BEYOND CONSULTATIONS

A tool for meaningfully engaging with women in fragile and conflict-affected states

Chair of Women's Association in Torit State, South Sudan (Photo: Saferworld)

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This tool is available in Arabic, French and Spanish at
www.beyondconsultations.org

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PART A:
INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

All women have a fundamental right to meaningfully participate in the decisions that frame and impact their lives, at all levels. There is also clear evidence that women's inclusion in political processes leads to more effective peace and stability.[i]

Despite this, globally, we are failing to engage meaningfully with women living in fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS) on the policies, processes and programmes that affect them. Between 1990-2017, women constituted only 2% of mediators, 8% of negotiators and 5% of witnesses and signatories in all major peace processes;[ii] and of 1,500 peace and political agreements adopted between 2000-2016, only 25 agreements included the roles of women's engagement in implementation.[iii]

2% of mediators	8% of negotiators	5% of witnesses
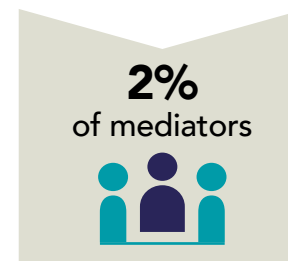
When consultation and engagement has occurred, feedback from women and women's organisations in FCAS has highlighted that it is often extractive, tokenistic and disempowering.[iv] This compounds the multiple practical challenges to participation which many women already face, from gaining family consent to managing caring responsibilities, domestic expectations or the finances required for transport.

Specific expertise on gender, inclusion and women's rights can strengthen the understanding of how conflict affects women, men, girls and boys differently. It is important to analyse how harmful gendered social norms fuel conflict and how they interact with other forms of discrimination in order to address them in policy, programming and processes.

The international framework

All women have the right to equal and inclusive participation and to engage in the decisions that affect their lives. These rights are protected under the following regional and international human rights frameworks:

- Article 2 of the Declaration on the Right to Development
- Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- Article 7 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
- UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development, including the Leave No One Behind commitment (particularly Goals 5 and 16)
- The Women, Peace and Security Framework (UN Security Council Resolution 1325 et al).

It is the collective responsibility of members of the international community to ensure that the principles in these agreements are upheld and achieved.

This tool

This tool was developed by the UK Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS) network, Women for Women International, Amnesty International UK, Saferworld and Womankind Worldwide.

Participatory research was conducted with women and women's organisations in FCAS as well as international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), government officials and representatives of multilateral agencies. This included detailed insights from **225** women from Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Nepal, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, Uganda, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

To ensure this research project modelled good practice the tool underwent a detailed peer review and validation process.

Who is this tool for?

This tool has been designed to be used by:

- Decision-makers (including multilaterals, donors and policy-makers) responsible for designing and overseeing engagement with women and women's groups in FCAS through 'consultation exercises'

- INGOs and civil society organisations wanting to improve their approach to engaging with women and women's groups locally

- Women and women's organisations in FCAS as a resource to assess those consulting with them and advocate for better standards

Bridging the gap – why and when to use this tool?

This tool supports actors to self-assess the extent to which their current consultation practices, large or small, meaningfully engage women in FCAS. As evidence shows, failure to include women's varied knowledge and voice will limit the effectiveness of the interventions developed and the outcomes achieved.

This tool provides a best practice framework to support actors to improve their practice, moving beyond extractive or tokenistic consultations towards meaningful dialogues with women and women's organisations in FCAS and to ensure that women and women's organisations are fully engaged with decision-making processes.

The tool should be used as early as possible during the planning and design phase of engagement with women and women's organisations, and regularly revisited throughout the participation activity and its evaluation.

Ultimately, this will ensure that women have their voices heard; that their contributions shape the future of their communities and countries in sustainable ways; that their rights and needs are met; and that their potential is achieved.

KEY PRINCIPLES FOR MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT

The development of this tool was supported through a participatory research project with women and women's organisations from FCAS, as well as INGOs, government officials and representatives of multilateral agencies.

This participatory research outlined what meaningful consultation, engagement and participation looks like. Through this, we have developed the following principles to ensure meaningful engagement:

1

All women have a **right** to meaningfully participate in **decisions that affect their lives**

2

Women and women's organisations should be engaged as **equal partners** in the planning, design and implementation of decision-making processes

3

Women should be supported to participate through a variety of appropriate, **context-specific methodologies**

4

Women should be **supported, prepared and reimbursed** for their participation

5

Women should be able to **set and shape agendas**

6

Women's participation should be **representative of women in all their diversity**

7

Participation should be **accessible,** ensuring women's access and resource needs are met

8

Participation should be **safe, empowering, respectful and not extractive**

9

Knowledge and learning generated by consultations **should be shared** with the communities from which it was informed **on an ongoing basis**

10

Meaningful participation is not an end in itself – women should experience **tangible benefits** through their engagement

PART B:
THE TOOL

The overarching aim for this tool is to ensure that women and women's organisations in FCAS to achieve full and equal participation throughout all consultation processes. The desired result will be that their rights, needs and concerns are supported and realised in agreements, policies, plans and programmes.

The tool is designed to be used as part of a learning process – it is a guide as much as an assessment. The score obtained through this tool should be used as a benchmark as part of an ongoing cycle of assessment to enable organisations to highlight good practice, chart areas for improvement and map progress over time.

This tool will enable you to:

- assess the extent to which you are engaging meaningfully with women in FCAS
- identify targeted areas of challenge and opportunity
- identify additional steps to improve the effectiveness of your current engagement strategies
- assess the way in which national and international decision-makers are consulting with women and women's organisations.

The tool is divided into nine sections, each assessing a specific dimension of effective engagement:

1. Consultation methodology

2. Partnership

6. Accessibility

7. Safeguarding

3. Support and preparation

4. Agenda setting

8. Feedback and action resulting from contributions

9. Clear benefits/ gains for consultation participants

5. Representation

Included in each of these sections are between two and five assessment criteria. The tool asks you to score your organisation for each of these on a scale of 1-4 using the detailed scoring guidance provided. This scoring correlates with a 'traffic light system', outlined on page 12.

How does the scoring work?

This tool uses a traffic light system that scores progress against each of the **9** outcome areas when designing and delivering a consultation activity.

Each criteria should be scored between **1 and 4**, depending on user self-assessment:

Red Score = 1	Amber Score = 2	Yellow Score = 3	Green Score = 4

Criteria are equally weighted. For example, if you scored 3 on each of the overall 31 criteria, you would receive 91 as your overall score. The maximum possible overall score is 124.

What does the score mean?

The overall scoring guide also uses a red – amber – yellow – green scale and is as follows:

Green 94-124	Strong achievement of all criteria, representing good practice and modelling meaningful engagement of women within consultations in policy and practice.
Yellow 63-93	Satisfactory achievement across most criteria. Good demonstration of meaningful engagement with clear planning in place to demonstrate how this can be further improved.
Amber 32-62	Limited achievement across most criteria. Some demonstration of meaningful engagement with no clear planning to demonstrate how this can be further improved.
Red 0-31	Insufficient achievement across criteria, with urgent need to prioritise meaningful engagement of women. Clear strategic planning necessary to improve policy and practice.

EXAMPLE

3. SUPPORT AND PREPARATION

Category objective: Women and women's organisations' needs are assessed, followed by tailored capacity-building and support to enable them to contribute fully and effectively to the consultation process

Criteria	Red Score = 1	Amber Score = 2	Yellow Score = 3	Green Score = 4
How far does/did the consultation process build in:				
3.1 Needs-assessment and capacity-building of women and women's organisations?			3	
3.2 Adequate support to prepare women and women's organisations to contribute effectively?				4
3.3 Comprehensive gender and conflict analysis which includes input from women and women's organisations?		2		
SUBTOTAL			9	

Use the relevant scoring guide to assess your score for each criteria, and then calculate your subtotal

1. CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY

Category objective: A range of appropriate, context-specific, participatory methodologies are used throughout the consultation process which include clarity for all participants on how their data will be used and fed back to them

Criteria	Red Score = 1	Amber Score = 2	Yellow Score = 3	Green Score = 4
To what extent does/did the consultation:				
1.1 Use participatory methodology and approaches to ensure that women and women's organisations are at the centre of the process?				
1.2 Provide a clear outline of how the information collected will be used and shared with participants?				
SUBTOTAL				

SCORING GUIDE

1.1 To what extent does/did the consultation **use participatory methodology and approaches to ensure that women and women's organisations are at the centre of the process?**

Green:
- Participatory methodological tools are integrated throughout the consultation design
- The engagement approach has a clear rationale with explicit aims and objectives for how the involvement of women and women's organisations will shape the processes, conclusions and outputs
- Safe spaces are created for women to come together and build their knowledge, power and leadership and be at the centre of analysing issues as part of the consultation process

Yellow:
- Participatory methodological tools are included in the consultation design
- The tools chosen have a clear rationale with explicit aims and objectives for how women's input will inform output(s) or process

Amber:
- Some participatory methodological tools used, but they do not focus on empowering women or building their knowledge
- Consultation dominated by non-participatory methods

Red:
- No participatory methodological tools or approaches used
- No clear link between the consultations and the resulting processes, conclusions and outputs

SCORING GUIDE

1.2 To what extent does/did the consultation **provide a clear outline of how the information collected will be used and shared with participants?**

Green:
- The process and proposed outputs for planned consultation are communicated to participants
- Clear explanation of how information collected will be used, how anonymity will be maintained (where appropriate) and how it will be fed back to participants in order to ensure equitable knowledge sharing

Yellow:
- The process and proposed outputs for the planned consultation are communicated to participants
- An explanation is provided of how information collected will be used

Amber:
- The process for the planned consultation is communicated to participants

Red:
- Neither the process for the planned consultation nor the expected outputs have been communicated

Members of Shiba Madhesi Dalit Women's Group (set up by FEDO) in Prcina village, Nepalgunj, Nepal (Photo: Sajana Shresta for Womankind Worldwide)

2. PARTNERSHIP

Category objective: Women and women's organisations are engaged as equal partners in the planning, design, implementation and follow up of consultations

Criteria	Red Score = 1	Amber Score = 2	Yellow Score = 3	Green Score = 4
To what extent are/were the partnerships involved in the consultation:				
2.1 Developed equally and genuinely with women and/or women's organisations?				
2.2 Built alongside on-going and meaningful dialogue with women and women's organisations?				
2.3 Supported by regular and strategic meetings with women and women's organisations?				
SUBTOTAL				

SCORING GUIDE

2.1 To what extent are/were the partnerships involved in the consultation **developed genuinely and equally with women and/or women's organisations?**

Green:
- Partnership(s) built with formally registered groups and NGOs as well as grassroots, unregistered groups where possible
- Women collaborate on the objectives, agenda and desired outcomes of the consultation
- Formalised with a memorandum of understanding (MoU) or similar which is based on the objectives of those being consulted and those wanting to consult
- Partnership(s) revised over time to ensure the objectives still reflect all parties' needs
- Effective mechanisms used to increase women's opportunities for leadership, with women and women's groups regularly invited to related meetings and recognised in policy statements and briefingsv

Yellow:
- Women and women's organisations consulted throughout the planning
- Women and women's organisations are able to influence the approach and make some joint decisions over the approach
- Partnership formalised through a jointly developed concept note or similar
- Opportunities created to increase women's leadership
- Women and women's organisations periodically invited to related meetings

Amber:
- Women's needs considered throughout
- Occasional meetings or conversations held and joint objectives agreed

Red:
- No partnership developed
- Women invited to attend an ad-hoc consultation event or discussion

2.2 To what extent are/were the partnerships involved in the consultation **built alongside ongoing and meaningful dialogue with women and women's organisations?**

Green:
- Ongoing dialogue with women and women's groups prioritised and reflected in decision-making processes
- Regular meetings and conversations are held, with jointly set agendas and no cancellations

Yellow:
- Regular meetings and conversations, but agendas not set jointly
- No cancellations or de-prioritising of the relationship
- Agenda items suggested by women and women's organisations are incorporated

Amber:
- Semi-regular communication with women and women's organisations

Red:
- No regular communication or meetings

2.3 To what extent are/were the partnerships involved in the consultation **supported by regular and strategic meetings with women and women's organisations?**

Green:
- Proactive and timely dialogues are held on an ongoing basis with women and women's organisations, enabling them to shape strategic priorities and emerging thinking

Yellow:
- Women's groups and organisations proactively contacted and consulted when important strategic decisions or events are taking place

Amber:
- Women and women's organisations informed of strategy, policy or programme changes or decisions but not given the prior opportunity to influence

Red:
- Women are not informed about strategy, policy or programme changes or decisions

3. SUPPORT AND PREPARATION

Category objective: Women and women's organisations' needs are assessed, followed by tailored capacity-building and support to enable them to contribute fully and effectively to the consultation process

Criteria	Red Score = 1	Amber Score = 2	Yellow Score = 3	Green Score = 4
How far does/did the consultation process build in:				
3.1 Needs-assessment and capacity-building of women and women's organisations?				
3.2 Adequate support to prepare women and women's organisations to contribute effectively?				
3.3 Comprehensive gender and conflict analysis which includes input from women and women's organisations?				
SUBTOTAL				

SCORING GUIDE

3.1 How far does/did the consultation process build in **needs-assessment and capacity-building of women and women's organisations?**

Green:
- Preparatory meetings/calls and guidance notes are provided for all participants to enable them to fully understand the organisational structures and mandates they are operating within and the potential for their influence
- Participants are well prepared to have maximum impact and their time is used wisely

Yellow:
- Preparatory meetings, calls or briefings are offered to participants prior to participation

Amber:
- Key information is provided before consultation, but it is not interactive

Red:
- Only basic details such as agenda and contact information is provided

3.2 How far does/did the consultation process build in **adequate support to prepare women and women's organisations to contribute effectively?**

Green:
- Capacity assessments completed in advance of the consultation exercise and proactive capacity building activities carried out, such as briefings, training and tailored support

Yellow:
- Capacity building activities carried out, but no formal capacity assessments take place to ensure all issues are identified

Amber:
- Only minimal briefing on the agenda and in technical language

Red:
- No attempts are made to build capacity of participants before consultation exercises

3.3 How far does/did the consultation process build in **comprehensive gender and conflict analysis which includes input from women and women's organisations?**

Green:
- Gender experts are fully supported to raise their technical input effectively at all stages in consultation
- Women and women's organisations are asked for their guidance on how strategy, funding, policy and programme level issues impact on women and girls specifically and how gender norms and inequality are fuelling conflict
- Women and women's organisations' insights are used effectively[vi]

Yellow:
- Gender experts and women's organisations are asked for their guidance on how strategy, funding, policy and programme level issues impact on women and girls specifically and how gender norms and inequality are fuelling conflict
- Their insights are used effectively

Amber:
- Gender and peacebuilding experts and women's organisations are involved but not sufficiently recognised for their gender expertise
- Their input is not implemented

Red:
- There is minimal attempt to conduct a gendered analysis of conflict how gender roles and social norms fuel conflict, and how strategy, funding, policy and programme needs to take account of this accordingly

4. AGENDA SETTING

Category objective: Women and women's organisations are fully informed, enabled to shape the agenda and have their priorities addressed throughout the process

Criteria	Red Score = 1	Amber Score = 2	Yellow Score = 3	Green Score = 4
To what extent did women and women's organisations:				
4.1 Receive full briefings with enough time before the consultation to ensure they could contribute to setting the agenda of the meeting or event(s)?				
4.2 Have their inputs actively included in the shaping of the agenda of the meeting or event(s)?				
4.3 See their diverse needs and priorities addressed in the agenda of the meeting or event(s)?				
SUBTOTAL				

SCORING GUIDE

4.1 To what extent did women and women's organisations **receive full briefings with enough time before the consultation to ensure they could contribute to setting the agenda of the meeting or event(s)?**

Green:
- Participants are given ample time to prepare their contributions
- For face-to-face public speaking engagements they have at least six weeks with full briefing and documentation to work on their input, or three months and supporting letters if they require a visa
- Timetabling for this is communicated in advance, so women and women's organisations are able to set aside appropriate time to work on their responses

Yellow:
- Women and women's organisations are given at least four weeks to prepare for public speaking
- Women and women's organisations are given at least two weeks to prepare for face to face meetings
- Consultation briefings and documentation are provided in advance
- If a visa is required, a supporting letter is immediately provided
- Women and women's organisations are given explanations for urgency and shorter timeframes

Amber:
- Women and women's organisations are given under two weeks to prepare their input into consultations or dialogue processes
- Women and women's organisations are given limited explanation as to why they were not given longer to prepare

Red:
- Less than one week is given for women and women's organisations to prepare their input
- No explanation given as to why they were not given longer to prepare

4.2 To what extent did women and women's organisations **have their inputs actively included in the shaping of the agenda of the meeting or event(s)?**

Green:
- Women and women's organisations are actively involved in writing and contributing to the agenda
- Women and women's organisations are given the opportunity to shape, add or change items for discussion

Yellow:
- Women and women's organisations are consulted on topics on the agenda and given the opportunity to input
- Agenda developed with consultation partner(s

Amber:
- The agenda is shared for comments prior to consultation or dialogue taking place

Red:
- The agenda is shared for information only
- The agenda is pre-set and there are no opportunities to influence it

4.3 To what extent did women and women's organisations **see their diverse needs and priorities addressed during the meeting or event(s)?**

Green:
- Women and women's organisations are consulted on all issues that affect their lives, country and community, including stabilisation, peacebuilding, state-building, economic development, infrastructure and access to justice, at strategy, funding, policy and programme development levels
- Clear efforts are made to acknowledge women's oppression, gender inequality and unequal power relations resulting in the systemic nature of women's exclusion from decision-making processes

Yellow:
- Women and women's organisations are consulted on a wide range of strategy, funding, policy and programme development, including on issues of stabilisation and peacebuilding
- Some uptake of issues raised as concerns by women, with some of these explored in more depth with women prior to consultation

Amber:
- Women are consulted on a wide range of topics, not just "women's issues"

Red:
- Women are repetitively consulted on the same topics that relate to "women's issues"

5. REPRESENTATION

Category objective: A fully representative range of women and women's organisations are actively identified and engaged in the consultation process

Criteria	Red Score = 1	Amber Score = 2	Yellow Score = 3	Green Score = 4
To what extent are:				
5.1 A diverse range of women and women's organisations identified?				
5.2 A diverse range of women and women's organisations proactively involved and engaged – with particular care taken to include those who are often excluded?				
5.3 Transparent consultation processes developed and used for working with women and women's organisations?				
5.4 Women and women's organisations given fair and equal opportunity to contribute, including in relation to time and status?				
SUBTOTAL				

SCORING GUIDE

5.1 To what extent are **a diverse range of women and women's organisations identified?**

Green:
- A diverse range of women are identified to be included and represented in the consultation, including: women from a range of different: ages, ethnicities, races, religions, SOGI, literacy levels, relationship statuses, socio-economic backgrounds, locations of a country or region, rural and urban areas and women living with disabilities
- Contextual analysis used to identify those specifically and/or traditionally excluded in a range of different contexts
- Often-excluded groups are identified rather than only engaging with the 'usual suspects'
- Mapping and inclusion of both formally registered organisations and NGOs, as well as grassroots and unregistered groups
- Each consultation is approached with a fresh look at who needs to be involved

Yellow:
- Women and women's organisations are not viewed as a homogenous group, and a broad range of women are identified
- Plans made to engage them, including through numerous consortium groups

Amber:
- A national-level consortium or umbrella organisation that represent a range of women's voices engaged
- Efforts made to identify umbrella organisations with a broad membership and/representation of women and/or women's organisations

Red:
- The same women or representatives from the same women's organisations are repeatedly consulted
- Limited diversity and demographic representation

5.2 To what extent are **a diverse range of women and women's organisations proactively involved and engaged – with particular care taken to include those who are often excluded?**

Green:
- Barriers to a diverse range of women and women's organisations inclusion identified
- Participatory consultation methodologies developed that address identified barriers
- A targeted mixed-methods approach to consultation activities used, for example multi-location meetings, and a range of interviews, focus group discussions and participatory methods

Yellow:
- Proactive work takes place to involve excluded women and women's organisations
- Learning from previous consultations informs increased diversity of participants and organisations
- Several different consultation activities used, reaching a varied audience

Amber:
- Some effort made to accommodate the diverse needs of typically excluded women and women's organisations
- Targeted consultation activities have been used, reaching a limited audience

Red:
- Only women with minimum access requirements are included in consultations and dialogues
- One ad-hoc consultation activity is delivered, reaching a limited audience

5.3 To what extent are **transparent consultation processes developed and used for working with women and women's organisations?**

Green:
- Fully articulated and easy to understand rationale of how consultation participants are selected, who is eligible for inclusion (their legitimacy for voicing the needs of specific groups), who is responsible for the consultation and making decisions on it
- Tangible ways developed for participants to feed in to communicate concerns or ask questions about the consultation process

Yellow:
- Rationale for consultation is shared publicly, including details of methodology, and who is responsible for the consultation
- Some consideration given to ways for participants to voice concerns

Amber:
- Rationale for consultation is communicated but there is no clear way to voice concerns

Red:
- No rationale for decisions communicated

SCORING GUIDE

5.4 To what extent are **women and women's organisations given fair and equal opportunity to contribute, including in relation to time and status?**

Green:
- Women and women's organisations given adequate time to participate in and respond to questions during the consultations
- Any panels, discussions or workshops have at least equal participation of women and men

Yellow:
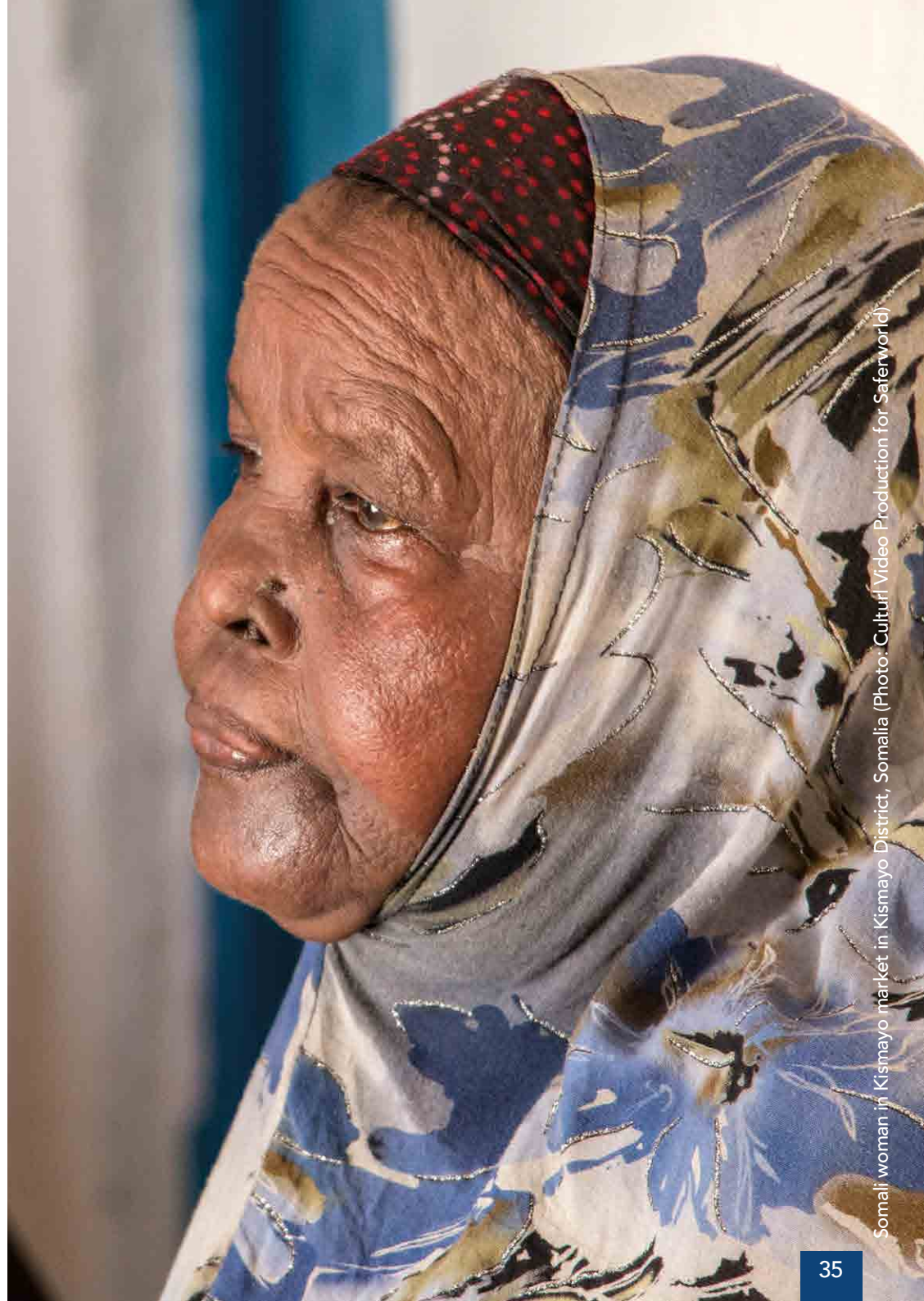- Women and women's organisations given adequate time to participate or respond to consultation requests

Amber:
- Women and women's organisations given limited time to participate or respond to consultation requests

Red:
- Strong gender disparities are present in participation and representation
- Women and women's organisations are not given adequate time to actively participate

Somali woman in Kismayo market in Kismayo District, Somalia (Photo: Cuturl Video Production for Saferworld)

6. ACCESSIBILITY

Category objective: Intersectional inequalities are taken into account and all women and women's organisations are supported to participate fully in the consultation process

Criteria	Red Score = 1	Amber Score = 2	Yellow Score = 3	Green Score = 4
To what extent are:				
6.1 Accessibility requirements assessed and supported throughout, including those of women living with disabilities?				
6.2 Adequate funding and resources allocated to logistical arrangements to enable security and attendance, including transport, subsistence, childcare, access requirements and staff costs?				
6.3 Consultation conducted in familiar languages?				
SUBTOTAL				

6.1 To what extent are **accessibility requirements assessed and supported throughout, including those of women with disabilities?**

Green:
- A needs assessment is conducted prior to consultation meeting/event
- All accessibility issues are identified, considered and planned for when designing the consultation methodology
- Individual accessibility needs are accommodated
- Renumeration to cover lost wages for consultation participants built into the budget from the outset and provided in a timely manner
- Accommodation and venues should include the offer of safe spaces, breaks, childcare, as well as all disability-related needs such as physical access, signers, interpreters, and helpers identified to provide individual support
- Practical arrangements for visas and travel should be fully met, subsistence should be paid, travel assistance and support provided to enable women to apply for a visa, and other needs such as facilitating a chaperone taken into consideration
- Women and women's organisations have at least three months to arrange travels and visas if necessary

Yellow:
- Support provided to enable participation, including full costs reimbursed, and money for staff time
- Some accessibility issues are identified and planned for, including childcare
- If travel is involved, subsistence should be paid, travel assistance and support provided to enable women to apply for a visa, and other needs such as facilitating a chaperone taken into consideration
- Women and women's organisations have at least three months to arrange travels and visas if necessary
- Disability considered and individual needs met appropriately

Amber:
- Costs incurred are reimbursed
- Limited support offered to enable participation including translation of relevant materials, and ad hoc support offered to those with particular access requirements
- Limited accessibility issues are identified and planned for
- Childcare is not provided

Red:
- Only basic support available to enable participation
- No accessibility issues are identified and planned for

6.2 To what extent are **adequate funding and resources allocated to logistical arrangements to enable security and attendance, including transport, subsistence, childcare, access requirements and staff costs?**

Green:
- Sufficient budget allocated for all logistical aspects of consultation such as visa (and any associated costs), travel, accommodation, translation, staff costs and other accessibility requirements
- Budget provision should be flexible and timely
- Budget should account for feedback and verification on the consultation and dialogue processes

Yellow:
- Sufficient budget is allocated and released in flexible manner, so it does not form a barrier to women and women's groups and organisations involvement

Amber:
- Some budget lines are allocated for necessary logistics but there is lack of flexibility in release of funds or support with unexpected resource requirements

Red:
- There is insufficient budget to carry out the consultation effectively

6.3 To what extent are **consultations conducted in familiar languages?**

Green:
- Consultations are conducted in conducted in a national language and simultaneous translation is provided
- All relevant documentation is translated, including the results of the consultation
- Facilitators are briefed to use simple language, avoid jargon and offer women the space to ask questions if they do not understand

Yellow:
- Consultations are conducted in conducted in a national language and simultaneous translation is provided
- All relevant documentation is translated
- Results of the consultation are not translated

Amber:
- Consultations are conducted in a language familiar to them
- Some documentation is translated

Red:
- Consultations are not conducted in the women's first language or a language familiar to them
- No documentation is translated

7. SAFEGUARDING

Category objective: Women and women's organisations are enabled to participate fully and safely and without experiencing current or future risk of harm

Criteria	Red Score = 1	Amber Score = 2	Yellow Score = 3	Green Score = 4
To what extent:				
7.1 Are all processes designed with a Do No Harm Approach?				
7.2 Are clear safety and security protocols in place, including Do No Harm and safeguarding provisions?				
7.3 Is information sought with informed consent and clear instructions on how consent may be withdrawn during the consultation process?				
7.4 Are women and women's organisations supported to only provide information they are comfortable to disclose?				
7.5 Is a referral pathway identified and made accessible for those disclosing traumatic personal experiences, particularly in relation to violence or abuse?				
SUBTOTAL				

SCORING GUIDE

7.1 To what extent are **all processes are designed with a Do No Harm Approach?**[vii]

Green:
- A Do No Harm Approach has been clearly considered and adopted within the consultation planning
- A safety and security protocol has been developed, taking into consideration emotional impact, media visibility, personal safety, safeguarding and travel risk
- Particular attention has been given to involving and protecting women who face multiple and intersecting forms of stigma and discrimination including women with disabilities and diverse SOGI

Yellow:
- A Do No Harm Approach was considered in the consultation planning
- This approach has been reflected in the safety and security protocol

Amber:
- Some reflection and consideration of Do No Harm Approach taken within the planning of the consultation

Red:
- Insufficient reflection and consideration of Do No Harm taken within the planning of the consultation

7.2 To what extent are **clear safety and security protocols are in place, including Do No Harm and safeguarding provisions?**

Green:
- A clear bespoke safety and security protocol is in place, including a safeguarding policy, informed by a thorough risk assessment and consultation with women
- The final draft protocol is clearly communicated to women before they consent to their involvement in the consultation or dialogue process
- There are plans in place on how to support vulnerable participants, taking into consideration appropriate duty of care and safeguarding measures needed throughout the engagement
- If travel is required consideration is given to risks associated with crossing checkpoints and borders
- Risks associated with media coverage, social media, photographs, disclosure and who to contact with specific concerns are all included in the protocol

Yellow:
- A risk assessment is conducted
- A safety and security protocol is in place
- Safeguarding is clearly considered and addressed
- The protocol is clearly communicated to women and women's organisations before they consent to their involvement in the consultation or dialogue

Amber:
- A risk assessment is conducted
- A standardised safety and security protocol is in place and communicated
- Safeguarding is not adequately addressed

Red:
- No safety and security protocol is developed

7.3 To what extent is **information sought with informed consent and clear instructions on how consent may be withdrawn during the consultation process?**

Green:
- A clear ethical protocol has been developed with an explanation of how consent must be sought and can be withdrawn at any point
- Specific and informed consent is given prior to any consultation taking place, recorded in a secure location and refreshed on an ongoing basis
- Consent is given and recorded for use of photos, social media and reference to people's names and/or organisations names

Yellow:
- A clear ethical protocol developed with an explanation of how consent will be sought and can be revoked
- Informed consent is given prior to any consultation
- Consent given and recorded for use of photos, social media and reference to people's names and/or organisations names

Amber:
- Informed consent is given prior to any consultation
- However, there is no clear ethical protocol in place
- Consent given and recorded for use of photos, social media and reference to people's names and/or organisations names

Red:
- Informed consent is not clearly sought
- There is no clear ethical protocol in place
- Consent given and recorded for use of photos, social media and reference to people's names and/or organisations names

7.4 To what extent are **women and women's organisations supported to provide only information they are comfortable to disclose?**

Green:
- It is clearly communicated to participants that they should only disclose information that they feel comfortable with
- Women are never pressured to talk about violence or abuse that they have experienced, or other traumatic events
- Women and women's organisations feel like they are able to make a valuable input/advocate for women's rights without providing direct testimony of any past experiences

Yellow:
- It is clearly communicated to women and women's organisations that they should only provide information that they feel comfortable to disclose

Amber:
- Some consideration has been made around communication to women and women's organisations that they should only disclose information that they feel comfortable to talk about

Red:
- Women are asked to disclose personal information that could potentially be retraumatising

7.5 To what extent is **a referral pathway identified and made accessible for those disclosing traumatic personal experiences, particularly in relation to violence or abuse?**

Green:
- Clearly communicate appropriate and accessible support services that are available before, during and after participation in consultation activities
- Women and women's organisations are aware of these referral pathways before contributing to consultations
- Women and women's organisations are asked if any further support would be beneficial
- Proactive follow up work takes place to ensure women have support services after disclosing personal information and if any further action is required

Yellow:
- Women and women's organisations are offered appropriate and accessible sources of support and encouraged to use the service if necessary

Amber:
- Contact details provided signposting women to a support service if needed

Red:
- No support provided to mitigate against potential re-traumatisation

8. FEEDBACK AND ACTION RESULTING FROM CONTRIBUTION

Category objective: Ongoing partnerships developed and process continues to effect positive change beyond the timescale of the initial consultation

Criteria	Red Score = 1	Amber Score = 2	Yellow Score = 3	Green Score = 4
To what extent:				
8.1 Is clear and timely feedback provided after the consultation?				
8.2 Are women and women's organisations engaged in the validation process?				
8.3 Are women and women's organisations given opportunity to engage in the dissemination process?				
8.4 Are results of consultation acted upon and included in broader decision-making processes?				
8.5 Are actions and developments resulting from the consultation regularly fed back to women and women's organisations (not just a one-off update)?				
SUBTOTAL				

SCORING GUIDE

8.1 To what extent is **clear and timely feedback provided after the consultation?**

Green:
- Clear and timely feedback on recommendations and actions is provided to women and women's organisations in an appropriate language and format within six weeks of the consultation
- The timetable for this is communicated at the beginning of the consultation process
- Women and women's organisations are given the option to be credited for their contribution where consent is sought and their security/community position is not jeopardised
- Options are given for how questions or feedback on the recommendations and actions from consultation participants can be fed in

Yellow:
- Clear and timely feedback is provided in an appropriate language and format

Amber:
- A letter of thanks without the full report and details on use of the findings is provided in an appropriate language and format

Red:
- No feedback is provided

8.2 To what extent are **women and women's organisations engaged in the validation process?**

Green:
- Women and women's organisations are actively engaged to validate and shape the findings of the consultation beyond the initial engagement
- The timetable for this is communicated at the beginning of the consultation process

Yellow:
- Women and women's organisations are clearly involved in the project validation process

Amber:
- Some women and women's organisations are involved in the project validation process

Red:
- No women and women's organisations are involved in the project validation process

8.3 To what extent are **women and women's organisations given the opportunity to engage in the dissemination process?**

Green:
- Women and women's organisations are given the opportunity to participate in various elements of the dissemination process to ensure findings and actions are communicated to those affected by them
- This includes follow up meetings/briefings in local languages and opportunities to participate in oral reports of findings
- The timetable for this is communicated at the start of the consultation process

Yellow:
- Women and women's organisations are offered the opportunity to participate in the project dissemination process
- A timetable for this is communicated at the start of the consultation process

Amber:
- Some women and women's organisations are offered the opportunity to participate in the project dissemination process

Red:
- No women and women's organisations have the opportunity to participate in the project dissemination process

8.4 To what extent are results of consultation acted upon and included in broader decision-making process?

Green:
- Consultation results are reflected in broader decision-making processes, including in strategy, policy and programme design
- Women and women's organisations are informed of and can clearly see the results of their input
- Women and women's organisations are empowered by seeing their views acted upon via updates from consultative body or inclusion in the design/review of implementation of consultation outcomes

Yellow:
- Consultation results are reflected in decision making processes
- Consultation results can clearly be identified in strategy, policy or programme design

Amber:
- Consultations results have been considered in relation to strategy, policy or programme design
- Participants are not informed of these

Red:
- Results of consultation not considered in relation to strategy, policy or programme design

8.5 To what extent are **actions and developments resulting from the consultation regularly fed back to women and women's organisations (not just a one-off update)?**

Green:
- Clear actions and developments resulting from the consultation are fed back to all women and women's organisations who participated in the consultation, in an appropriate language and format

Yellow:
- Actions and developments resulting from the consultation are fed back to some participants, in an appropriate language and format

Amber:
- Limited communication is provided on the actions and developments resulting from the consultation

Red:
- No feedback is provided on the actions and developments resulting from the consultation

9. CLEAR BENEFITS/GAINS FOR CONSULTATION PARTICIPANTS

Category objective: Women and women's organisations experience tangible benefits from engagement in the consultation process

Criteria	Red Score = 1	Amber Score = 2	Yellow Score = 3	Green Score = 4
As a result of the consultation(s), women are able to:				
9.1 Increase ability to access and engage with decision makers or to influence decisions affecting their lives?				
9.2 Access professional development training, based on needs assessment or as requested by participants?				
9.3 Continue to engage and meet with other women and women's organisations in the long-term?				
SUBTOTAL				

9.1 As a result of the consultation(s), women and women's organisations are able to **increase ability to access and engage with decision makers or to influence decisions affecting their lives?**

Green:
- Through the consultations, women and women's organisation are supported to access new decision-making arenas
- Women and women's organisations are empowered to influence other decisions affecting their lives

Yellow:
- Consultations activities are facilitated or designed to proactively support women and women's organisations to feel comfortable to engage

Amber:
- Some consultation activities are facilitated or designed with some effort to support women and women's organisations to feel comfortable to engage

Red:
- No consultation activities are facilitated or designed to support women and women's groups and organisations to feel comfortable to engage

9.2 As a result of the consultation(s), women are able to **access professional development training based on needs assessment or as requested by participants?**

Green:
- All women who participate in the consultation are offered a range of professional development opportunities
- A range of professional development opportunities are provided for staff organising consultation activities to better enable them to participate and deliver effective, participatory consultations, using the methods suggested above

Yellow:
- 50% of women who participated in the consultation are offered professional development opportunities

Amber:
- 25% of women who participated in the consultation are offered professional development opportunities

Red:
- No professional development opportunities provided for women and women's groups and organisations or internal staff

9.3 As a result of the consultation(s), women are able to **continue to engage and meet with other women and women's organisations in the long-term?**

Green:
- Consultation activities feed into long-term strategy, funding, policy and programme development in decision-making arenas (such as UN agencies, national peace processes, local and regional government, INGOs and donor governments)
- Women and women's organisations play an integral part in the planning process
- Relationships are strengthened by positive experience of collaborative, participatory consultations and trust is developed through a mutually respectful relationship

Yellow:
- Consultation activities go some way to feed into long-term strategy, funding, policy and programme development

Amber:
- Consultation activities contribute to building a positive relationship between policy makers and women's organisations

Red:
- Consultations activities are one-off and do not feed into any long-term strategy, funding, policy and programme development

TOTAL SCORE

CATEGORY	MAXIMUM POSSIBLE SCORE	YOUR SUB-TOTAL SCORE
1. Consultation methodology	8	
2. Partnership	12	
3. Support and preparation	12	
4. Agenda setting	12	
5. Representation	16	
6. Accessibility	12	
7. Safeguarding	20	
8. Feedback and action resulting from contributions	20	
9. Clear benefits/gains for consultation participants	12	
TOTAL	124	

WHAT DOES YOUR SCORE MEAN?

The overall scoring guide also uses a red amber green scale and is as follows:

Green 94-124 — Strong achievement of all indicators, representing good practice and modelling meaningful engagement of women within consultations in policy and practice.

Yellow 63-93 — Satisfactory achievement across most criteria. Good demonstration of meaningful engagement with clear planning in place to demonstrate how this can be further improved.

Amber 32-62 — Limited achievement across most criteria. Some demonstration of meaningful engagement with no clear planning to demonstrate how this can be further improved.

Red 0-31 — Insufficient achievement across criteria, with urgent need to prioritise meaningful engagement of women. Clear strategic planning necessary to improve policy and practice.

PART C:
WHAT NEXT?

WHAT NEXT?

This tool, when first used, should help provide an important benchmark for you to build on to promote more meaningful engagement with women and women's organisations in FCAS. This will support progress in women's rights as well as making critical steps towards a more equal and peaceful world.

To build on this benchmark, users are encouraged to:

- **Seek additional feedback from women and women's organisations in FCAS** – once the tool has been completed, we strongly recommend that users discuss the results with women and women's organisations to help identify next steps. This will help to prioritise areas to be addressed as well as identify effective solutions for those areas and any other challenges that have been identified.

- **Integrate the tool into monitoring, evaluation and learning processes** – this tool is intended for repeated use as part of a learning process and therefore is not a one-off instrument. By using the tool as part of ongoing processes, users will be able to demonstrate progress over time and identify areas for improvement.

- **Aim for the green boxes in future planning** – the criteria highlighted in the green boxes represent good practice for meaningfully engaging with women and women's organisations in FCAS. Users should therefore refer to these criteria as they plan future consultations.

- **Share progress and learning** – users are encouraged to openly highlight and share their progress in supporting more meaningful engagement with women and women's organisations. We further encourage users to share their learning, challenges and how challenges were overcome to better support peers in using the tool. Please contact us at **consultations@gaps-uk.org** if you would like your experiences to be shared on the Beyond Consultations website or if you have any questions about the tool.

ENDNOTES

i   UN Women and the Council on Foreign Relations (2018) Women's Participation in Peace Processes (https://www.cfr.org/interactive/womens-participation-in-peace-processes)

ii   Ibid

iii   PA-X (2017). Peace Agreements Database and Access Tool (https://www.peaceagreements.org)

iv   The term 'women's organisations' throughout this tool refers to a diverse range of formal and informal organisations, movements, groups and networks working on women's rights, gender equality and peacebuilding

v   Conciliation Resources (2018) Partnership in peace-building: lessons from Conciliation Resources

vi   Saferworld (2016) Gender analysis of conflict toolkit – guidance on carrying out gender power analysis and Saferworld (2017) Building inclusive peace: gender at the heart of conflict analysis

vii   'Do No Harm' has now become synonymous with conflict sensitivity. Conflict sensitivity refers to the practice of understanding how humanitarian, development and peacebuilding interventions interact with conflict in a particular context, to mitigate unintended negative effects, and to influence conflict positively wherever possible (More information available: https://www.cdacollaborative.org/)

Feedback

The tool was developed and verified using a rigorous process involving women and women's organisations in FCAS, national governments, INGOs and multilateral agencies. We welcome your feedback on the tool and will respond to any emerging trends through future revisions as appropriate.

Please send feedback to consultations@gaps-uk.org
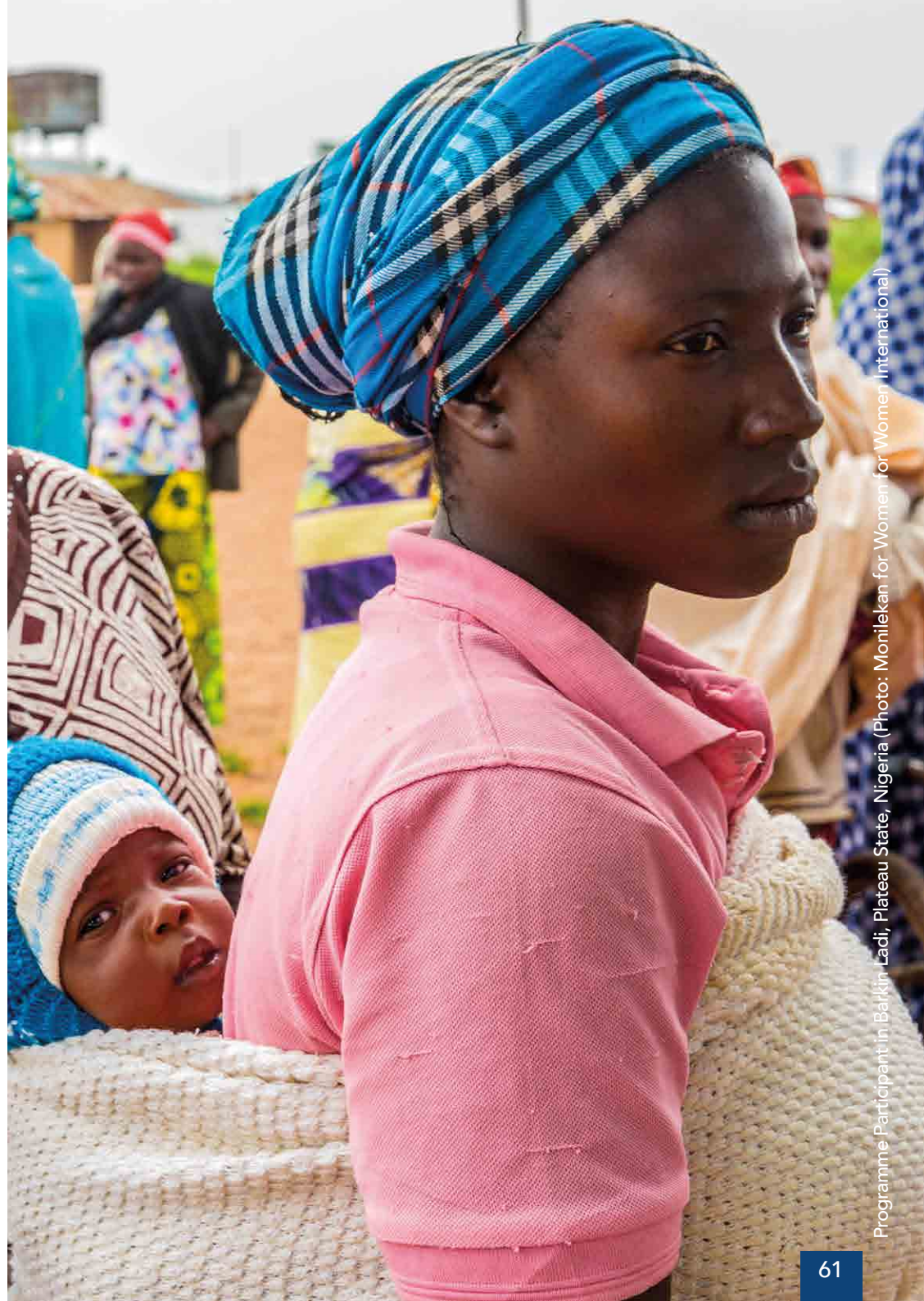
Programme Participant in Balkin Ladi, Plateau State, Nigeria (Photo: Monilekan for Women for Women International)

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