **4%**, Negotiators **9%**
- Of 504 agreements signed since UNSCR 1325 (2000), **138 (27%) referenced women**
- Higher levels of **gender equality** are associated with a **lower propensity for conflict** between and within states
- 2018: **8** UN Security Council Resolutions and **74** National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security



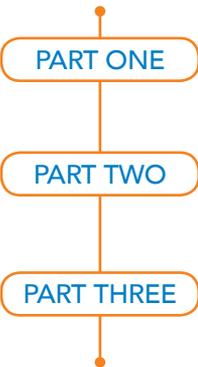


BPI Products and Resources

The **Better Peace Tool** booklet offers practical guidance based on past cases and lessons on the 'why' and 'how' of inclusive and gendered mediation. It also provides advice and sample criteria on how to identify and include civil society groups committed to the resolution of conflicts through political and nonviolent processes.

The BPT:

- *is easily transferable;*
- *is translatable;*
- *is adaptable to local contexts; and*
- *ensures a solid foundation of the core principles, values and ingredients necessary to guarantee effective inclusivity.*



Part One situates the issue of women's participation in the history and evolution of peacemaking and demonstrates why the inclusion of such civil society actors in today's peace processes is essential.

Part Two addresses six common barriers to the inclusion of women peacebuilders and how to overcome them.

Part Three provides a comprehensive 4-part framework of actions that mediators, practitioners and donors can take to ensure the effective participation of women peacebuilders and integrate gendered perspectives into the design of mediation from pre-talks to the implementation phases.

Using our 4-part framework, ICAN has developed **animations** and **discussion guides** to demonstrate why gender perspectives and women's inclusion are important to issues that are often at the heart of peace negotiations and how to address them. The BPI animation series brings a gendered lens to address:

1. Inclusive mediation process design: why it matters and how to overcome obstacles
2. Governance including power sharing
3. Justice including post-war transitional justice mechanisms
4. Security including ceasefire processes and reform of community police
5. Socio-economic recovery including land rights

Concept & Purpose of Process:
Understand the context, and analyze the conflict and peace drivers and purpose of the process and/or themes with women peacebuilders.

Political Support:
Push for the inclusion of women peacebuilders in mediation, key meetings, summits, and consultations; Call for gendered briefing papers to inform track 1 and other processes and summits.

Preparation/Pre-talks, During Peace Talks, and Implementation

Technical Support:
Provide women peacebuilders with access to gender-sensitive expertise on security, governance, natural resources, and other issues in the process.

Logistical and Financial Support:
Enable women's participation through assistance with travel, security, visas, and timely funding.



We need to question how we make peace. Talks to end fighting are not the same as what is needed to enable peace."

-Rosa Emilia Salamanca, Executive Director of Corporación de Investigación y Acción Social y Económica (CIASE), Colombia

Interested in supporting the BPI?
Email info@icanpeacework.org