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**From Depletion to Regeneration:
Addressing Structural and Physical Violence in Post-Conflict
Economies**

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From Depletion to Regeneration:**Addressing Structural and Physical Violence in Post-Conflict Economies**

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10 Drawing on depletion through social reproduction (DSR) and political economy of violence
11 against women (PEVAW) approaches, we show how the context of violence intensifies the
12 depletion of women's lives as they labor to meet their household needs; and how this
13 depletion heightens their vulnerability to violence in conflict-affected contexts and inhibits
14 their roles in peacebuilding. We propose the concept of the 'regenerative state', as a post-
15 conflict moment of openness when state policy underpinned by attention to issues of
16 depletion, social reproduction and violence against women, can help reshape gendered power
17 relations in post-conflict transitions.
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8 To be a mother

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10 Is to look at poverty at its face.

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12 For the cruelty of war

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14 Lies not on heads that roll,

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16 But tables always empty.

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19 How does one look for food for the eldest

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21 As a baby sucks at one's breast?

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26 Joi Barrios (1990)

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31 **Introduction**

32
33 What does it mean to re-cast conflicts and post-conflict transitions through the lens of social
34 reproduction? How might a focus on processes of human depletion that can accompany the
35 doing of social reproduction advance a more nuanced and systematic analysis of the complex
36 range of sites and forms of gendered violence across conflict transitions? As the epigraph
37 conveys, the standpoint of women, including mothers, provides a different voice on the
38 experience and impact of conflict – one that is grounded in the labors of the everyday
39 reproduction and maintenance of life. In situations of conflict and their aftermath, feminist
40 research has shown that gender shapes the distinct experiences and insecurities of women and
41 girls (Cahn et al 2011). These insecurities are defined by direct and physical forms of
42 violence such as heightened risks for rape and sexual violence as well as other forms of
43 gender-based violence during conflict (Swaine 2018;--). They also constitute long-term
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3 harms such as maternal mortality, impoverishment and decline in well-being in the aftermath
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5 (--). Culcasi (2019) notes that:

7 [W]ar affects women from the bedroom to the battlefield ...for most women war is
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9 experienced within intimate spaces. Intimate spaces are rarely the focus of
10
11 mainstream academic research or media reporting; thus, women's experiences of war
12
13 and displacement are often concealed.
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17 Jacqui True (2012) argues that physical gender-based violence is much more likely to occur
18
19 in the context of structural violence reflected in prevailing patterns of gender discrimination,
20
21 barriers to accessing post-conflict resources, and women's exclusion from peace processes
22
23 and political decision-making (--). Globally, there have been important strides in rendering
24
25 visible the 'conflict-related' violence that women and girls experience in security frameworks
26
27 such as the UN Women, Peace and Security agenda (--). As this paper will show, social
28
29 reproduction is a vital yet taken for granted resource for the survival of affected populations
30
31 during and after conflicts especially in war-torn urban and rural communities and in sites
32
33 such as internal displacement and refugee camps (see--). We argue that the recognition and
34
35 redistribution of care should be an integral part of conflict response and peace-building. At
36
37 present, however, unpaid care labor is hardly recognized or supported by state and
38
39 international actors in post-conflict reconstruction. This non-recognition and under-valuing of
40
41 gender-specific roles in household reproduction and care labor by society and by state and
42
43 international financial institutions (IFIs) that direct economic policy and planning, affects the
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45 policy and development strategies that could reverse this depletion of lives and the risks of
46
47 the recurrence of conflict. Often the state provisioning of social infrastructure via transitional
48
49 macroeconomic and social reform policies does not reflect the gender-specific impacts of
50
51 these policies, in particular, on women's labor and wellbeing in households in conflict-
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53 affected contexts. Thus, the gendered political economy approach advanced in this paper
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3 aims to not only stem the unequal costs of rebuilding in the aftermath of conflicts, but by
4
5 recognizing the important role of social reproduction also paves the way for the regeneration
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7 of societies and their peaceful transformation into more caring and gender-equal societies.
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12 Social reproduction is the labor that goes into reproducing social life. This includes biological
13
14 reproduction, unpaid production in the home (both goods and services), social provisioning
15
16 (such as, voluntary work directed at meeting community needs), the reproduction of culture
17
18 and ideology, and the provision of sexual, emotional and affective services in the household
19
20 required to maintain family and intimate relationships (--). In conflict-affected situations, the
21
22 deterioration in physical infrastructure and public services, and reduced social expenditures
23
24 heighten the pressures on those who perform social reproductive roles. As women largely
25
26 care for the injured and traumatized family members, and provision soldiers and displaced
27
28 communities, they are most adversely affected without adequate social infrastructure to
29
30 support them. Of course, women also perform paid productive activities under these
31
32 conditions, which can also increase pressure on them. These pressures intensify what Rai et
33
34 al (2014) have called ‘depletion through social reproduction’ (DSR) results.
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43 The paper is structured into following way: the first part of the paper draws together the two
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45 main bodies of work that explore respectively the processes of depletion and violence in post-
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47 conflict environments to demonstrate the potential to integrate the costs and contributions of
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49 women’s unpaid care labor across conflict analysis and post-conflict rehabilitation. The
50
51 second part of the paper highlights women’s unpaid labor in conflict-affected settings and
52
53 shows how valuing household care economies could promote post-conflict recovery and
54
55 reconstruction. The third part of the paper introduces the concept of ‘regeneration’ to the
56
57 post-conflict reconstruction toolkit as a way of reshaping gendered social relations through
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3 the recognition and redistribution of social reproduction. It requires the framing of peace
4 settlements that promote new policy and economic frameworks at community, national and
5 international levels. Crucially, we argue, these frameworks must recognize the value of social
6 reproduction and establish the social infrastructures to support and sustain it as an integral
7 part of post-conflict reconstruction while at the same time working towards engaging both
8 women and men in its delivery.
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19 **Bridging PEVAW and DSR**

20 Integrating the political economy of violence against women (PEVAW) and DSR
21 frameworks in conflict and post-conflict situations enables us to connect multiple facets of
22 structural violence and physical or direct violence to processes of depletion and harm; to
23 make visible the multiple scales at which violence reverberates and is experienced, and to
24 challenge the limited temporalities of violence in existing post-conflict frameworks.
25
26 Scholarship on PEVAW has revealed how structural inequalities rooted in patriarchal control
27 over material resources and decision-making exacerbate women's vulnerability to various
28 forms of violence including during and after conflict (--). Scholarship on DSR has identified
29 how the devaluation or non-recognition of social reproduction, including unpaid care labor
30 leads to the depletion of wellbeing of individual women, households and communities. DSR,
31 on its own, is unable to connect the devaluing of social reproduction with a broader analysis
32 of violence and conflict-affected situations. Diana Sankey (2014) has alerted us to
33 deprivations of subsistence needs as a discrete form of violence, or 'subsistence harms' that
34 can impact transitional justice after conflict or violence. Despite the growing evidence of
35 these harms in post-conflict situations, there is a pervasive gendered expectation by
36 individuals, governments and international donors that the daily provisioning of care during
37 and in the immediate after crisis is an endlessly elastic and self-renewing resource (Elson
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2000). Bringing together PEVAW and DSR, we note that these socio-economic harms intensify DSR as women in conflict-affected situations struggle to meet the needs of their households and communities, leading to a ripple effect of harms. That ‘ripple’ effect includes heightened vulnerability to, as well as the experience of, physical violence in conflict-affected public and private spaces such as homes, workplaces, villages/cities, roads, displacement or refugee camps, military compounds and so on.

So, our argument in this paper is that taken together, these two approaches shed light on women’s experiences of insecurity and help to explain why women’s voices have been absent from post-conflict agenda setting despite SDG 16.7, which calls for ‘responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels’ and the negative effects of this absence. Whilst feminist scholars have sought to connect the gendered political economy processes that undergird conflicts and peace settlements and to integrate feminist political economy and security analysis (Bergeron et al 2017;--), we argue that there are major gaps in our knowledge in addressing this problem due in part to the ‘silo-ing’ of security, humanitarian, and development policy responses. We now turn to outlining our two frameworks.

Conceptualizing harms as depletion

As advanced by Rai, Hoskyns and Thomas, DSR occurs, albeit at different rates and levels in different social contexts, when the gap between the outflows —domestic, affective and reproductive labor — and the inflows — medical care, income earned and leisure time — falls below a threshold of biological, financial and affective sustainability (2014). DSR denotes the specific economic analysis of the distribution and cost of performing paid and unpaid social reproductive in the household and social institutions such as schools, hospitals,

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3 community organizations, religious organizations and so on. As feminist scholars have
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5 pointed out, while social reproduction sustains human relations as much as, and if not more
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7 than the productive economy and begins in the household or family unit. However, this
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9 economy is relatively ‘invisible’ with the work involved in caring mostly uncounted and
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11 unmeasured in national and international systems despite its importance in daily survival.
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13 Unpaid care economies in particular are expected to cushion ‘crisis shocks’ whether those
14
15 associated with financial crashes or conflict outbreak or humanitarian disasters. They
16
17 frequently serve as safety nets in the face of minimal or decreasing economic inflows during
18
19 conflict and post-conflict conditions of austerity (Elson 2012) and often state collapse. DSR
20
21 can help to identify how the mal-recognition and mal-distribution of social reproduction can
22
23 lead to increased level of human depletion under conditions of conflict and during post-
24
25 conflict situations. For example, when applied to conflict-affected settings the framework
26
27 highlights the greater demands on women’s labor in procuring basic needs including food,
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29 water, clothing, shelter, health and education for their families as a result of war-damaged
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31 physical and social infrastructure. Blocked and broken transport, deterioration of services
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33 needed to care for of sick, injured and traumatized children and family members can generate
34
35 an increased need to secure more income to cover household necessities, for example because
36
37 of inflation in prices or loss of employment, which can also add to the burden of work. DSR
38
39 stresses the costs of women’s increasing labor on their health and wellbeing, and on their
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41 capacity to continue to participate beyond the household in social and political life at a time
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43 when new post-conflict political arrangements are taking shape, often shutting them out of
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45 conversations about the reshaping of post-conflict societies.
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56 While the DSR approach does not explicitly use the language of conflict or violence, it does
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58 reflect four types of harms that result from the non- or mal-recognition of social
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3 reproduction: discursive harm; emotional harm; bodily harm; and harm to citizenship
4
5 entitlements (Rai et al 2014, 91). These harms constitute indirect forms of violence, which
6
7 relate to “structures of inequality that are inextricably intertwined with gender and implicated
8
9 in how society arranges care” (Razavi 2007, 2). Violence can disrupt everyday life and can
10
11 adversely affect the coping strategies available to individuals, households and communities.
12
13 Take for example, women’s everyday lives in Palestine, where in addition to worrying about
14
15 their children being harmed by the Israeli military they also have to cope with negotiating
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17 check-points to access food, visit friends and relatives and go to work, adding another layer
18
19 of anxiety to their already stressful lives. Moreover, as Ni Aolain has argued in times of
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21 conflict, “individual violations create communities of harm, which include not only the
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23 victim herself but also those people who are closely tied to her emotionally, or who are in a
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25 relationship of co-dependency with her” (2010, 219). Resilience, often discursively mobilized
26
27 by the state and international agencies as an important agential route to recovery from
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29 violence, cannot, we argue, be taken as a given. Individual coping strategies during and after
30
31 conflict are inseparable from relationships of mutual interdependence as well as of unequal
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33 gendered social relations. DSR can thus help to reveal, analyze and map these communities
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35 of harm and to develop strategies to support those who are experiencing depletion at
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37 individual, community and societal levels. We now turn to outlining the key features of the
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39 PEVAW framework and showing how this combines with DSR to provide a holistic
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41 approach to gendered violence against women in particular, in conditions of conflict and
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43 post-conflict.
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Harms and the political economy of violence against women

54 The PEVAW approach considers both material inequalities and underlying vested interests in
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56 cultural norms and practices as gendered structural conditions for vulnerability to violence
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3 against women and girls. Feminist political economy analysis of violence against women in
4 conflict and non-conflict affected situations has been principally concerned with tracing how
5 “gendered inequalities that fuel violence against women are rooted in structures and
6 processes of political economy that are increasingly globalized” (True 2012: 5). Addressing
7 social and economic livelihoods thus is integral to ending all forms of such violence in the
8 aftermath of conflicts. As True argues, “failure to address equality in access to social and
9 economic resources in post-conflict societies accentuates women’s economic poverty and
10 material insecurity relative to men and, consequently, their vulnerability to violence”,
11 especially in displacement and in woman-headed households (2012, 139). Failure to address
12 impunity for conflict-related violence against women, as Swaine (2018) argues, compounds
13 this vulnerability.
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31 In conflict and post-conflict countries where there are usually few income-generating
32 alternatives, new forms of gendered exploitation such as forced and child marriage,
33 kidnapping, trafficking, and coercive sex work tend to emerge in the absence of mitigating
34 structures and policies. For example, in Syria’s war economy, women have been used as a
35 form of currency to further political, military, and economic goals by being sold into
36 marriage, kidnapped for ransom, traded for weapons and safe travel, and for basic necessities
37 such as rent (Carrié et al. 2017). In Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan, child marriage has increased
38 alarmingly among Syrian refugees, encouraged by parents to protect their daughters from the
39 threat of sexual violence as well as to alleviate economic pressures (Save the Children 2014).
40 Moreover, there are contexts where conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence is
41 clearly part of a political economy of resources extraction or competition over resources,
42 such as in the conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Meger 2015). These forms of
43 physical violence in conflict exist on a continuum with the structural violence manifested in
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3 the economic grievances of men who are harmed by the loss of their former breadwinner
4 status or protector identities vis à vis women. Domination and subordination of women
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6 become strategies for regaining masculinity when male identity is weakened by the nature of
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8 conflict-affected political economies (--; Duriesmith 2018). These linkages between everyday
9
10 violence and the distinct harms that arise in conflict-affected settings need to be examined in
11
12 greater depth. As Elias and Rai (2015, 428) point out, with a few exceptions there is “a gap
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14 within feminist studies of the household and social reproduction in political economy when it
15
16 comes to the issue of violence.” We argue that certain experiences of gendered violence
17
18 result from the accumulated harms that stem from non-recognition and marginalization of
19
20 women’s wellbeing. For example, Jennings and Nikolić-Ristanović (2009) found that women
21
22 continue to be both imported and exported for sex work a decade after end of the Bosnian
23
24 war, with the number of foreign women decreasing and the number of Bosnian victims
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26 increasing significantly because of the economic desperation and lack of alternative
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28 economic opportunities that many women face in the post-conflict society.
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39 Bringing both DSR and PEVAW into focus is important because “those who are invisible as
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41 producers [as workers] will be invisible in distribution” (Rai, Hoskyns and Thomas 2014, 93)
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43 both in terms of the allocation of resources but also the redistributive policies and services
44
45 provided by the state and other actors to counter violence against women. Economic
46
47 marginalization of women and girls thus constitutes a form of structural violence that may
48
49 further intensify the political economy of violence and bodily harm that women and girls
50
51 distinctly experience during and after conflict. Indeed, this in turn might lead to increasing
52
53 the chances for the resumption of violence and conflict as the depletion of carers adds
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55 pressure to the local economies (see Chilmeran and Pratt *this issue*; UN/World Bank 2017).
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Multi-scalar Violence

Feminist scholars studying violence and those studying social reproduction have emphasized that individual experiences of harms are significantly affected by competitive global economic processes that tend to exploit women's labor and push them into precarious situations in which they have little power to protect themselves. As we have noted above, both the DSR and the PEVAW approaches analyze harm across multiple sites and at multiple scales. Rai et al connect micro household labor processes and macro policies and outcomes by identifying three main sites of depletion namely, individuals, households and communities. They stress the interaction across these three sites such that depletion at the household and community level can be examined with reference to the overall decline in individual wellbeing and vice versa. For example, women's bodies can be seen as visible markers of depletion fueled by a crisis in social reproduction. However, "social relations are historically specific, culturally contested and affect the ways in which bodies are viewed, depleted and renewed" (Rai, Hoskyns and Thomas 2014, 90). True's (2012, 20) PEVAW model also identifies three layers of structural violence: the household economy; global economy; and militarism and war economies. By connecting these different elements, the PEVAW approach argues for both a structural and a context-specific analysis of the causes and consequences of violence against women. Physical violence experienced by women needs to be understood as tethered to the structural violence of systems of oppression; PEVAW critically does this and alerts us to the harm that is attendant upon these layers of violence.

War and militarism may be reinforced by global political economy structures that perpetuate modes of exclusion and extraction sustained by the accumulation and distribution of natural resources. They are also legitimized by ideologies of masculinity and femininity which take

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3 root in household social relations. We see this for instance in current ‘strongman’ political
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5 leaders who project hyper-masculinity in conflict situations embodying the “role of the
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7 provider in the patriarchal family-household” and “legitimate protector writ large to
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9 citizens... often in the name of women and children” (--, 420). Discursive representations of
10
11 gender at the global level shape and often legitimize everyday experiences of physical and
12
13 structural violence at household and community levels to the extent that they legitimize
14
15 particular approaches to security. For example, maternal mortality is largely preventable but
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17 deaths still occur on a large scale especially in fragile and conflict-affected settings not only
18
19 because of conflict but also because of the structural violence manifested by poor health
20
21 infrastructure and services. The gradual depletion of women’s lives culminates in the gender-
22
23 specific violence of maternal death, which could have been addressed by economically
24
25 valuing women’s social reproductive labor and health, and as a matter of security in times of
26
27 conflict (--). Neglecting the care economy after conflict through the gradual or immediate
28
29 erosion of care institutions and services constitutes structural violence. The consequences of
30
31 this neglect are ultimately preventable deaths (Li and Wen 2005), as well as physical and
32
33 mental depletion legitimized by gendered symbols and discourses, and pervasive gender-
34
35 based violence. A multi-scalar approach is thus needed to examine this intimate relationship
36
37 between social reproduction and gender-based violence in post-conflict economies.
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47 ***Conflict-related violence versus everyday violence***

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49 We have argued above that the DSR framework does not consider violence as evidence of
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51 depletion and PEVAW does not have a specific approach for identifying and analyzing the
52
53 intensifying costs of social reproductive work under conditions of conflict and post-conflict.
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55 PEVAW and DSR approaches, taken together however, challenge conventional temporal
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57 understandings of violence in conflict situations. Feminist scholars have proposed that
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3 conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence are on a continuum with everyday forms of
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5 gender-based and structural violence outside of conflict (see Swaine 2018). Elias and Rai
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7 define violence as “regimes of labor, law and policy that secure the boundaries of the public
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9 and the private, of property, systems of rule-making and of justificatory ideologies of
10
11 separation and segregation, where boundaries of race, ethnicity, and sexuality are created and
12
13 defended by violent acts” (2018,14). This continuum is obscured in mainstream definitions of
14
15 conflict which are based on counts of ‘battle-deaths’ or direct fatalities rather than gradual,
16
17 socio-economic harms that are more difficult to measure yet fundamental to the social fabric
18
19 of communities (--). Another example is how wars and conflicts contribute to
20
21 intergenerational trauma. There is less attention given to addressing emotional and
22
23 psychological harms suffered by victims of conflict than to immediate and egregious acts of
24
25 violence. Because of this, primary caregivers, who are predominantly women and girls, might
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27 suffer enduring harms after conflicts, which are typically left unaddressed in post-conflict
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29 reconstruction.
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38 Feminist political economists have examined social reproduction and the costs of neglecting
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40 the care economy in the context of economic crises (Elson 2012; Hoskyns and Rai 2014;--),
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42 health epidemics (Harman 2016), displacement (--2018) and in the context of feminized
43
44 forms of productive labor and migration (Gunawardana 2016;--). Unlike, PEVAW analysis,
45
46 however, the DSR framework has not been applied to the analysis of depletion in conflict-
47
48 affected situations. In the next section, integrating the insights of both approaches we ask
49
50 what are the ‘care regimes’ (Razavi 2007) of post-conflict states and societies and why does
51
52 women’s unpaid labor particularly matter in conflict-affected settings? In so doing, we also
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54 bring together feminist security studies and feminist IPE literatures by re-engaging with the
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56 concept of the continuum of violence. We now explore what depletion looks like within the
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3 context of post-conflict transitions where both structural and gender-based violence are often
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5 endemic.
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10 **Household Care Economies and Post Conflict Recovery**

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12 The household is a key unit in mobilizing material and ideological resources especially
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14 human resources in conflict and post-conflict. Social reproduction underpins peace initiatives
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16 and also sustains violence in times of conflict. We have argued that care provisioning is ever
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18 present in times of conflict and its aftermath. It is the one constant on all fronts of violence.
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20 As we have noted above, social reproductive labor ranges from providing food for families,
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22 provisioning soldiers with food and shelter, providing care including health care for injured
23
24 or displaced persons and contributing to community services, which may have been
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26 destroyed, discontinued or dislocated. Gendered expectations of altruism and self-sacrifice
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28 are also prominent in times of crisis (Tanyag 2018, 10). However, care is needed by victims
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30 of violence as well as by armed combatants; it is required to sustain households in
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32 displacements as much as in insurgent households. It is therefore important both as a resource
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34 as well as meriting recognition in its own terms, and therefore needing support.
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42 In households, women's caring labor refashions cultural, national and other group identities
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44 and ideologies, which has material implications for the re-allocation of power and resources
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46 in post-conflict transitions. Post-war settlements, however, are often captured by
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48 conservative, "far right" or religious fundamentalist ideologies that seek to curtail women's
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50 autonomy, fuel communal violence, and regress advances in human rights in the name of
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52 tradition and 'the family'. Indeed, pro-natalism in the aftermath of conflicts has been a
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54 historical pattern (Yuval-Davis 1997). Women face pressures to reproduce a group's
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56 collective identity biologically and culturally as a way of replenishing 'stock'. Moreover, the
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3 salience of the family institution in post-conflict reconstruction may negatively affect sexual
4 and reproductive rights and privilege heteronormativity as a way to allocate value and reward
5 contributions (see Griffin 2007). This has implications for the marginalization and invisibility
6 of sexual minorities in post-conflict processes. It also points to how social reproductive work
7 needs to be analyzed through the dual lenses of PEVAW and DSR.
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17 In conflict-affected households, women are especially impacted by continuing violence and
18 severe violation of economic and social rights as a result of reductions in social infrastructure
19 and public expenditure (--). Diane Elson argues, with respect to non-conflict affected
20 societies, that governments frequently fail to factor in the costs of women's unpaid labor
21 when making policies that reduce public services or social protection measures. Women's
22 labor is seen as 'elastic', expanding in unlimited ways to provision the significant basic needs
23 of families and communities when the state, employers or the community do not provide for
24 them (Elson 1995, 25; Rai et al 2014). This is also the prevailing assumption of policymakers
25 in incipient state structures, donor agencies and international financial and development
26 institutions in conflict and recovery from conflict. Culcasi notes that "paid work is
27 understudied within feminist geopolitics, but such a focus renders important insights into how
28 gender shapes experiences of displacement and how displacement is reshaping gendered
29 relations" (2019,1). Economic analysis has shown that "improved access to public
30 infrastructure affects women's time allocation decisions and, in turn, changes in these
31 decisions affect the process of growth and economic development" in low and medium
32 income countries (Agénor 2017, 25). As the paid and unpaid labor of women increases to
33 support households, and social infrastructure deteriorates because of austerity policies and/or
34 lack of investment, the pressures on women's health and well-being intensify. This is
35 particularly the case in conflict-affected situations such as in contemporary Ukraine, for
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3 example. Below we bring together the DSR/PEVAW frameworks to demonstrate the value of
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5 this approach to addressing issues of social reproduction in conditions of conflict.
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10 *Conflict-affected households in Ukraine – DSR/PEVAW analysis*

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12 The Ukraine government's military operations in the Donbas region vis a vis Russian
13 separatists began in April 2014 after the Russian annexation of Crimea, and led to a 25 per
14 cent contraction in equivalent economic output in one year. Defense spending substantially
15 increased at the same time reducing the funds to support economic and social infrastructure
16 and reforms. In their Universal Periodic Review submission to the UN Human Rights
17 Council based on consultations with Ukrainian women's organizations, WILPF (2017)
18 documented the negative gender impacts of the nationalism and militarism fueling the
19 conflict and the IMF-mandated economic reforms in response. This report noted that
20 the elimination of subsidies for fuel and heating led to much higher prices for gas, heating,
21 electricity, transportation, and other goods and services related to fuel use and that this has
22 had an extremely negative impact on the living standards of much of the population. A large
23 percentage of people's salaries can be spent on heating alone; even up to half of the salary or
24 a quarter if there are two people with salaries in the same household. It dramatically affected
25 women in rural areas, increasing their household labor and negatively affecting their health.
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47 Extensive reduction in government spending in civil service workforce, health, education,
48 and social services, also had extremely negative consequences for the beneficiaries of social
49 services including child care, disproportionately affecting women in two main ways:
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52 First, cutbacks in public health and social service expenditures effectively shifted care
53 previously provided by the government to women. Health per capita spending dropped
54 substantially from USD 282 to USD 125 in 2015 after the start of the war (World Bank
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3 databank 2019). The Ukraine government effectively saved money by having women
4 provide for free the services that they were no longer providing, enabling reallocation to
5 defense. Second, education, health care, social work, and public administration were the
6 sectors with most job cuts and salary freezes or reductions in the economic reform program.
7
8 These were also the economic sectors with the highest representation of women, close to 80
9 per cent of the total employees. During 2014-2015, 165,000 civil service jobs were cut within
10 an overall plan to reduce 20 per cent of the civil service. As a result, many women lost not
11 only a stable income but also guarantees of social protection, such as maternity leave. No
12 effective social protection programs or active labor market policies were introduced to
13 reemploy or retrain of those who have been laid off. Women's labor force participation
14 declined as result from 51 per cent of the labor force in 2000 to 47 per cent in 2017 (World
15 Bank databank 2019). Very few countries have seen such a decline in women's paid labor in
16 the same time period. The negative impact of conflict and reform on women's public-sector
17 employment has led to their employment in precarious forms of work where they are at
18 heightened risk of depletion, abuse, and violence.
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40 In the areas within or proximate to conflict in the Ukraine, women's labor is reported to be
41 increasingly stretched given the pressure on the domestic sector to make up for deficiencies
42 in public provision. This may result in a depletion of human capabilities because the
43 household needs adequate inputs from all other sectors (Elson 2000, 28). In a recent
44 ethnography time-use survey, women's time spent on care activities in households within
45 conflict areas was found to be far greater than in relatively stable areas and additionally
46 affected by lack of social infrastructure under conflict conditions (-- and WILPF 2018). From
47 that pilot study, it was evident that in conjunction with the impact of inflation in prices and
48 reduced employment due to austerity, adult women in conflict-affected households were
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3 seeking to increase their paid work participation even as the demands on their time spent in
4 household social reproduction was greater than before the conflict. Informal economies of
5 care were also evident, including grandparent care, babysitting paid in cash, and children
6 providing care for other children enabling women to work for income to procure basic needs
7 in an inflationary, conflict-situation. In the households where those informal economies did
8 not function, women were often overburdened or unable to access employment. Women's
9 intensified labor was also possibly at the expense of their own health and that of their
10 children. Poor health and access to health for women and their children have been
11 documented in recent epidemiological research in the Ukraine including in internally
12 displaced communities (Cotterham et al 2017; Nidzvetska et al 2017).

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28 Without adjustments to public provisioning and social protection in such a conflict and
29 austerity affected situation, women's health and wellbeing can be expected to decline with
30 further negative effects on household and community wellbeing. This decline may also have
31 an impact on conflict resolution given that women's labor is integral to the recovery from
32 conflict, especially in displaced communities, and that women's organizing is known to be
33 one of the societal contributors to sustainable peace (Krause et al 2018). If women's lives are
34 depleted, the capabilities of women to contribute to recovery and to peace processes beyond
35 the household, at the community and national level will be severely constrained.

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49 Depletion, because of the double burden of unpaid domestic work and increasing
50 mobilization of women into the labor market, reduces their ability to participate in civil
51 society activities, governance structures or in any attempts at reviving peace processes. This
52 can result in the depletion of communities that has implications for peacebuilding work.

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There are also significant obstacles to collective organizing when the efforts of individuals –

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2
3 especially women – are focused on merely being able to survive and maintain their
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5 households (see WILPF 2017). Moreover, even though women might already be contributing
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7 significantly in the rebuilding of their communities, because of the invisibility of their labor,
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9 they are excluded from accessing resources and decision-making fora. As Rai et al (2014)
10
11 have argued, the lack of recognition of social reproductive work results in harm to women’s
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13 citizenship entitlements; they are treated more as recipients of welfare and a burden on the
14
15 state or as service providers. This means that any investment in social infrastructure that
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17 might replenish women’s lives takes second place; the focus of post-conflict reconstruction
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19 remains on roads and railways rather than crèches and health clinics.
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26 At a transnational level, in what Safri and Gibson (2010) have called ‘global households’,
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28 remittances rather than state social expenditures, official development assistance or foreign
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30 direct investment constitute the largest type of financial flow to fragile conflict-affected
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32 contexts (OECD 2016: 17). As Kunz (2011) has pointed out, increasingly transnational
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34 development organizations view these remittances as an instrument to finance development
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36 and reduce poverty and make sense of this phenomenon through a gender-blind lens that
37
38 delinks the global political economy from the individual subject who generates these
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40 resources. Such an instrumental approach to remittances fails to connect the costs of
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42 generating remittances to the global neoliberal regimes of labor: Using DSR as a lens,
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44 however, reveals these connections. In post-conflict societies, the remittance economy is
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46 typically large, but underestimated given personal cash transactions across borders (Bojičić-
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48 Dželilović 2013). In Ukraine, remittances have grown rapidly alongside the decline in the
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50 economy and the net migration out for work, from approximately USD 57 million in 1999 to
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52 almost USD 11 billion in 2018, now the equivalent of 10 per cent of GDP (World Bank
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54 2019). Between 2015 and 2017 it is estimated that 4 million left the Ukraine for work in
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3 Russia and other parts of Europe (Talant 2018). Remittances are a gendered phenomenon
4 affecting individual, household and society-wide depletion. For instance, more Ukrainian
5 women than men have migrated for work and women are more likely to be long term
6 migrants than men. Divorced or widowed women constitute a substantial proportion of
7 female migrant workers, raising concerns over children ‘left behind’ (ILO 2017, 37).
8
9 Moreover, women short-term migrant workers remit more than men are found to remit less
10 (2,000 cf. 1,806 Euros) even though they tend to earn less money while abroad. As a result,
11 many households in the Ukraine are dependent on remittances and women’s labor is directly
12 implicated, constituting the majority of those generating remittances and having to increase
13 their unpaid work in the household to compensate for a partner who has migrated for work.
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28 The evidence on the positive impacts of remittances is thus, mixed and there is no definitive
29 research on their transformative potential beyond the immediate environment of migrants.
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31 Rather, research has shown that migrant remittances are stop-gap resources that are exhausted
32 in the daily provisioning of the conflict-affected family’s needs such as in education, food
33 and health even as some of these remittances are able to be allocated for savings and
34 investments. The significant trade-off involved in remittances-driven survival in fragile and
35 conflict affected areas is that dependence on these financial flows can negatively impact
36 donor or post-conflict state investment in social infrastructure.
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49 As the next section discusses, valuing these household care economies has the potential to
50 regenerate post-conflict societies.
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56 **Toward a Regenerative State**

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58 As we have argued in parts one and two of this paper, in conflict-affected contexts, depletion
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3 through social reproduction is heightened because there is typically little state support for
4 women's care responsibilities leading to a double day carrying out income-earning activities
5 and unpaid social reproductive activities while the demands in war and peacebuilding
6 economies increase for both types of labor. In this section, we consider how social
7 reproduction might be supported in post-conflict economies, depletion reversed and new
8 approaches to a gender-responsive political economy of *regeneration* developed.
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19 In the DSR framework, Rai et al (2014) suggest three types of reversal of depletion are
20 possible; mitigation, replenishment and transformation. Mitigation is based on individual
21 strategies, replenishment on state and non-state provisioning, and transformation involves
22 societal (re)valuing of women's social reproductive labor. Mitigation and replenishment are
23 short to medium-term responses to depletion. Mitigation reallocates care responsibilities
24 without necessarily addressing their sustainability. Replenishment moves closer to
25 sustainability but may not lead to transformation in gender relations due to embedded norms.
26 For example, women's health may be given support but only in so far as to encourage their
27 role as primary caregivers, while maintaining male breadwinner identities and neglecting to
28 address men's power over women as expressed through gendered violence. Transformation
29 requires societal recognition of social reproduction, redistribution of care labor and equal
30 representation of women and men in political and economic decisions from the household to
31 the wider societal level (cf. Fraser 2005).
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51 Here we argue that post-conflict transitions provide us with a moment of openness that can be
52 harnessed to establish both new institutional rules and norms and non-state initiatives to
53 redress inequalities, reduce depletion of carers, and thus contribute to sustainable and
54 inclusive peace. This approach is neither to be confused with 'liberal peacebuilding' which
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3 pushes for neoliberal-type reforms in political, legal and economic systems nor with a
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5 hybridity approach that focuses on interactions ‘between different institutional and social
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7 forms, and normative systems, in a wide range of contexts’ (Forsyth et al 2018, 408). Rather,
8
9 based on our analysis of DSR and PEVAW above, we put forward the idea of a regenerative
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11 state, which we situate within complex and interconnected systems of governance including
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13 state and non-state actors, civil society groups and social movements that hold the state
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15 accountable to reverse depletion and reduce the chances for the recurrence of conflict by
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17 paying attention to social reproduction. We note three core elements of such a state, which
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19 are heuristic devices to explore what we need the post-conflict state to address as it takes
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21 shape under conditions of optimism, instability and moments of possibility. The first element
22
23 of the regenerative state aims to recognize the value of social reproductive work and supports
24
25 the rebuilding of *social infrastructure* rather than just infrastructure related to the physical,
26
27 built and resources environment; the second intends to facilitate and be open to a politics of
28
29 *dialogic, deliberative and participative conversation* across conflict lines, involving inclusive
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31 processes and all stakeholders; and the third element aims to incorporate *accountability*
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33 *mechanisms* through a democratic framework for post-conflict rebuilding focused on a
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35 bottom-up approach to regeneration involving as above, civil society groups, social
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37 movement actors and epistemic communities.
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47 We could be accused of utopian thinking in suggesting such an approach to the state; we are
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49 well aware of the pitfalls of state power that can often reinforce gender hierarchies. Feminist
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51 theorists have long argued that gendered social relations are constitutive of western liberal
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53 and welfare states as well as postcolonial states, all of which have shored up the continued
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55 dominance of patriarchal relations of social production and reproduction (Fraser 2005;
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57 Parashar, Tickner and True 2018; Randall and Waylen 1997; Yuval-Davis and Anthias
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3 1989). However, as Cooper has argued, “whether virtual or material, reimagining involves
4 deliberate practices of framing, interpreting, cutting and connection-drawing, as alternative
5 histories and futures get posited” (2020, 2) While cautious of the politics of cooption,
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8 feminist scholars have also argued that state policy is a legitimate arena of contestation for
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10 women’s rights and gender justice (Hozic and True 2016; Htun and Weldon 2018;--; Meyer
11
12 and Prugl 1999).
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19 A regenerative state would promote gender equality in post-conflict reconstruction by
20 recognizing women’s social reproductive work, facilitating women’s political agency through
21 equal access to decision-making power, as well as recognizing and redressing conflict-related
22 harms such as gender-based violence. This approach would support not only women engaged
23 in social reproductive work, but all those who care and are cared for, by providing social
24 infrastructure to support a good quality care regime. Moreover, we conceive of the
25 regenerative state as involving many actors and institutions including civil society and
26 international actors in dialogue with and involved in the redesign of gender-responsive
27 institutions in post-conflict transitions.
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42 ***Social infrastructure***

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47 Peace is an expensive process, and many post-conflict resources are directed toward the
48 rebuilding of physical infrastructure that may have few benefits for many women or that
49 prioritize men’s needs and employment such as rebuilding roads (to the capital rather than to
50 the local market for example) (Duncanson 2016). These gendered priorities for reconstruction
51 may freeze a situation of inequality rather than advance gender equality. Regeneration in
52 post-conflict transitions needs to direct resources to building social infrastructure that will
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3 support social reproductive work of care, affordable health for conflict-affected populations
4 including sexual and reproductive health services, gender-responsive, quality public services
5 such as sanitation, education from early-childhood to tertiary, and public safety, sustainable
6 infrastructure, including access to clean energy, safe drinking water, safe designing of
7 transport systems and urban spaces and social protection systems such as old-age pensions,
8 child and family benefits, maternity/parental protection, and unemployment support. For
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10 example, a recent decision by a court in South Africa (Nkala and Others v. Harmony Gold
11 Mining Company Limited and Others, 2016) took the unusual step of acknowledging care
12 work and ordering compensation not only to the affected miners but also their carers for the
13 harm that they suffered: “Often, the care work requires fulltime attention, effectively
14 compelling many women and girls to forego income-generating, educational, and other
15 opportunities.” The court noted that general damages would benefit these carers by reducing
16 their care work and would “indirectly compensate them for the care-work they have already
17 provided” (Goldblatt and Rai 2017, 676). Such legal recognition can reduce and redistribute
18 social reproductive labor, reversing depletion for carers. This has also been noted by the UN
19 Commission on the Status of Women, especially with regard to conflict-affected women and
20 communities (UN Economic and Social Council 2019). Such measures to reverse depletion
21 can also greatly reduce the threat of violence, the potential for the recurrence of violence and
22 the role that they play in further depleting individuals, households and societies.
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49 Further, gender-sensitive reparations programs that redress the harms suffered by civilian
50 victims of conflict and the effects of conflict on the social and economic situation in the
51 country could form part of building this social infrastructure (True 2012, 157-8). A fair share
52 of post-conflict resources could be devoted to rebuilding the social infrastructure in societies.
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Toward this end, for example, the UN Peacebuilding Fund has adopted a fifteen per cent

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3 target for gender-responsive financing for peacebuilding initiatives while the UN Secretary-
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5 General has recommended that states guarantee fifteen per cent of their post-conflict funds
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7 are dedicated to infrastructure and economic development that addresses women's specific
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9 needs or empowerment and advancing gender equality (S/2010/466). With a feminist lens,
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11 we could further build the evidence to support this approach to a regenerative post-conflict
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13 state by adapting Diane Elson's (1995, 164-190) method of comparing the impact of reducing
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15 budget deficits with the impact of strengthening investments in human capacities and needs
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17 on economic growth, poverty reductions and gender equality. Integrating gender impact
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19 analysis and gender budgeting into financing and needs assessments in post-conflict societies,
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21 and conducting regular audits to ensure that resources on the ground benefit social
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23 reproductive as well as productive capacities, and women and men equally will be important.
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33 ***Participatory policymaking***

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37 The second element of a regenerative state is the potential to build and support capacity
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39 within civil (and wider) society to meaningfully participate and engage in economic reform
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41 processes, and to provide access for mobilization and dialogue. Meaningful participation
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43 occurs when social reproductive labor is redistributed to enable equal participation in
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45 policymaking rather than requiring women to do multiple unremunerated shifts laboring in
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47 their households, in rebuilding their communities, and in post-conflict institutions. Towards
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49 this, there needs to be a greater representation of women in political institutions and public
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51 political spaces which is essential to the development of progressive social policies able to
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53 generate such redistribution (Weldon and Htun 2013; Htun and Weldon 2018; Dahlerup
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55 2005;--). Policies that promote regeneration from a gender perspective need to include gender
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3 equality in family laws and laws addressing the elimination of violence against women and
4 girls. Women's organizations are also often at the frontlines of post-conflict (Cahn et al 2011)
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6 working with communities, providing support and counselling to victims of violence and
7
8 displaced persons, organizing community dialogues and other peacebuilding initiatives. They
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10 may be exposed to threats of political violence, constituting significant gendered costs to
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12 political participation for individual women and collectively. Policies that provide protection
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14 measures for politically-active women therefore must be in place.
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21 As an example, in Nepal, following the Comprehensive Peace Accord in 2006, Local Peace
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23 Committees were organized at district, municipal and village level. By mandate, at least one-
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25 third of its members were women. They were intended to facilitate peacebuilding through the
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27 implementation of the peace agreement but the committees were not properly implemented,
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29 in part due to a lack of resources and external support (UN Women 2018, 27-8). One
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31 example of where broad-based participation and dialogue has been effective in post-conflict
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33 recovery and could be extended to post-conflict economic reconstruction is via the Peace
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35 Huts model developed by Liberian women peace activists after the war in that country (UN
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37 Women 2018). These Peace Huts involved women mediating local disputes, monitoring
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39 police and justice services, referring victims of violence to services, and raising awareness
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41 within communities regarding peacebuilding priorities, such as elections, decentralization,
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43 and natural resource concessions. The Huts proved to be a cost-effective way of reducing and
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45 even preventing violence in the community because they defused tensions and alerted police
46
47 to potential violent outbreaks. But they also provided a space for women's voices to be heard
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49 on priorities for peacebuilding, security, rule of law, and other issues, which could include
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51 the economy. At present, they have promoted women's economic empowerment by
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53 organizing savings and loans groups and supporting the political aspirations of community
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3 women but the existing model could be extended to economic governance. Yet, foreign aid
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5 budgets allocated to supporting gender equality and women's empowerment remains minimal
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7 with few states committed to the target of directing fifteen per cent of peacebuilding funding
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9 to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in fragile and conflict-affected
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11 states.
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17 Participation is also crucial to a regenerative state in a conflict transition, where land and
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19 property rights, access to justice and redistribution programs are all vital to redress in order to
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21 reverse the depletion of social reproduction and eliminate gender-based violence and
22
23 insecurity. For example, the 2016 *Colombian Final Peace Agreement* prioritized land rights
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25 and ownership, which included the establishment of the Land Fund to facilitate land
26
27 redistribution (--). Rural women, female-headed households and displaced persons are given
28
29 priority under the framework; and their participation in the governance of land redistribution
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31 program is guaranteed. The implementation of these land reform provisions is at an early
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33 stage, however, the intent is to reduce women's vulnerability to conflict-related violence by
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35 bolstering their economic rights and access.
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42 There is also a window of opportunity in the mandate of IFIs, for instance the World Bank's
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44 Systematic Country Diagnostics and development of the Country Strategic Framework and
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46 the IMF's "Article V" consultations to promote broader participation in the early preparatory
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48 and analytical stages as well as during the implementation of post-conflict economic reforms
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50 and international support for that participation (True and Svedberg 2019). These civil society
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52 consultations, specifically including women and women's civil society, could be a
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54 requirement prior to international approval of lending agreements, for instance.
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3 Ensuring meaningful representation of women and men in any post-conflict decision-making
4 process, whether for large-scale infrastructure as well as social infrastructure projects, would
5 also engage citizens in participating as well as in holding the state accountable.
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10 11 12 13 14 15 *Accountability mechanisms* 16

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19 The third element of a regenerative state that is important to reverse the DSR and the
20 gendered violence that results, are the accountability mechanisms to ensure that state
21 agencies and policies deliver on social infrastructure and participatory policymaking. Strong,
22 democratic institutions with parity representation of women and men would be an important
23 starting point for ensuring that social infrastructure development takes place. Further, gender-
24 sensitive, human rights impact assessment of economic reforms before any strategy or reform
25 program is approved are one such accountability mechanism. There needs to be a clear,
26 systematic and independent impact assessment carried out at all stages of post-conflict
27 development interventions and investments to uphold economic, social and cultural rights as
28 well as civil and political rights and to ensure that, at the minimum, that their implementation
29 does no harm (WILPF 2017, 43). Mandatory gender and human rights-based indicators
30 should be required as part of the monitoring and evaluation of all post-conflict programs. A
31 more far-reaching accountability mechanism would involve establishing an independent,
32 effective and accessible complaints mechanism for violations of economic, social and
33 cultural rights and sex- and gender-based discrimination in the post-conflict country
34 embedded in the framework for economic recovery and reconstruction. At the international
35 level, an internal human rights compliance and gender monitoring and accountability process
36 would also need to be established within IFIs that would serve as accountability mechanisms
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3 in relation to poverty reduction, human rights and equalities responsibilities.
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8 Democratic and accountable mechanisms outlined above can then help mobilize a feminist
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10 politics that engages and challenges the state to see how the interdependence of giving and
11
12 receiving care, of production and social reproduction might elicit new policy frameworks (--).
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15 Thus, the phase after conflict could enable the distribution of resources through economic
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17 reform including greater social expenditure on ‘decent work’ creation and care as well as
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19 stronger regulation of the labor market and human resource management policies for
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21 employees with caring responsibilities rather than reliance on feminized migration and
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23 remittance flows (for the potential in the Sri Lanka case, see Davies and True 2017). In many
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25 respects, these ideas are the antithesis to most post-conflict development strategies that
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27 emphasize power transitions among elites representing armed groups and distributing
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29 authority and resources accordingly (North et al 2009).
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36 The regenerative state can be supported rather than obstructed by international actors and
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38 policy frameworks. The Sustainable Development Goals provide a framework that can be
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40 used to develop gender sensitive policies by the regenerative state. For example, regeneration
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42 could involve gender-responsive and inclusive reform by providing social infrastructure to
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44 support gender equality (SDG 5) and participation (SDG 16), and decent work (SDG 8)
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46 opportunities for women as an integral part of post-conflict transitions. However, as feminist
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48 scholars have pointed out, the SDG emphasis on growth as development, continues to
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50 underline the international development regime’s neglect of the care economy (Esquivel,
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52 2016; --). Fukuda-Parr argues that “while the SDGs promise the potential for a more
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54 transformative agenda, implementation will depend on continued advocacy on each of the
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56 targets to hold authorities to account” (2016, 43). Also, women’s participation in
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3 peacebuilding could be explicitly targeted as a marker of stability and peace, and women's
4 realization of economic and social rights could become an end in itself, enabling broader
5 prosperity and lasting peace. At present though, the IFIs are driven by an instrumental rather
6 than rights-based approach; prioritizing gender equality interventions as "smart economics"
7 because they deliver on the core goals of eradicating poverty and promoting growth.
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17 **Conclusion**

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19 Post-conflict transitions provide an opportunity to promote positive norms around non-
20 violence, to recalibrate the allocation of labor in the household, and to improve the access to
21 key resources such as health and education. By bringing together two frames of feminist
22 scholarship – DSR and PEVAW – in this paper, we have argued that that the rebuilding of
23 societies begins with and within households to enable a social transformation in power
24 relations. We have examined how the post-conflict context can be seen as a moment of
25 openness wherein re-imagining a regenerative state can redress depletion and violence as part
26 of securing peace and stability. Focusing on social reproduction and the depletion of those
27 performing it under conditions affected by conflict, highlights the need for the urgent
28 prioritization of social infrastructures to reverse depletion.
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45 Feminist analysis plays a vital role in mapping the structural barriers to regeneration,
46 promoting greater attention to women's unrecognized and uncounted labor and to women's
47 participation and rights in post-conflict environments. This evidence may inform more
48 gender-sensitive and inclusive reform plans and aim to formalize this labor by providing
49 social infrastructure to support gender equality and decent work opportunities for women as
50 an integral part of the transition to peace. Four aspects are important: First, we need to
51 revision the gender divisions of labor in societies recovering from conflict that keep women
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3 from participating in peace processes and that reinforce the structural gender inequalities
4 causing or exacerbating gender-based violence and enabling militarized masculinities and the
5 normalization of violence. Second, we need to recognize women's social reproductive
6 activities in the household and community during conflict and how they respond to individual
7 and community humanitarian needs, and support the transition of women's agency to shape
8 and rebuild social infrastructure and services after conflict. Third, we need to analyze the
9 gendered impact of peace implementation and post-conflict economic reform plans, and
10 promote the obligations of state and external actors to ensure the social and economic rights
11 of post-conflict citizens. Finally, by holding the state and the international governance regime
12 to account we can address the depletion of women's lives in post-conflict contexts and their
13 vulnerability to violence. Such a four-fold transformation requires the development of a
14 regenerative politics that sets forth new policy and economic frameworks at community,
15 national and international levels. These frameworks should recognize the value of social
16 reproduction and establish the social infrastructures to sustain it as an integral part of
17 securing peace and re-building economies.
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