Africa's Contemporary Security Challenges Seminar

Plenary 7: Gender Dimensions of Insecurity

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Impact through Insight

Three Questions and
Two Ways to Examine Them

- What constitutes a gender perspective on security and why is it important?

- Which stakeholders are key to engage in adopting a gender perspective?

- How can cultural, social, institutional norms be overcome to facilitate a gender perspective on security?

Two Perspectives

1. What do these questions mean for U.S. Policy
2. What do these questions mean for our African partners?
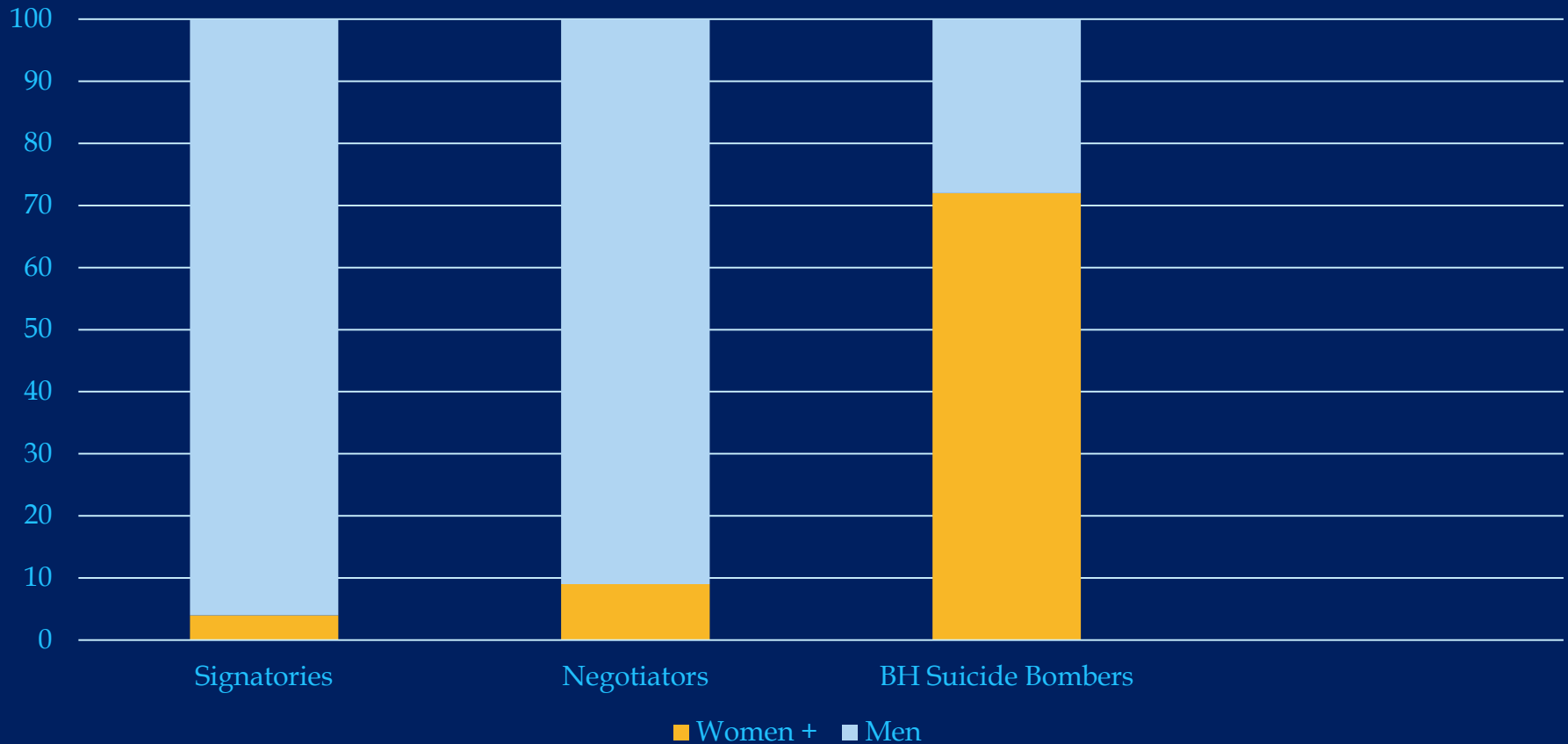
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What constitutes a gender perspective on security and why is it important?

- "Deadly conflicts can be more effectively avoided, and peace can be best forged and sustained, when women become equal partners in all aspects of peacebuilding and conflict prevention, when their lives are protected, their voices heard, and their perspectives taken into account." U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, 2016

- Priority Actions: "EMPOWER WOMEN AND YOUTH: Societies that empower women to participate fully in civic and economic life are more prosperous and peaceful. We will support efforts to advance women's equality, protect the rights of women and girls, and promote women and youth empowerment programs." National Security Strategy, December 2017

- "It shall be the policy of the United States to promote the meaningful participation of women in all aspects of overseas conflict prevention, management, and resolution, and post-conflict relief and recovery efforts." Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 (P.L., 115-38)

Various areas where gender plays a role:

- Violent extremism
- Civil-military relations
- Combat
- Conflict relapse
- C/P Violent extremism
- DDR
- Early warning systems
- Governance
- Humanitarian relief
- Justice
- Negotiations
- Operational capability
- Peacekeeping
- Policing
- Post-conflict recovery
- Reconciliation
- Recruitment & retention
- Risk management
- Security forces
- Security sector reform
- Sexual & gender based violence
- Peace processes

Some Notable Statistics

Who are the stakeholders?

U.S. context:

NSC, DOD, State, USAID, IC, MCC, NGOs…

State: Ambassador for Global Women's Issues (vacant)

USAID: Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

DOD: Women, Peace and Security Synchronization Group

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Stakeholders in Africa?

- Political Leadership
- Security Forces
- Police and Judiciary
- Other Ministries: Health, Education, Women, Finance
- Local political, religious, and community leaders
- Women's organizations
- Peacemakers and negotiators
- Combatants
- Peacekeepers
- Humanitarians
- Regional Economic Communities

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How can cultural, social, institutional norms be overcome to facilitate a gender perspective on security?

Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017

"Simply put, when women are at the negotiating table, peace is more likely. The benefit of women's participation – and the risks of their exclusion – in all aspects of governance and peacemaking are too great to ignore."

--- House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman

Ed Royce (R-California)

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